

## 2020-2021 Year End Evaluation Feedback Report

Given the impact the COVID pandemic has had on our community and chapter operations, OFSA has elected to alter Accreditation for 2020-2021. For the 2020-2021 academic year, chapters will be assessed through a modified Year End Evaluation Report process.

### Chapter:

Alpha Epsilon Pi

### Assistant Director:

Andrew Dorriere

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### Rating Scale

For the 2020-2021 academic year, chapters will not be assessed based on Accredited with Excellence, Accredited, Unaccredited or Unacceptable. Instead, each area will be assessed by a panel of students, faculty, staff and advisors. The combined average will produce a numerical average value signifying Exceptional, Above Average, and Average. This evaluation is not only based on performance, but also on effort made to prioritize these essential areas during a pandemic in lieu of more traditional fraternity and sorority efforts and operations.

**Exceptional [3]** - extraordinary demonstration of chapter operations and membership engagement in the area of evaluation

\*remarkable commitment to chapter and community purpose, mission and values

**Above Average [2]** - commendable demonstration of chapter operations and membership engagement in the area of evaluation

\*outstanding commitment to chapter and community purpose, mission and values

**Average [1]** - standard demonstration of chapter operations and membership engagement in the area of evaluation

\*acceptable commitment to chapter and community purpose, mission and values

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### 2020-2021 Year End Evaluation Report Areas

1. Prioritization of membership engagement & accountability
2. Dedication to educational initiatives & chapter priorities
3. Commitment to diversity, inclusion & equity
4. Ability to adapt and implement creative and innovative methods
5. Emphasis on new member education and the onboarding of Spring 2020, Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 new members

Chapters are encouraged to upload any supplemental materials to their Year End Evaluation Report folders. Doing so will allow the interview panel and Assistant Directors the ability to provide meaningful feedback as they prepare to interview and evaluate chapters.

*Examples include, but are not limited to, marketing materials, program flyers, chapter meeting minutes, Summit of Headquarters chapter presentations, recruitment materials (videos, presentations), overview of community service hours/member, overview of philanthropy events and dollars raised and donated to charities/foundations.*

**List any chapter provided supplemental materials.**

COVID-19 Expectations Email  
Various Virtual Event Flyers  
COVID-19 Return Plan of Action

**Demonstrated effort toward prioritization of membership engagement & accountability.**

*Examples could include but are not limited to*

- *Hosted virtual brotherhood/sisterhood events to keep members engaged outside of chapter meetings.*
- *Evaluated and restructured our standards board to achieve better accountability in the chapter.*
- *Focused on engagement of members in all classes.*
- *Chapter responded to OFSA related emails within the required deadlines.*

**Chapter's demonstrated description and justification.**

**Chapter Strategic Plan**

Throughout the summer, as it became more and more likely that 2020-2021 would not be Lehigh as we knew it, chapter leadership and our advisors recognized member retention and engagement as a top priority and worked together to develop a strategic plan to express the value that AEPi can bring to its members through a remote and otherwise limited in-person setting, which we shared with all members during our first chapter meeting and our other stakeholders through an email communication. Leadership identified four key areas that we predicted would require significant attention concerning member engagement and accountability this year: COVID safety protocols, providing a fraternity experience through smaller scale or virtual programming, recruitment, and community engagement. The "AEPi Post-COVID Return Plan of Action" is included for your reference. In exchange, we communicated baseline engagement expectations from our members, particularly from juniors and seniors, that we deemed necessary to maintain a cohesive chapter. Ultimately, we had to be flexible on our action plan as circumstances changed throughout the year, but it served as a great foundation to center everyone's focus and priorities.

**Implementation of COVID Safety Guidelines**

We were also highly aware heading into this school year that COVID health and safety precautions would be a major concern both for Lehigh and our members. Over the summer, we developed a working group consisting of our president, house manager, health and safety coordinator, alumni advisor, and an alum who serves on our housing corporation board to research and create comprehensive, yet flexible, plans for chapter operations and our expectations for our members based on best practices that were being discussed in webinars and articles for maintaining a healthy and safe fraternity/sorority experience, which we then communicated by email to our members and other stakeholders (see <https://mailchi.mp/5ae95a9e4123/ae-pi-post-covid-return-plan-of-action-4440254>).

As the semester progressed, people either developed a risk tolerance or felt overly constrained by Lehigh's guidelines and our Executive Board struggled to hold certain members accountable to AEPi and Lehigh COVID health and safety rules, who went as far intentionally hiding small off-campus gatherings from chapter leadership to avoid oversight. Our president sought out advice from our alumni advisor and Holly Taylor, as well as OFSA on our chapter coaching calls, to brainstorm effective ways to mitigate risk and promote accountability. In November and again in February, our chapter president sent chapter-wide emails reiterating our expectations for complying with COVID protocols and the repercussions for violations.

### **Career & Professional Development Initiatives**

Based on member feedback last year, we have put a greater focus on professional development and networking opportunities with chapter alumni, which began with a mentoring program we started at the end of last year to facilitate more collaborative connections between our fraternity's alumni and undergraduate brothers based on common professional interests and to provide brothers with an industry resource within AEPi that they can utilize for advice about their academics and/or professional goals, resume, potential internships and jobs, etc. during their time at Lehigh and beyond. Throughout this year, we have tried to scale up this initiative by developing a more refined alumni database of both volunteers and other alumni who we think would make good mentors that is organized by industry, and then being more proactive in encouraging members, including New Members, to utilize this resource. Sam Striz '22, a Finance and Accounting major who will be interning at KPMG this summer, was matched with two KPMG alumni. He expressed, "Speaking with alumni who have years of experience in the industry I want to enter gave me a valuable perspective of where I can take my career. I am looking forward to connecting with them in person during my internship this summer."

