

## ALPHA CHI OMEGA

Accreditation Report

2016-2017

### Leadership & Member Development

- Alpha Chi Omega had a sister serve on the Panhellenic executive board as Vice President of Publicity and Marketing for the 2016-2017 academic year.
- Alpha Chi Omega members represent the chapter in a variety of different leadership positions across campus in organizations including Chabad, Student Senate, Challah for Hunger, Lehigh Liners, and more.
- The chapter offers mini-positions for all members, including new members, to prepare sisters for future leadership. This allows people to shadow the related executive board member and provides a less time consuming opportunity to stay involved in the chapter. The committee would like to see the chapter develop additional ways for members to be involved in leading and contributing to the chapter beyond only positional experiences.
- The chapter had a few members attend the Great Pocono Escape and has one sister serving as a Greek Emerging Leader Mentor. The committee is surprised by the lack of engagement in campus leadership development opportunities. For example, Alpha Chi Omega was the only Panhellenic sorority not represented at LeaderShape. The committee recommends that the chapter work with campus leadership resources to identify opportunities to get further involved.
- The committee feels that of the few leadership experiences chapter members are participating in, the rest of the chapter is not benefitting. The committee recommends that the chapter provide opportunities for the entire membership to engage in the learning and development.
- Alpha Chi Omega utilizes the MyJourney program from Headquarters to contribute to member development across four years of membership. This is a peer-facilitated program that connects to the organization's core values of wisdom, devotion, and achievement. Curriculum is divided by member class. "Dedication" is the subset of the program utilized for new member education.
- The chapter has been working to improve the understanding and practice of ritual. Ritual workshops and ceremony practices are held in order to understand the true meaning behind components of Alpha Chi Omega rather than simply going through the motions. The chapter also tries to garner buy-in around ritual by recognizing a sister each week for living the values of the organization.
- The committee feels as though the chapter does not understand the difference between promoting diversity and creating an inclusive environment. In response to the 2015-2016 chapter development question, the chapter spoke about participating in programs and listening to speakers. It is evident the chapter has further development before they can become a leader in creating an inclusive environment within the fraternity and sorority community. The committee encourages Alpha Chi Omega to utilize campus resources to increase member knowledge and ensure inclusive chapter practices.
- Alpha Chi Omega Headquarters expanded the definition of membership to include any person who identifies as a woman. The chapter expressed the importance of promoting and celebrating diversity. The committee recommends that the chapter embrace this as an opportunity to partner with the Pride Center to foster a trans-inclusive environment.

### **Chapter Development Question for 2017-2018:**

- **How can Alpha Chi Omega incorporate the bLUeprint learning cycle to further develop inclusive leaders around social justice efforts?**

In the area of **Leadership & Member Development**, the Committee rated Alpha Chi Omega to be an **Accredited Chapter**.

### **Organizational Operations**

- Alpha Chi Omega created a liaison position with the Office of Gender Violence Education and Support. The purpose of this position is to strengthen the partnership with this office in connection to the chapter's philanthropy, Domestic Violence Prevention and Awareness.
- Alpha Chi Omega's Vice President of Finance provides a breakdown of chapter dues to both members and parents for full transparency of financial expectations. The Vice President of Finance also sits down with all of the new members to explain how these monies are allocated and provide a space to ask finance-related questions.
- The chapter facilitated a mock standards board hearing at a chapter meeting. This increased transparency and decreased fear around the Chapter Relations and Standards Board process. The committee considers this a best practice.
- The chapter is high functioning but is not intentionally planning and pushing the organization to the next level. The committee recommends that the chapter engage in strategic planning by determining a future vision for the organization and setting S.M.A.R.T. goals in order to achieve them.
- Alpha Chi Omega's Chapter Relations and Standards Board positively incentivizes members in addition to holding them accountable. For example, when a member was accepted into the Iacocca Internship Program, the board brought her in and awarded her a Saxby's gift card.
- The chapter engages the general membership in decision making through surveys and open executive board meetings. An example of how the chapter has utilized general member input is through budgeting. The executive board worked with members to identify priorities and values to make sure the budget reflected that.
- Alpha Chi Omega recognized the need for change in recruitment and found a tool to streamline voting. The chapter will be implementing the Select-A-Sis App that removes manual, time consuming processes by providing an online forum for members to vote on potential new members between each round.
- The chapter follows national risk management policy by educating members on the "backstops" framework. Backstops are questions for women to lean on when determining action in a risky situation. The chapter holds a workshop each semester to educate members on how to utilize these backstops and develop healthier decision-making skills.
- The committee is concerned by the lack of transparency between the chapter and the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs. Alpha Chi Omega cannot truly utilize advisors as resources if they are not honest about challenges and obstacles within the organization.

