

New Member Education Plan

Theta Chi Beta Sigma

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Purpose:

“I believe in Theta Chi, its traditions and its ideals.”

The introductory sentence of the creed of Theta Chi is more than a collection of words. Our creed sets forth the expectations of how a brother of Theta Chi is expected to conduct his life. It also proposes the ideal goal for a proper New Member Education program. As the Marshal of the Lehigh Chapter of Theta Chi, it is my duty to instill the values of our Fraternity and Alma Mater in those who wish to become our newly initiated brothers.

To accomplish this, I must not simply guide the New Member through our rituals and activities but must also monitor and speak with each on an individual basis to ensure that he has a clear understanding of what is expected.

The term “Marshal” is used herein as Theta Chi’s New Member Educator. Marshal is a ritualistic term and the traditional way of referring to a Theta Chi New Member Educator.

The Constitution and Bylaws of Theta Chi Fraternity define the role of the Marshal in this way:

“The Marshal shall be responsible for the education of the New Members. His responsibilities shall include development of the educational program and conduct of the entire educational process and shall continue until the New Members have been properly prepared for initiation. He shall assist the treasurer and the secretary in the collection of fees and the filing of forms required by subsections 4(c) and 4(e) in connection with the registration of New Members and the initiation of members. He shall always serve as an example for New Members and members to follow and shall make certain that no hazing practices are allowed to take place in the educational program or otherwise or tolerated under any circumstances. He shall make certain that every New Member is assigned an undergraduate member as a big brother or other mentor to assist him in learning about the Fraternity.”

This year, the principal theme of the program will be guiding New Members through the Resolute Journey, in accordance with the values of Theta Chi. My New Member Education program is designed to educate and assimilate my new brother into the proud and honored ideals and ways of Theta Chi. In addition to the goals we set as a chapter, the goals of the Resolute Journey are broken up into five main areas:

Area I: Leadership and Teamwork Development

Area II: Alma Mater First

Area III: Social Competence and Development

Area IV: Life After Graduation

Area V: Theta Chi for Life and the Assisting Hand

Additional Goals:

- Instill in the New Member the sacred values and ideals of my fraternity.
- Instill a sense of pride for the Chapter house as a building and as an institution.
- Teach the New Member to the best of my ability how to run and care for the Chapter.
- Create an atmosphere of deep and meaningful brotherhood within the Chapter.
- Create lifelong bonds between the New Member and current brothers alike.
- Teach them to leave the house in a better state when they graduate than it was before.
- Develop motivated and dedicated future brothers.
- Foster personal and intellectual growth as well as academic and fraternal growth.
- Develop the New Member's time management skills for future success.
- Use both fraternity and Lehigh resources to support their academics.
- Initiate a young man I can personally be proud to call my brother.
- Create a sense of responsibility to the broader Lehigh community.

Expectations:

Our program further defines the role of the Marshal as the overseer of the development of the following foundational responsibilities of a brother of Theta Chi:

Scholastic Responsibility: The top priority for a brother of Theta Chi is academics. The well-being of the Chapter, fraternity, and the entire University fraternity system depends upon achieving and maintaining a high degree of scholarship. Academic excellence should be valued above all else as prescribed by our maxim - Alma Mater first, and Theta Chi for Alma Mater.

Character Responsibility: As one becomes part of a larger organization, that individual takes on the shared responsibility of upholding the organization's image and reputation. The moral conduct and personal behavior of each member reflect the total Chapter image to the University administration and to the public. This makes it imperative that each individual member acts as a true gentleman of Theta Chi and thereby upholds the sacred values of this fraternity.

Leadership Responsibility: A brother of Theta Chi must constantly strive to better his Chapter while growing as a member of the same. This striving involves being ready to accept leadership roles when needed and to always serve to his best ability. Not only this, but each New Member should strive to hold an elected position within the Chapter. It is critical for the continuation of the Chapter that New Members are fully prepared and capable to take on these leadership roles.

Membership Responsibility: Policies and regulations are established by the University and the Fraternity for the good of all. It is expected that members comply with all such rules and practices including the elimination of hazing, the legal and responsible use of alcohol, and an active stance against the use of illegal drugs. Every member shall strive to attend all Chapter meetings, official functions, and shall participate fully in Chapter activities. It is also the responsibility of each brother to play an active role in the continuation of the Chapter by actively recruiting New Members who are a good fit. A member must also realize that the responsibility of brotherhood does not end upon graduation but last a lifetime.

Financial Responsibility: Every member is expected to pay all bills presented to him in a timely manner. Prompt payment ensures smooth operation of the house and avoids accumulating debt with the fraternity. Financial challenges to an individual and their family can arise. Any issues of this kind should be brought to the attention of the President, Treasurer, Chapter Advisor, and Alumni President as soon as they arise, so that various solutions can be explored, such as payment plans.

Personal Responsibility: Each Member owes it to himself to uphold these responsibilities, not only for his own sake, but for the sake of his brothers as well. He must take care of his personal health, well-being and appearance. He must also do all in his power to understand the meaning of the Ritual of Theta Chi Fraternity and follow its oaths and ideals to the utmost of his ability.

As the one leading the New Member through this program, I hold myself to a higher standard regarding these critical areas of responsibility. One of the most important aspects of this accountability is ensuring the safety and well-being of our New Member. No hazing of any kind will be tolerated. Primarily, this is accomplished by ensuring both the brotherhood and the New Members are familiar with what constitutes hazing, and by discouraging any such behavior. It is also my responsibility to foster an environment where people are comfortable reporting any incidents of hazing to myself and the Lehigh administration. The Constitution and Bylaws of Theta Chi Fraternity prohibit all forms of hazing.