Additionally, we realized early on that one area of programming that lends itself well to a virtual format is career and professional development because of the accessible nature of Zoom. Instead of coming to campus, alumni were able to participate in career panels and workshops, which we discuss further below. In response to concerns over summer internship plans being disrupted due to COVID, we also hosted virtual workshops with the Center for Career and Professional Development on Handshake and their new COVID-specific resources.

### **Veterans Day Zoom with Captain Matthew Golden '14**

We have wanted to do a program with past president Matthew Golden since he sent our chapter an American flag flown over Camp Vance on AEPi's Founders Day when he was stationed in Afghanistan. We were finally able to make that happen this year through the power of Zoom. Now stationed in Germany, Matt spoke with our chapter on Veterans Day about his experience in ROTC, joining the Army as a combat engineer and, more recently, working this past summer with the Army Corps of Engineers supporting pandemic response in Baltimore. He was also profiled in AEPi's Friday PiDay series:

<https://www.aepi.org/2020/05/15/fridaypiday-matthew-golden-lehigh-2014/>.

### **Connecting with Sophomores**

As members remained isolated either off campus or at home throughout the fall semester, we were limited in how our fraternity could engage members and build that deep brotherhood connection, and we were particularly concerned for our Spring 2020 New Member Class, whose in-person AEPi experience was cut short last March. During winter break, we encouraged small groups of members to get together (complying with COVID safety measures of course), and some took a small ski trip to a brother's ski house in Vermont to provide an opportunity for some previously isolated brothers, including sophomores, to bond with more traditional brotherhood activities.

**Rating assigned to this evaluation area? [Exceptional, Above Average, and Average]**

Exceptional

## **OFSA & panelist feedback to chapter for this evaluation area.**

Alpha Epsilon Pi (AEPi) took it upon themselves to strategize how they would operate during an incredibly tough time and virtual environment by creating a strategic plan over the previous summer. They have also created a Post-Covid Return to Action Plan as well. The chapter also worked hard to educate members on expectations as it related to COVID-19 guidelines and letting members know about accountability measures. The chapter also utilized feedback and started providing more professional development opportunities and networking specifically with alumni. One panelist enjoyed hearing about their past year and wrote, "I think their financial planning and care speaks a lot to the chapter's interest and engagement in retaining and caring for their members; this was extremely unique advantage that AEPi had compared to other chapters and I'm happy to see that they made such good use of it." The strong focus on connecting sophomores will benefit them as well as Lehigh transitions back to in-person operations. The chapter should think of ways to build brotherhood and connect members who may have not had the opportunity to meet before the Fall 2021 semester. The chapter self rated themselves as Exceptional in this area. Based upon the panelist feedback, the chapter has been rated as Exceptional.

Chapter Development Questions:

1. How can the chapter help to build brotherhood when you move back into the house?
2. How can you all continue to engage alumni post-COVID?

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## **Demonstrated effort toward dedication to educational initiatives & chapter priorities**

Examples could include but are not limited to

- *Hosted a virtual visit from Educational Leadership Consultant (or equivalent).*
- *Took specific steps to ensure the chapter was fiscally responsible, offering flexible opportunities for membership dues or payment plans due to financial issues or concerns related to the pandemic.*
- *Chapters should be attending all necessary National/regional/area organizational meetings as required.*

## **Chapter's demonstrated description and justification.**

### **Summer 2020 Leadership Retreat**

Like every other fraternity and sorority this summer, we had no idea how to approach virtual Greek life and whether AEPi would or could even remain AEPi through the pandemic. Would we lose our sense of brotherhood? Would our new members understand the AEPi experience? How do you recruit if we're not on campus and can't meet people in person? What do we even write about for accreditation? And nobody seemed to have a great answer other than we just had to do it. We always host a summer retreat for chapter leadership and decided to include AEPi's Director of Leadership Development and our former Educational Leadership Consultant, Kyle Whitlock, who led us through a holistic chapter analysis. He prompted us to assess the previous Executive Board's strengths and weaknesses, conducted a SWOT analysis, and facilitated S.M.A.R.T. goal setting for this academic year in order to guide us in transitioning chapter operations to a virtual setting. One key takeaway was to accelerate our officer elections to give greater time and attention to the leadership transition process, which was, in part, a reason that we adopted the .5 system discussed below.

### **Webinars (and 5x10s) on Contemporary Jewish Issues Featuring Neil Lazarus**

Part of AEPi's mission as a Jewish fraternity is to provide Jewish cultural programming. Our events tend to be more centered around in-person holiday celebrations such as Shabbat dinners, Sukkot brunches, or Hanukkah parties. We less frequently focus on contemporary Jewish and Israel-related educational programs, which became our focal point as we were forced to switch to a primarily virtual format and caused

us to look more holistically about how our chapter fulfills its mission as a Jewish organization.

One way we did that was to host two webinars with British-Israeli educator Neil Lazarus, who was highly recommended by both our alumni advisor and faculty advisor. In addition to being great educational programs for our members, we saw this as an opportunity to put values-based recruitment into practice and qualified both webinars for 5x10 credit.

The first webinar, “Behind the Headlines: Understanding Current Events from Israel and the Middle East,” focused on the realities of Israeli current events, Middle East geopolitics, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, while challenging our understanding based on how these issues are framed by the American and international media, and sought to equip attendees with the context and the skills to develop more informed, nuanced thinking as they develop their own identities and positions and perhaps challenge their own beliefs, understandings, and possible misconceptions up to this point surrounding Israel and the Middle East.

