

MU SIGMA UPSILON

Accreditation Report

2016-2017

Leadership & Member Development

- Mu Sigma Upsilon was recognized for Program of Distinction with Dining in the Dark for the second year in a row. Former president, Djenne Dickens, was awarded Outstanding President of the Year at the Fraternity and Sorority Leadership Awards.
- Mu Sigma Upsilon members received recognition in multiple areas outside of the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs. Members Djenne Dickens and Gladys Castellon received the Ujima Award and the Bosey Reiter Leadership Cup, respectively, at the Student Life Leadership Awards. Gladys Castellon was also awarded the Ralph Albert Thomas, Class of '76 Leadership Award from the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the 2017 Henry Baird Award from the Pride Center.
- The chapter took advantage of leadership opportunities beyond Mu Sigma Upsilon including Greek Emerging Leaders, Orientation Leaders, the Undergraduate Interfraternity Institute (UIFI), and the Cultural Greek Leadership Conference (CGLC). Through these experiences, members were able to build relationships across both the Lehigh and national fraternity and sorority community.
- The chapter has a significant relationship within the district and with the National Governing Council (NGC). One sister interns with NGC blogging and developing a history of Mu Sigma Upsilon chapters. The chapter also attends monthly district meetings and the annual national convention.
- Mu Sigma Upsilon member utilized a connection made at Base Camp to begin writing for the Odyssey, allowing her to share multiculturalism across the readership. The committee commends the chapter for being able to translate new connections into opportunities.
- Mu Sigma Upsilon has made an intentional effort to build relationships with other chapters across the country. This is demonstrated through members' willingness to serve as big sisters to founding women in colonies of Mu Sigma Upsilon. For example, one member serves as a big sister to a woman of the Wujimu chapter at DePauw University. The committee considers this a best practice.
- The chapter has facilitated Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) with members in the past. The committee recommends that Mu Sigma Upsilon continue to integrate this as the chapter brings in new members.
- The chapter's new member orientation process is an in-depth education of the history, values, and expectations of Mu Sigma Upsilon. Extensive interviews and education must take place prior to a neophyte becoming an active member of the organization. This learning is demonstrated through a probate where new members salute and present about the history of Mu Sigma Upsilon at Lehigh, in the region, in the district, and nationally.
- Mu Sigma Upsilon members quickly become leaders of the organization due to the size of the membership. The committee encourages the chapter to develop a structured plan for leadership development and transition to ensure that members are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to propel the organization forward.
- Mu Sigma Upsilon members are incredibly engaged and present throughout the Lehigh campus community. Each member is involved in a multitude of leadership opportunities outside of the chapter. While these experiences are to the benefit of the organization, the committee encourages the chapter not to lose sight of Mu Sigma Upsilon in the many commitments of members.

Chapter Development Question for 2017-2018:

- **How can Mu Sigma Upsilon utilize outside leadership experiences to further develop best practices related to intentional member development?**

In the area of **Leadership & Member Development**, the Committee rated Mu Sigma Upsilon to be an **Accredited with Excellence Chapter**.

Organizational Operations

- The chapter experienced a fluctuation of membership this year when two members were inactive in the fall semester, leaving one sister to lead the chapter on her own. Spring semester served as a re-stabilization period for Mu Sigma Upsilon where both members returned to active status and the chapter welcomed a line of one in the spring semester.
- Mu Sigma Upsilon hosts three Ladies Nights informational sessions each semester to cultivate interest in joining the organization. The committee feels this is a good start but is concerned that the chapter may rely too heavily on these events. The committee recommends that the chapter develop a formalized, robust intake plan that is consistent and sustainable.
- The chapter routinely exceeds expectations of the National Governing Council (NGC) through the Stride Toward Attainable Results (S.T.A.R.) Development Program. This report is designed to hold chapters accountable to both district and organizational responsibilities.
- The chapter recognized the need to focus on practicing self-care and took multiple steps to achieve this. For example, the organization increased the intentionality behind events and programming to foster quality not quantity. There was also progress towards sustainable chapter growth in order to expand the membership, and therefore, diffuse responsibilities.
- Mu Sigma Upsilon successfully articulates the purpose and value behind chapter operations. The committee commends the chapter for the deep connection to the mission and culture of the national organization. For example, members demonstrate a significant understanding of multiculturalism, especially through the research and intentional naming of each member line.
- The chapter took steps towards streamlining organizational operations. Through the use of Google Drive as a central hub, the chapter included information on accounts, campus resources, and programs to aide in transition. The committee believes this is still an area of development for the chapter and recommends focusing on creating a strategic plan that incorporates S.M.A.R.T. goals. The committee believes a formalized plan will help the chapter determine a long-term vision that can be sustained beyond the current membership.
- Mu Sigma Upsilon continues to be a well-functioning organization. However, the committee does not feel that the chapter has demonstrated significant growth in this area. A key focus for Mu Sigma Upsilon moving forward needs to be sustainability across organizational operations: by-law management, intake practices, finances, and goal setting.