### **Chapter Development Question for 2017-2018:**

- **How can the chapter identify a community issue and utilize social capital to build capacity in addressing it?**

In the area of **Organizational Operations**, the Committee rated Alpha Chi Omega to be an **Accredited Chapter**.

### **Community Service & Engagement**

- Alpha Chi Omega hosts two philanthropic events per year for Domestic Violence Awareness: Mountain Hunk and Dodging Domestic Violence. The chapter recognized the incongruence of using dodgeball as a fundraising activity for domestic violence awareness and changed the event to Alpha Chi Olympics, in partnership with Pi Kappa Alpha. While the committee commends the chapter for changing a problematic event, the next step is to increase intentionality around educating attendees about domestic violence.
- The chapter works to support Turning Point, a local women's shelter, through financial contributions, donating toiletry bags, online training, and volunteering. The committee is concerned that most of the chapter's relationship with Turning Point is monetary considering that it is up to members to volunteer on their own time rather than through an organized chapter effort. The committee recommends the chapter identify meaningful opportunities for ongoing, hands-on service to Turning Point.
- The chapter partnered with Break the Silence and the Office of Gender Violence Education and Support to assist in the implementation and advertising of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Healthy Relationships Week, and Sexual Assault Awareness Month.
- The chapter received a Panhellenic infraction related to recruitment violations of strict silence and bid promising. Specifically, members of the chapter were in contact with potential new members throughout the primary recruitment process and assured women they would receive bids to the chapter. The committee recommends that the chapter continue educating the membership on recruitment rules and harmful recruitment practices.
- Alpha Chi Omega received a Panhellenic infraction for violating National Panhellenic Conference's (NPC) policy on social events with recognized fraternities. Specifically, the chapter had a party with an unrecognized organization. The committee is concerned that the chapter is putting both the organization and members at risk.
- The chapter has begun to explore the link between service and ritual. The committee believes the chapter is still on the cusp of fully understanding the connection. The committee recommends to continue exploring and reflecting upon the relationship between ritual and community service.
- Alpha Chi Omega communicates with alumni through social media, newsletters, and My Chapter Room, an online organizational hub. The committee encourages the chapter to expand alumni relations efforts to engage in a more interactive manner.
- The chapter worked to get Lehigh students involved in the national elections through voter registration tables. This provided students and other community members a convenient way to prepare for Election Day. The chapter also saw an increase in healthy debate amongst members regarding politics.

### **Chapter Development Question for 2017-2018:**

- **How can Alpha Chi Omega intentionally increase hand-on service within the local community?**

In the area of **Community Service & Engagement**, the Committee rated Alpha Chi Omega to be an **Accredited Chapter**.

## Academic & Intellectual Advancement

- Alpha Chi Omega was ranked first out of nine Panhellenic Sororities in the fall 2016 semester with a GPA of 3.50372, an increase of .02915 from the spring 2016 semester. The 3.50372 GPA placed the chapter above the All Sorority and All Greek average.
- Alpha Chi Omega was ranked first out of nine Panhellenic Sororities in the spring 2017 semester with a GPA of 3.44, a decrease of .06372 from the fall 2016 semester. The 3.44 GPA placed the chapter above the All Sorority and All Greek average.
- Alpha Chi Omega's spring 2017 new member class GPA was 3.21 ranking fifth out of nine Panhellenic Sororities.
- Alpha Chi Omega had 44.9% of the chapter on the Dean's List in the fall 2016 semester and 31% on the Dean's List in the spring 2017 semester.
- The chapter consistently has the highest GPA in the Panhellenic community while also being above the all sorority and all Greek GPA averages. The committee commends the chapter for sustaining such high academic success. The committee encourages the chapter to assess the academic plan to identify impactful components and areas for improvement to ensure continued success.
- The chapter engaged in educational programs around healthy relationships. The director of the Office of Gender Violence Education and Support, Brooke DeSipio, facilitated a workshop around the hook-up culture at Lehigh University where students learned about sex statistics, sexual stigmas for women, and resources for sexual assault. The chapter also co-sponsored a visit from Bill Mitchell, president of the Kristin Mitchell Foundation, to speak with students about warning signs and how to break away from dating violence.
- Alpha Chi Omega puts members struggling academically on academic probation and requires them to adhere to a positive points system. This system awards points for completing tasks related to good study habits. Members on probation are assigned a required number of points per week until they get back on track. The committee believes the chapter could do more with regards to supporting members academically before they reach probation. The committee recommends that Alpha Chi Omega work to refine the plan by consulting a chapter with best practices in academic support. The plan should also emphasize supporting new members as research shows that is the time that GPAs are most negatively impacted.
- The chapter recognizes members who attend every class in a week by putting names into a Skippy Jar and drawing a winner for a gift card. Other positive incentives include a Dean's List dinner and hanging impressive assignments on the refrigerator.
- The chapter built relationships with faculty members through the annual events Apple Pie with Alpha Chi and a Professor Barbecue. Members invite professors to get to know them on a personal level while diving deeper into course subjects. The chapter also recognizes outstanding faculty members by awarding Professor of the Week that includes a gift card.
- The committee believes the chapter is at an operational point where they could easily be reflecting and educating members beyond academics to stimulate intellectual development but is not doing so. The committee encourages the chapter to identify needs and areas of interest within the membership in order to create and implement an educational experience that complements the classroom.