The second webinar, “The Rise of New Antisemitism,” which we co-sponsored with Lehigh Friends of Israel, examined how history’s oldest hatred has evolved and now rears its head in modern society with a particular focus on the recent surge in hate crimes against Jews and, most timely, how anti-Semitism increases during crises such as the ongoing COVID pandemic, and enabled attendees to gain a better understanding surrounding the history of anti-Semitism, its impact within modern society, how it may affect them personally, and how anti-Semitism is a real, lived experience for every Jewish person that shapes their identity and place within the greater community (and at Lehigh).

### **We Walk to Remember**

Each year on Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day), in partnership with B’nai B’rith International and Hillel, AEPi hosts a Holocaust commemoration program called “We Walk to Remember,” which usually consists of a silent walk across campus to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust by symbolizing the forced march of Jews and other victims of the Nazi regime between concentration camps and then a presentation by a Holocaust survivor to strengthen our ties to the Jewish community and to educate the greater Lehigh community. As discussed further below, this year, we reoriented We Walk to Remember for a virtual format by facilitating a community discussion on both the historical and present-day threats of anti-Semitism, and running a fundraiser to benefit Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center in Jerusalem. We then participated in a webinar hosted by Hillel@Home with Dr. Zsuzsanna Ozsváth, a Hungarian-Jewish Holocaust survivor who founded the Holocaust Studies Program at The University of Texas at Dallas, who shared both her firsthand experience during the Holocaust and her academic perspective on historical and contemporary anti-Semitism confronting Jews.

### **Anti-Hazing Coalition Webinar**

In light of the organizational priority we place on anti-hazing and risk management, chapter leadership required all members—not just the entire new member class and 50% of the chapter as required by OFSA—to attend IFC’s presentation about the Anti-Hazing Coalition, during which Rae Ann Gruver, mother of Max Gruver from Louisiana State University, and Evelyn Piazza, mother of Tim Piazza from Penn State, shared their stories about losing their sons to fraternity hazing and how fraternity members, including those in positions of power, such as chapter presidents, recruitment chairs, and new member educators, could and should intervene to stop hazing and other high-risk behavior. The most upsetting part of the presentation came from Mrs. Piazza, who drove home how many opportunities there were for bystanders to intervene as she shared the circumstances leading up to Tim’s death in graphic detail. We have spoken in the past about the amnesty under the Pennsylvania law named for Tim for those of us who report hazing in real time but it resonated differently hearing about it from Mrs. Piazza and drove home what we can each do individually and as an organization to stop hazing. As one member notes, “I take pride in being part of a fraternity that has a New Member Education process that focuses on the positive impacts our organization has on its members, and I know it’s my responsibility to help my organization and brothers live up to that commitment.”

## Restructuring Chapter Dues

Over the summer, we realized that the types, frequency, and scale of programs and activities our chapter would be impacted by COVID and it would be reasonable for members to question the value proposition of full dues as if we were fully on campus. We therefore decided to significantly cut our operating costs and commit \$10,000 (or 75%) of our chapter's savings/net operating funds to subsidize our operating costs for the 2020-2021 year in consideration of the fact that brothers paid into chapter savings throughout their time in AEPi. A significant portion of those funds went to pay for every brother's AEPi membership fees and IFC dues and to subsidize New Members' AEPi membership fees both the fall and spring semesters. Additionally, instead of funding specific activity budgets like we would have in the past, we decided to charge the costs for in-person chapter social and brotherhood events directly to those people who attended given that chapter social and brotherhood events were impacted by social distancing restrictions and certain members were either fully remote or not able to participate in in-person activities. Finally, we reiterated to chapter leaders who held programming-heavy roles that they could utilize our Programming & Education Fund to cover the cost of those activities, such as Neil Lazarus' speaking fee. Ultimately, dues decreased from typically about \$900 per brother per semester to \$100 per brother and \$300 per New Member in the fall and \$200 per brother and \$610 per New Member in the spring (with the significant price differential between brothers and New Members as a result of AEPi's fees).

This reorientation has caused us to look critically at how we budget and spend chapter funds as we head into the 2021-2022 school year, including by consulting advisors more regularly on budgeting and introducing a tiered dues system based on class year that reflects AEPi's value proposition to older members who don't engage with fraternity in the same way as younger members.

### **Rating assigned to this evaluation area? [Exceptional, Above Average, and Average]**

Exceptional

### **OFSA & panelist feedback to chapter for this evaluation area.**

Alpha Epsilon Pi did extremely well in this category and provided a plethora of educational opportunities for their members and the community. The work began with their summer leadership retreat where they invited a staff member from their headquarters to attend. The chapter also worked to provide educational programming for first year students by creating 5X10s and webinars focused on issues facing the global Jewish community including anti-semitism, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and an event for Holocaust Remembrance Day. The chapter also attended the Anti-Hazing Coalition's webinar where Rae Ann Gruver and Evelyn Piazza, who both lost their sons to fraternity hazing, came to speak to the entire fraternity and sorority community about their stories and experiences on the subject. One panelist was incredibly impressed by their work and wrote, "AEPi has done an incredible job incorporating educational initiatives into a very hectic past few semesters. They hosted many events with educational speakers and events. I think their initiative to seek out speakers to come to their chapter and help audit their strengths and weaknesses is really promising for how well their chapter is going to do. They do a good job of including general academic-educational initiatives and additional educational initiatives that pertain to the history of their fraternity." AEPi should think about how they can continue to offer strong educational programming for the next year with a focus on younger members who have not had a normal college experience just yet. The chapter self rated themselves as Exceptional in this area and based on the panelist feedback they have earned their Exceptional rating.