Chapter Development Question for 2017-2018:

- **How can Mu Sigma Upsilon engage in strategic planning efforts in order to set the organization up for intentional, continuous growth?**

In the area of **Organizational Operations**, the Committee rated Mu Sigma Upsilon to be an **Accredited Chapter**.

Community Service & Engagement

- Mu Sigma Upsilon continues to partner with Disability Support Services to host the multi-award winning event, Dining in the Dark. This event educates attendees on the daily experiences of living while visually impaired through community resources, personal testimonies, and a blindfolded dining experience. The committee considers both the program and partnership best practices.
- Mu Sigma Upsilon supports a national and local philanthropic organization. This year, the new national philanthropy is “To Write Love on Her Arms”, a non-profit organization aimed to provide hope for anyone struggling with depression and suicidal tendencies. The chapter worked with the Women’s Center to make buttons and succeeded in fundraising roughly \$100. Since the founding of the chapter, they have locally supported March of Dimes through fundraising and participation in the annual March for Babies walk.
- The chapter participated in multiple community service opportunities in addition to philanthropic efforts. Members volunteered with Bethlehem Rehabilitation Services, Adopt-a-Family, and Crisis Text Line. The committee thinks this is a good start but believes these efforts are very individualized. The committee recommends identifying an opportunity for Mu Sigma Upsilon to volunteer and give their time as an organization.
- The chapter passed out ribbons for International Women’s Day while educating about the importance of women’s roles. This effort directly connected with the chapter goal to develop unity amongst all women.
- The committee is concerned by the lack of collaborative partnerships. Recognizing that the chapter is trying to make a conscious effort to focus on quality versus quantity through intentional programming and fundraising, the committee believes collaboration would assist in minimizing the workload while increasing the impact.
- Mu Sigma Upsilon’s alumnae membership maintains significant involvement and is consistently available to support undergraduate members in meeting organizational goals. For example, alumnae assist in the education of neophytes through new member orientation. The committee recommends that the chapter further explore concepts of mentorship with alumnae. This is a repeated recommendation from last year.
- The chapter maintains strong relationships with other chapters across the country. Most significantly, Mu Sigma Upsilon engages with sisters in the district on a monthly basis through district meetings, additional district events, and other chapters’ programs.

Chapter Development Question for 2017-2018:

- **How can Mu Sigma Upsilon develop true collaborative connections that will aid the chapter in making an intentional impact across communities?**

In the area of **Community Service & Engagement**, the Committee rated Mu Sigma Upsilon to be an **Accredited Chapter**.