### Chapter Development Question for 2017-2018:

- **How can Alpha Chi Omega utilize the experiences of chapter members to stimulate intellectualism outside of the classroom?**

In the area of **Academic & Intellectual Advancement**, the Committee rated Alpha Chi Omega to be an **Accredited with Excellence Chapter**.

### **Facilities Management**

- Alpha Chi Omega had no common damages for 2016-2017.
- Alpha Chi Omega managed openings and closings with no issues.
- Alpha Chi Omega passed life safety inspections and fire drills with zero violations.
- The chapter consistently exceeds occupancy with 138% and 133% in the fall 2016 and spring 2017 semesters respectively.
- The chapter requires members to maintain the cleanliness and organization of the facility. The steward assigns two members nightly to straighten up the kitchen to prepare for the chef the next day. The house manager inspects individual rooms a few times throughout the year.
- The chapter has a green chair position and eco-reps in the organization to advocate for the environment. These members share reminders about environmentally friendly practices. For example, there are posters in the kitchen indicating what is recyclable and tips for recycling properly. The committee encourages the chapter to use these positions to explore additional opportunities for sustainable practices within the facility.
- Alpha Chi Omega regularly has furniture piled in the hallways of the facility. The committee encourages the chapter to work with the Office of Residential Services as necessary to remove extra furniture.

### **Chapter Development Question for 2017-2018:**

- **How can Alpha Chi Omega build upon green initiatives to establish best practices for sustainability?**

In the area of **Facilities Management**, the Committee rated Alpha Chi Omega to be an **Accredited Chapter**.

### **Overall Rating**

**Overall, Alpha Chi Omega has been rated an Accredited chapter by the 2016-2017 Accreditation Committee.**

Alpha Chi Omega is a well-functioning organization but has not demonstrated growth from previous years. The chapter has the capacity and the social capital to excel as a leader in the fraternity and sorority community should they choose to take that role. The committee believes this starts with strategic planning and a willingness to create change. There is already a stable structure in place; it is up to the chapter to be intentional in building upon what exists in order to establish best practices. The committee encourages the chapter to lean on advisors and utilize available resources to critically evaluate areas for improvement. Only then will Alpha Chi Omega be successful in achieving excellence.

**The Accreditation committee assigns Alpha Chi Omega an overall rating of Accredited, which meets expectations set forth by Lehigh University. The chapter is fully successful in all metrics and is an active contributor to the Greek and Lehigh communities.**

### **Chapter Development Questions**

- How can Alpha Chi Omega incorporate the bLUeprint learning cycle to further develop inclusive leaders around social justice efforts?
- How can the chapter identify a community issue and utilize social capital to build capacity in addressing it?
- How can Alpha Chi Omega intentionally increase hand-on service within the local community?
- How can Alpha Chi Omega utilize the experiences of chapter members to stimulate intellectualism outside of the classroom?
- How can Alpha Chi Omega build upon green initiatives to establish best practices for sustainability?

### **Best Practices**

- The chapter facilitated a mock standards board hearing at a chapter meeting. This increased transparency and decreased fear around the Chapter Relations and Standards Board process. The committee considers this a best practice.