#### Chapter Development Questions:

1. How can the chapter ensure financial access for members moving forward?
2. Who else could be utilized outside of your HQ for the summer leadership retreat?

## **Demonstrated effort toward commitment to diversity, inclusion & equity**

Examples could include but are not limited to

- *75%-100% completion of the EverFi Course on DEI.*
- *Hosted various offices on campus during chapter virtually for education on Black Lives Matter, the Election, the LGBTQ community, and supporting a diverse membership.*
- *Evaluated by-laws and recruitment practices for potential or unintentional bias.*
- *Held conversations with chapter members and/or the executive board using guiding questions from OFSA.*
- *Programming was conducted with at least 1-3 organizations that are non-greek affiliated or culturally based.*

## **Chapter's demonstrated description and justification.**

Recent events and the amplification of the Black Lives Matter movement, together with calls for the Lehigh community to better acknowledge and address issues around diversity, inclusion, and equity, prompted us to focus more intentionally and holistically on becoming more engaged members and leaders within the Lehigh community. This involves both external community engagement and advocacy and internal reflection and progress on our organizational culture.

Our chapter struggled—and continues to struggle—with knowing exactly how we fit in within the larger diversity, equity, and inclusion dialogue. AEPi is a Jewish fraternity that was founded as a direct result of exclusion from traditionally white, Christian fraternities and, 108 years later, continues to be a target for anti-Semitism on college campuses, as recently as January when swastikas were spraypainted on the AEPi chapter house at at California Polytechnic State University and this past Yom HaShoah when virtual AEPi-sponsored programs at Rutgers University and Brooklyn College were both bombarded with antisemitic content.

Would focusing on our marginalized status, however, take away from the immediate and necessary attention being paid to BIPOC students and their concerns, particularly when Lehigh doesn't have a significant anti-Semitism problem? Who are we to demand greater racial and ethnic diversity within Greek life when our chapter is largely homogeneously Jewish? How can we engage without being performative? We have worked through these questions throughout the year with our advisors Alfredo Ramirez, Rabbi Steve Nathan, Andrew Dorriere, and Josh Greenberg '13, and identified two starting points:

1. We should not ignore the importance of our organizational purpose and of our lived experiences, and that our members may relate to the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion through the lens of anti-Semitism.
2. We need to look critically at our organizational culture and assess how we can more proactively and meaningfully promote diversity, equity, and inclusion within the Greek and greater Lehigh communities through our relationship building, advocacy and inclusion, and continued fraternal education.

## **Formation of Jewish Student-Led Coalition at Lehigh**

Along with the Office of Jewish Student Life, we assembled the academic, religious, and cultural constituents and students, faculty, and staff who comprise the Jewish community at Lehigh, namely Hillel, Chabad, Lehigh Friends of Israel, and Challah for Hunger, to advocate for comprehensive protections for the Jewish community and spearhead educational programming and opportunities to promote a more inclusive and equitable Lehigh community and to address anti-Semitism and anti-Israel bias at all levels of the institution.

In addition to sharing and supporting programming initiatives spearheaded by each Jewish organization, we aim to play a key role within a group that can serve as a single voice for the student-led Jewish organizations

at Lehigh, and aims to host or co-sponsor coordinated educational programming on the topics of anti-Semitism and anti-Israel bias, participate in the Diversity Peer Educators' programs or establish a similar peer education group specific to anti-Semitism and anti-Israel bias, and advocate for relevant courses that focus on historical or contemporary anti-Semitism to be eligible for a new diversity, equity, and inclusion distribution credit requirement that may be under consideration or soon be adopted.

AEPi also convened a brainstorming session with representatives from StandWithUs, Alums for Campus Fairness, AEPi IHQ, and the Jewish Federation of the Northeast and of the Lehigh Valley to discuss how Jewish students and campus organizations are advocating for greater institutional protection for anti-Semitism, namely through the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) non-legally binding working definition of anti-Semitism. The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations (which includes AEPi), along with thirty international governments and institutions across the globe, including the U.S. Department of State and Department of Education, have embraced this definition of anti-Semitism as the most comprehensive understanding of historic and contemporary hatred and bias against Jews. Our coalition of Jewish student organization remains engaged in discussions with Rabbi Steve Nathan, as well as Professor Nitzan Lebovic (Lehigh's Apter Chair of Holocaust Studies and Ethical Values), about advocating for the IHRA working definition of anti-Semitism (or one similar in nature) to be incorporated as guidance into the Lehigh's Student Code of Conduct and/or University Policy on Harassment and Non-Discrimination to explicitly address how acts of anti-Semitism and bias-related incidents against Jews would be evaluated. Most recently, our group watched a webinar produced by Hillel International on the use of the IHRA working definition of anti-Semitism on college campuses and had a discussion about the benefits and drawbacks of its adoption on college campuses across the country.

By creating collaborative connections within this group, we hope to collectively become better advocates in building a better, more inclusive community based on values important to us.