Academic & Intellectual Advancement

- Mu Sigma Upsilon was ranked second out of three Cultural Greek Council sorority chapters in the fall 2016 semester with a GPA of 3.145, an increase of .57167 from the spring 2016 semester. The 3.145 placed the chapter below the All Sorority and All Greek average.
- Mu Sigma Upsilon was ranked third out of three Cultural Greek Council sorority chapters in the spring 2017 semester with a GPA of 2.91, a decrease of .0235 from the fall 2016 semester. The 2.91 GPA placed the chapter below the All Sorority and All Greek average.
- Mu Sigma Upsilon's spring 2017 new member class ranked second out of two Cultural Greek Council sorority chapters. Mu Sigma Upsilon only had one new member and grades are not reported for only one member or one new member per FERPA.
- Mu Sigma Upsilon had 25% of the chapter on the Dean's List in the spring 2017 semester.
- The chapter had a member participate in an ongoing Courageous Conversation experience about gender in the fraternal experience titled Frat Stars and Mean Girls. This opportunity engaged participants in a dialogue around the development and intersections of gender identity, how it is impacted by both society and fraternal organizations, and gender-based violence.
- Mu Sigma Upsilon hosted "Study with the Mus" study sessions for members and other women from the campus community. The chapter utilizes this as an academic support tool as well as a recruitment strategy. This is continued through new member orientation where prospective members are encouraged to participate in study hours between 9AM-5PM as schedules allow.
- The chapter's National Governing Council (NGC) requires one academic event and one educational event a semester. The committee believes this is good practice and encourages the chapter to take advantage of programs already happening on campus in order to (1) work with experts in the selected subject matter and (2) to remove the burden of "reinventing the wheel" by crafting something unique.
- The chapter holds members to a 2.8 cumulative GPA requirement. Should a member fall below, they are placed on academic probation. While on probation, members are required to attend all classes, visit faculty office hours, and participate in tutoring. The committee recommends that the chapter work to develop a more robust support system for members struggling with academics. This academic plan should be twofold: proactively helping students before they fall below the required GPA and providing resources to help inactive members get back on track. The committee encourages the chapter to utilize on campus resources, such as the Center for Academic Success, in these efforts.
- Mu Sigma Upsilon encourages creative curiosity of its members and the community through both chapter programming and individual passions. This can be seen in efforts to raise awareness through Dining in the Dark and International Women's Day as well as the emphasis on history and culture throughout new member orientation.
- The committee believes that professional development is an area of growth for the chapter. In the past, the chapter engaged in professional development opportunities surrounding womanhood. The committee encourages the chapter to re-engage in those opportunities while identifying new resources for further development.

Chapter Development Question for 2017-2018:

- **How can Mu Sigma Upsilon develop a more robust academic support plan that incorporates incentives and proactive measures?**

In the area of **Academic & Intellectual Advancement**, the Committee rated Mu Sigma Upsilon to be an **Accredited Chapter**.

Overall Rating

Overall, Mu Sigma Upsilon has been rated an Accredited chapter by the 2016-2017 Accreditation Committee.

Mu Sigma Upsilon has established a meaningful fraternal experience, deeply rooted in the mission and goals of the organization, in its five years at Lehigh University. The values and passions of the members can be seen woven throughout the chapter experience. The committee appreciates this opportunity for members to define the chapter, yet also believes that there needs to be more structure that can transcend the current membership. These structures, such as a more robust academic plan or a long-term strategic plan, will be key in establishing a sustainable model for the chapter regardless of transition or membership numbers. The committee encourages the chapter to identify available resources and develop valuable partnerships to accomplish the recommendations laid out in this report. The committee is hopeful that this feedback will help Mu Sigma Upsilon build upon the significant impact the chapter already has on the fraternity and sorority community.

The Accreditation committee assigns Mu Sigma Upsilon 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 Mu Sigma Upsilon utilize outside leadership experiences to further develop best practices related to intentional member development?
- How can Mu Sigma Upsilon engage in strategic planning efforts in order to set the organization up for intentional, continuous growth?
- How can Mu Sigma Upsilon develop true collaborative connections that will aid the chapter in making an intentional impact across communities?
- How can Mu Sigma Upsilon develop a more robust academic support plan that incorporates incentives and proactive measures?

Best Practices

- Mu Sigma Upsilon has made an intentional effort to build relationships with other chapters across the country. This is demonstrated through members' willingness to serve as big sisters to founding women in colonies of Mu Sigma Upsilon. For example, one member serves as a big sister to a woman of the Wujimu chapter at DePauw University. The committee considers this a best practice.
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