### **Reorienting our Community Engagement Director Position**

Last year, we altered the responsibilities of our then-Civic Leadership Director, now referred to as the Community Engagement Director, to center a leadership role around creating collaborative connections between AEPi and other chapters, clubs, and organizations in an intentional way that shapes our chapter development beyond partnering for social or community service events. While this position was previously solely focused on both accreditation and academics and professional development, this year's Community Engagement Director was also tasked with undertaking diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. However, we realized that this position was not as defined as we had initially hoped given its myriad of disjointed responsibilities, which attracted different personalities who are better suited to lead programming within each of these areas (i.e., someone passionate about diversity, equity, and inclusion may not necessarily have the same skill set and drive needed to handle academics and professional development). We consequently re-established a separate Academic and Professional Development Director to solely handle additional support for members needing academic help in addition to career-related programming, while charging the Community Engagement Director to lead the fraternity in engaging with the Lehigh community, beyond just other fraternities and sororities, to create collaborative connections with campus organizations to make a more meaningful impact on campus and bridge the Greek/non-Greek divide; including, valuing, elevating, and promoting viewpoints from outside our organization and the Greek bubble that align with our organizational mission and values in order to become better advocates and promote a more inclusive Lehigh community; and providing learning opportunities that reinforce our fraternal values, such as hosting educational guest speakers, promoting external events with professional and intellectual focuses, and highlighting leadership development opportunities.

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Audit**

As discussed above, chapter leadership has been working with our faculty, staff, OFSA, and alumni advisors to develop a specific action plan around address, embrace, and internalize diversity, inclusion, and equity as organizational priority within AEPi, understanding that first examining our organizational culture was more



important in comparison to external activities and partnerships for the sake of superficially appearing engaged. Our first step has been to conduct an internal assessment of whether we have been meeting our organizational goals, what we want AEPi to be, and to identify how we can work towards further promoting diversity, inclusion, and equity initiatives given our unique perspective as Lehigh's Jewish fraternity, beginning with a discussion facilitated by Alfredo Ramirez, Andrew Dorriere, and our president and vice president who are former Greek EMerging Leaders (GEM) mentors. With members from all class years present to provide diverse perspectives regarding the evolution of AEPi in recent years, we specifically aimed to answer where we stood previously in terms of diversity, equity and inclusion, who we are as a fraternity, what we strive to represent, and where we desire to be with respect to creating a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment. This is the first of what we hope are several facilitated discussions and, from here, our incoming chapter leaders will utilize some key takeaways to set the stage for their goalsetting and for realigning expectations of members as we reconvene for a (hopefully) more traditional in-person fraternity experience in the fall, primarily how we aspire to continue our positive growth, engage with the campus community more broadly, support and actively contribute to Jewish life at Lehigh, and build and champion a safe, welcoming space within our chapter and in the greater Lehigh community.

**Rating assigned to this evaluation area? [Exceptional, Above Average, and Average]**

Above Average

**OFSA & panelist feedback to chapter for this evaluation area.**

Alpha Epsilon Pi serves a unique chapter within our fraternity and sorority community being both historically and predominantly Jewish. The chapter had a great start by reflecting on their own identity and how that fits within conversations surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). They have completed the first steps by asking themselves those questions listed above and figuring out how to engage members and the community in this work. The formation of the Jewish Student-Led Coalition at Lehigh is a great start on providing community and education on issues surrounding the Jewish faith and people. The reorienting of the Community Engagement Director position shows that the chapter is restructuring the way their own chapter operates to create space and opportunity for DEI. The DEI audit is a fantastic idea to help members understand the importance of these conversations and work. Gathering the unique perspective of each new member class will highlight the similarities and differences in how that can be a starting point to embedding DEI into the chapter culture. One panelist wrote, "I think AEPi is in a unique place in the IFC community, already serving as an organization for an underrepresented group. However, I think they could benefit from some chapter programming/education around other areas of diversity and inclusion." AEPi should reflect and think about how they can partner with other offices or organizations on campus such as the Center for Gender Equity, the Pride Center, Office of Multicultural Affairs, and more. This could help the chapter create more tangible ideas or goals related to DEI. The chapter self rated themselves as Above Average in this category. Based on the panelist feedback, they have been assigned a rating of Above Average.

**Chapter Development Questions:**

1. What are more tangible ways AEPi can get involved in DEI?
2. How can DEI be embedded into the chapter operations and be thought of outside of recruitment?

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**Demonstrated effort toward ability to adapt and implement creative and innovative methods**

Examples could include but are not limited to

- *Hosted a virtual philanthropy event through xyz platform and raised x amount of dollars.*
- *Created new communication and incentive programs.*
- *Hosted virtual recruitment/mock recruitment events to help prepare the chapter for recruitment/intake.*

**Chapter's demonstrated description and justification.**

As discussed above, we understood heading into this year that providing our members with a meaningful AEPi experience, even if remote/virtual, would be centrally important to maintaining an engaged brotherhood that saw value in AEPi. Chapter leadership also acknowledged that a virtual fraternity experience was just as new and uncharted for our programming chairs, such as our Jewish Leadership Director, Philanthropy and Community Service Director, and Brother-at-Large (brotherhood chair), among others, so our vice president was hands-on in coaching these chapter leaders through brainstorming and implementation.

### **Career and Professional Development Alumni Programming**

In the fall semester, we hosted two career panels via Zoom with alumni who work at Apple and in accounting and finance roles. The Apple/tech panel consisted of Eric Wankoff '12, who is an ICD product development engineer, and Eric Winokur '06 '08G, who is a touch and sensing hardware engineering manager. The accounting and finance panel consisted of Andrew Katz '09, CFO at Waterfront Capital Partners, Sam Goldstein '10, Assistant Controller at Diameter Capital Partners LP, and Jon Reynolds '10, Senior Associate at Edison Partners. Each panelist shared some background on their Lehigh experiences, their anticipated career goals throughout college and how those may have changed in the years since, how they ended up at their current jobs at Apple or in finance and an overview of their roles, some cool things they have worked on throughout their careers, how AEPi has influenced them both personally and professionally, and general advice they had for students who are hoping to work in their respective industries.

As many brothers prepare for their summer internships and some for their first jobs, our last event of the year is a panel discussing the “Dos and Don’ts” for a successful internship or entry-level job. The three alumni who will lead the discussion all directly supervise interns and recent graduates and will share tips and anecdotes for effectively tackling assignments, extracting as much value as possible from mentoring relationships, and making a strong first impression.

### **Game Nights**

Virtual game nights became a popular substitute for our usual large, in-person brotherhood events in a remote and often disjointed environment. What began as a skeptical way to hold a “virtual fraternity event” grew into several “Quiplash Nights,” poker games, and Among Us games that attracted even members who had not otherwise been engaged in traditional chapter programming in the past. We also incorporated these game nights into our virtual recruitment, which allowed us to engage with prospective new members in a casual, low pressure atmosphere and was ultimately very successful.

### **Philanthropic Efforts**

Our Philanthropy and Community Service Director learned early on that direct, hands-on community service opportunities would be relatively limited during the pandemic so he put significant focus on virtual awareness campaigns and fundraising efforts. In the fall, as part of our Lehigh-Lafayette weekend substitute programming, we hosted a virtual philanthropy poker tournament for brothers and alumni, and we donated the proceeds from our optional buy-in to Family Promise of Lehigh Valley, a local organization that provides lodging, food, education, and assistance to children and families experiencing homelessness. The winner received a gift box of Lehigh swag donated by another alum. As greater attention was paid to hate crimes against the Asian American and Pacific Islander community in the past several months, we partnered with Pi Beta Phi on an Instagram “bingo board” fundraiser for Stop AAPI Hate, which raised \$1,130. Finally, we tied in a philanthropic aspect to our Jewish cultural programming in the week leading up to Yom HaShoah by hosting a three-day fundraiser that unlocked different prizes at certain donation milestones up to \$1,600, which we met. Proceeds were donated to Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center in Jerusalem, to support its Holocaust commemoration, documentation, research and educational efforts. This was an effective fundraising strategy that we plan to continue to include in our spring Yom HaShoah commemoration programming.

### **Adapting We Walk to Remember and Holocaust Education**

As discussed above, we adapted our traditional We Walk to Remember silent walk through campus and in-person presentation by a Holocaust survivor for the virtual setting by hosting a community discussion that featured Rabbi Zalman Greenberg, Director of Chabad at Lehigh, who spoke about Jewish continuity and his perspective on a sharp increase in attacks against openly observant Jews as of late, Rabbi Steve Nathan, who shared the cultural significance and symbolism in Yom HaShoah occurring just a short time before Yom HaZikaron (Israeli Memorial Day) and Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israeli Independence Day), and our outgoing Jewish Leadership Director, who recounted his experience participating in the International March of the Living, an annual educational program where young Jews march along the same three-kilometer path leading from Auschwitz to Birkenau on Holocaust Remembrance Day. Our incoming Jewish Leadership Director remarked, "The atrocious events of the Holocaust must be studied, shared and remembered to remind us why we must never stop in the battle against hate. The fight against anti-Semitism is ongoing; just because it may be subdued does not mean injustice should be tolerated. Yom HaShoah allows us to remember that the effects of the holocaust are not strictly bound to our ancestors and history, as anti-Semitism continues to persist in our society. Yom HaShoah ensures we look at a painful past so that we never forget."

### **New Executive Board Officer Transition Period**

As our sophomore members transitioned into AEPi in the fall semester, mostly remote, our president, vice president, and alumni realized that those sophomore members, who had not even had one full academic year of a traditional Lehigh or AEPi experience, would soon occupy the majority of our Executive Board positions, which concerned us. We borrowed a best practice from Chi Psi that our alumni advisor observed while serving on their accreditation panel, which was the ".5 system," where chapter members would be tapped for leadership positions a full semester before they transition into the role to provide a more structured and longer shadowing opportunity. Our 2021-2022 chapter leaders were elected in February and worked with the incumbent officers through the spring semester before assuming their roles in May. These .5s have been able to become involved in important conversations related to our chapter's operations, attend leadership, IFC, and advisor meetings, and learn about their responsibilities firsthand from the current position holders. In the past, the official officer transition period was informal and lasted two weeks before the outgoing leaders checked out, whereas this official partnered transition period has allowed the incoming leaders to acclimate to their roles and better understand expectations and responsibilities, and we plan on adopting this structure and system for future years.

### ***Rating assigned to this evaluation area? [Exceptional, Above Average, and Average]***

Exceptional

### ***OFSA & panelist feedback to chapter for this evaluation area.***

Alpha Epsilon Pi worked hard to be both adaptive and innovative in their efforts to create a meaningful experience for their members during the past year. The chapter worked to provide alumni engagement through educational opportunities focused on career and professional development. The creation of virtual game nights is a great idea to ensure brothers are still able to engage and connect in fun and unique ways and the incorporating of the events into recruitment set them up for a successful Spring 2021 new member class. Adapting their philanthropic efforts and raising awareness for other organizations through social media shows the chapter still wanted to help despite in-person community service and philanthropy events would not be an option or at least very limited. AEPi even adapted their Walk to Remember and Holocaust education to be virtual to ensure those efforts still happened for the community. One panelist enjoyed learning about their adaptive practices and wrote, "I think the ways that you used the virtual platforms to create and build those relationships with the new members were important. Since the chapters were not able to gather in large groups as they did the years prior, I do applaud your effort to build the foundation of those relationships given the hardship of Covid." How can the chapter utilize what they've learned this past year in terms of operation and apply it to future semesters? The chapter self rated themselves as Exceptional in this area. Based on the panelist feedback they have been assigned and earned their Exceptional rating.

Chapter Development Questions:

1. How can the chapter continue to be flexible even when back to in person operations?
2. Are there ways to ensure strong alumni engagement outside of virtual?

**Demonstrated effort toward emphasis on new member education and the onboarding of Spring 2020, Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 new members**

Examples could include but are not limited to

- *Collaborated with Headquarters to initiate new members virtually.*
- *Maintained frequent contact with new members through various means such as text, GroupMe, Zoom, etc.*
- *Provided opportunities for new members to engage with active members, chapter leaders and alumni.*
- *Chapters need to adhere to the timelines and schedules given to the office as well as the names of Potential new members in a timely manner.*

**Chapter's demonstrated description and justification.**

**Spring/Fall 2020 New Member Education**

The abrupt shift to remote learning that occurred midway through the Spring 2020 semester—along with the later decision to limit on-campus activity during the Fall 2020 semester—presented us with a significant challenge in how to complete our New Member Education process for those new members who joined AEPi last year. Given our assumption on the University's commitment to return to campus throughout the summer, we planned to largely delay the onboarding process until the fall in an attempt to preserve the impact of a traditional, in-person New Member Education experience. In the interim, we saw retention as our number one goal and continued brother interviews via FaceTime, chapter leadership seminars, and other bonding events and game nights. Once the Spring 2020 New Member Class was virtually initiated, there was a general consensus that we had not done enough to make New Member Education as successful as it could have been in a virtual, remote setting. Junior and senior members felt disconnected from the sophomore class, and that the newest members did not truly understand AEPi yet. This was a strong wakeup call to our New Member Educator that our Spring 2021 New Member Education program required proactivity and adaptability.

The virtual environment also led to significant anxiety among chapter leadership and members about how we would successfully recruit in the Spring 2021 semester without traditional in-person recruitment events and then effectively run an impactful New Member Education program.

**Rallying Around Recruitment for Spring 2021**

In anticipation that the Spring 2021 semester would consist of an entirely virtual recruitment process, we began as early as Thanksgiving to implement several changes to our recruitment process in order to provide additional opportunities and resources for the potential new members and brothers to get to know one another in an organized and intentional way.

Typically, our sophomores lead recruitment but we quickly realized they would not be equipped to “sell the AEPi experience” without having had a normal AEPi or Lehigh Greek experience. Our sophomores might have learned about our values and organizational culture through New Member Education and brief glimpses during recruitment but their exposure was limited. Coupled with concerns over membership numbers, our junior and senior classes stepped up to actively support recruitment in a way that, at least for the seniors, they had not before. We added an additional Recruitment Director who is a junior, and asked

several seniors, including a past Recruitment Director, to join our Recruitment Committee. We had the most successful recruitment in our chapter's history, which noticeably changed the outlook, engagement, and enthusiasm of many, particularly older, members.

This approach ultimately paid off in the largest New Member Class our chapter has ever had, and so our attention turned to providing a meaningful and productive New Member Education that would address the shortcomings of Spring/Fall 2020.

### **Spring 2021 New Member Education**

Our New Member Education program in the Spring 2021 semester focused on chapter-led virtual educational and relationship building opportunities, coupled with independent bonding among the New Member Class.

We were able to adapt some of our most impactful events to a virtual setting. In our M&M event, a brother facilitated an open, honest discussion with an assortment of M&Ms representing a set of questions that New Members are invited to answer about themselves and confide in brothers who were willing to share their deepest secrets despite not having much (if any) time to meet each other in person during a time of extended social isolation, and understand what it means to have complete trust in one's brothers. Similarly, we utilized Zoom and breakout rooms for our Four Corners event, in which New Members are split into four rooms that each represent a different corner of the AEPi pledge pin—perseverance, faith, humility, and mutual helpfulness—where brothers reiterate their importance through personal stories about how that value has helped them in their journey through AEPi. New Members expressed that this served as another unique opportunity for them to collectively tie their desire to join AEPi with personal stories.

To replace brother dinners at our chapter house, each class year held a unique event with the New Members to cultivate relationships in what was an isolating time. Each Friday or Saturday, the brothers of a certain New Member Class hosted an activity with the New Members, ranging from tournaments in console video games such as FIFA and Call of Duty to games such as Quiplash.

In addition to holding mandatory study hours on a recurring basis, we reinstated our academic mentorship program, which we felt was an essential step given that this New Member Class is the first to only have experience with Lehigh virtual learning. Our Community Engagement Chair paired brothers with New Members with similar majors and/or professional interests to help guide them through their first academic year. Rather than helping New Members track their academic progress over the course of New Member Education by simply meeting with them on two separate occasions in preparation for Common Hour exams as originally outlined in our New Member Education Plan, chapter leadership sought to improve upon this program by ensuring brothers continue to assist recently initiated members with course registration and long term academic planning in addition to helping them improve time management skills, which we plan to continue to implement in the years to come.

One member recently shared his thoughts on the New Member Education Program:

"During New Member Education, we experienced the two most important rituals conducted by Alpha Epsilon Pi. The first being at the start with our induction into the fraternity, and the other being at the end when we were finally initiated as brothers. During each of these rituals, the Master and other brothers reiterated the values our fraternity stands for and emphasized how we are a brotherhood that will always stand with each other through thick and thin. This really resonated with me, as it gave me a sense of how committed everyone is to each other, as well as the fraternity. We are more than just individuals and we, as a fraternity, are something much greater with brothers all around the world."

**Rating assigned to this evaluation area? [Exceptional, Above Average, and Average]**

Exceptional

**OFSA & panelist feedback to chapter for this evaluation area.**

Alpha Epsilon Pi, like many chapters, was greatly affected by the challenges of the past year that greatly affected current and new members. The chapter worked hard to ensure new members from Spring 2020 felt valued and included after a social pause and the pandemic forcing a transition to an online and remote environment. Given the anxiety they felt surrounding Spring 2021 recruitment, they were able to rally the older members to share the “AEPi experience” as they stated above. This led to a successful recruitment and their largest new member class in the history of the chapter. The chapter then had a strong focus on Spring 2021 new member education in order to assimilate members into the chapter virtually and provide class bonding as well bonding with other member classes. One panelist loved hearing about these experiences and wrote, “As I mentioned earlier, I applaud your efforts that you committed to when trying to emphasize the new member’s education. It appears that you and the rest of the chapter understand the importance of building those relationships from the ground up and engaging those new members in the chapter early on. Engaging members early on will lead you to success as your chapter continues to evolve.” While AEPi rated themselves as Above Average in this area, the panelists felt differently and that the chapter has earned an Exceptional rating for their work with new member education.

Chapter Development Questions:

1. Are there ways to ensure seniors stayed more engaged with recruitment?
2. How can the chapter build brotherhood amongst members who may still feel distant after a virtual year?

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**Chapter SWOT Analysis**

In order for the interview panel and OFSA to have a clear understanding of the current celebrations and challenges your chapter faces, OFSA is expecting chapters to evaluate their current state by conducting a SWOT analysis. This does not have to be lengthy, but should include a snapshot so that we are able to offer specific and clear feedback and action items moving into the 2021-2022 academic year.

*This section will not directly impact the overall evaluation rating.*

Chapter’s provided response in text boxes below:

**Strengths:**

- We have a core group of motivated brothers and leaders who care about improving the organization.
- Our rising senior class has demonstrated strong leadership and engagement that will be essential as we return to a normal fraternity experience next year with a membership that is less familiar with a traditional, in-person AEPi experience.
- As a whole, we perform well academically and have added additional support to motivate academic success (i.e., Academic Success Plan).
- We have a robust organizational structure, constitution, and bylaws, including a Standards Board that works well and is respected.
- We are working actively to develop and deepen partnerships outside the Greek

**Weaknesses:**

- We have difficulties keeping seniors engaged with AEPi, which can be noticeable with an already small chapter and, in turn, affects brotherhood morale that ultimately creates a gap in mentoring and leadership.
- Rising sophomores and juniors who are taking on key leadership roles have not had exposure to a traditional, in-person AEPi experience and will encounter a learning curve with respect to chapter operations, culture, and expectations.

<p>community with organizations that align with our mission, including through the Jewish student organization coalition.</p>	
<p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our chapter had the most successful recruitment in our history and there's now great enthusiasm to build upon our large New Member Class by tapping into a pool of potential new members who might not have been able to navigate virtual recruitment.</li> <li>• As we lead the Jewish student organization coalition, we have an opportunity to become more active in advocating and promoting a robust Jewish student experience, and reconnect with that aspect of our fraternity mission.</li> <li>• We will host our own signature philanthropy event that members would take pride in and feel a sense of ownership over, which would benefit groups most important to our organization.</li> <li>• We should build on existing relationships with campus groups and University offices to make a more meaningful impact on campus and be better advocates through our new Community Engagement Director, who will focus on making collaborative connections.</li> </ul>	<p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When we return in the fall, there will be an inclination to make up for lost time, which will cause our chapter and the Greek community to slip back into a culture that overlooks harmful stereotypes and negative impact on the campus community and, in turn, distract our chapter and community from looking critically at ourselves and implementing organizational change with widespread buy-in.</li> <li>• Virtual recruitment leveled the playing field with other fraternities in a way that may not continue as we return to campus and a norm that emphasizes party culture over values-based recruitment.</li> </ul>

**OFSA & panelist feedback to chapter for the SWOT Analysis.**

It is clear that Alpha Epsilon Pi put a lot of clear effort into their SWOT Analysis. They have clear examples in almost every category and will set the chapter up for success in the future as they brainstorm ways to build upon their strengths, opportunities and reflect on ways to tackle their weaknesses and threats to the chapter. One thing the chapter should focus on is how the Fall 2021 semester landscape may change throughout as well and how the chapter can continue to be flexible in their operations as they have been the past year. Having back up plans may be beneficial. One panelist was impressed by their analysis and wrote, "The SWOT analysis was very comprehensive and looks like a lot of thought and effort went into creating it. I appreciate the hard work."

**Concluding Summary**

**Overall evaluation rating. [Exceptional, Above Average, and Average]**

Exceptional

**OFSA concluding summary.**

Alpha Epsilon Pi, despite the many challenges, had a very successful year and that is why they have been assigned an overall rating of Exceptional. The chapter had clear priorities for the year, provided a meaningful experience virtually for members, recruited and retained a strong new member class for both Spring 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters while staying true to their Jewish history and identity. The chapter recognizes the

opportunity for growth in the area of diversity, equity, inclusion and has a strong foundation to do more from their DEI audit. One panelist had this to say about the chapter, "Overall, I think that your chapter is doing a great job given the time we are currently in. I did wish to see more detail and data from the chapter but please continue to better yourselves each and every year from here on out. Build those relationships with your brothers from the ground up so that when they are in your position they are then dedicated just as much as this group was." Alpha Epsilon Pi is already doing great work and is in a position to lead by example for the community.