Theta Chi fraternity sets high and meaningful expectations of both its New Members and brothers. During his time as a New Member, the brotherhood will teach him what he needs to know to grow into a contributing brother of Theta Chi fraternity. First and foremost, Theta Chi is a fraternity at an educational institution, and as such, the success of our future brothers is integrally connected to their academic success. We expect our New Members to attend the library regularly, as well as take advantage of the knowledge of older brothers by recognizing them as vital educational resources. We also encourage usage of the school's academic resources, such as tutoring services and the career center. Our fraternity also thinks that it is important that we acknowledge that we are a part of the local and school community; as such, the Chapter's participation in philanthropy is part of its core beliefs. The New Member, since he will be expected to organize and run our future philanthropy events, will be expected to help the brothers organize and run all philanthropy events that occur during the semester. As a brotherhood, we also have every member of the Executive board, as well as various other minor officer positions, give presentations to expose the New Member to the many leadership opportunities that they will at some point need to take over. The New Member is offered a shadowing program to gain a deeper understanding of the daily responsibilities of those positions, if the New Member expresses interest in a particular position.

During the New Member process, the active members recognize that it is their duty to teach and help the New Member to have a successful program. This is done by acting as role models, answering questions, giving presentations, and offering advice.

Statement on Hazing

The Fraternity prohibits absolutely all physical hazing, servitude, paddling, uncalled-for humiliation, and public displays in connection with pledging and pre-initiatory activities. As well as subscribing to the National Interfraternity Conference resolutions and the Fraternity Executives Association's "Statement of Position on Hazing and Pre-Initiatory Activities" which condemn all forms of hazing in connection with New Member Education and pre-initiatory activities. The Beta Sigma Chapter shall carry out the Fraternity's policy and conform strictly to this policy, not only to escape the danger of bringing discredit to the Fraternity and injuring the entire fraternity cause, but also to build higher respect for the Beta Sigma Chapter and the Fraternity in the minds of New Members and to instill a finer type of loyalty thereby. Initiation activities shall not be permitted to interfere in any way with the scholastic obligations or class attendance of those involved. The Brotherhood follows national "no hazing policies," and fully understands that any action considered to be hazing is intolerable.

The New Member will be clearly informed at the start of the New Member Education process about Lehigh's and Theta Chi's anti-hazing policies through a group meeting with the President and Vice President. This will be a confidential and open discussion between the President and the New Member, during which, they will be informed of the abundant resources afforded to them by the school, the fraternity, alumni, and nationals. This meeting will hopefully facilitate more discussions periodically throughout the process about any concerns the New Member might have about the program. This constant feedback about the success and failures of the program can help us continuously revise and strengthen the program.

Furthermore, the New Member will be given contact information for at least two members of the Alumni Board who they can contact regarding any issues of hazing or anything else about the NME program or the fraternity about which they have concerns. In addition, at the commencement of the NME program the New Member Educator will obtain contact information for his parents or guardians and supply that to the Alumni Board. Our Alumni Board will then reach out to the parents or guardians with information about the fraternity.

Resources

President

Prescott Epard
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Risk Manager

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New Member Educator

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Lehigh University Fraternity and Sorority Life

Alexandra Smith: Associate Director, Fraternity & Sorority Life
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Lehigh University Hazing Emergency Hotline

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Alumni Advisor

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Alumni Advisor

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Regional Advisor

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Schedule

Note: Due to some changes and uncertainty at Lehigh, the dates in our new member education plan are tentative. The plan will be divided into six weeks, not including spring break, and are described in more detail below. To accommodate for the busy schedules of the new members, each meeting will be listed as either optional or required. Optional meetings are entirely optional for each new member. Required meetings can be excused for prior commitments such as class, clubs, schoolwork, etc. – the academic schedules of the new members will be collected at the start of the plan to help with scheduling. If a new member cannot attend the required meeting, they are asked to contact the Marshal and inform him that he will be missing the meeting. If a new member must miss a required meeting, they will be required to either work with the Marshal or their pledge class to make up for the missing information. Depending on the size of the new member class, the schedule may be more flexible to fit everyone's needs. All times are subject to change if conflicts arise.

Week One (1/31/26 - 2/8/26):

Meeting One: New Member Ceremony

Day (Time): Saturday (6:00pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Entire brotherhood, new members (Required)

Attire: Business casual

Agenda:

- Perform New Member Ceremony.
- Introduce Theta Chi history, creed, and structure.
- Sign the Pledge Honor Code.
- Discuss new member fees.

Homework: Start memorizing the creed.

Meeting Two: Weekly Chapter Meeting

Day (Time): Sunday (12:00pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Entire brotherhood, new members (Required)

Attire: Casual

Agenda: Weekly chapter updates, officer reports, open discussions.

Meeting Three: Creed Test & Values Discussion

Day(Time): Monday(6:10pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: New members, President, Vice President, VP of Health & Safety

Attire: Business casual

Agenda: Creed recitation, discuss sacred purpose, and aligning habits with fraternity values.

Homework: Reflect on how to embody Theta Chi values daily.

Meeting Four: Health, Safety, & History

Day (Time): Tuesday(6:10pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: VP of Health and Safety, Alumni Advisor, new members (Required)

Attire: Casual

Agenda: Discuss health and safety, chapter history, and alumni roles.

Meeting Five: Brotherhood Introductions

Day (Time): Friday (6:10pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Half the brotherhood, new members (Required)

Attire: Business casual

Agenda: Meet brothers, share backgrounds, discuss Theta Chi's community role.

Homework: Reflect on Greek life stereotypes and join a campus club.

Meeting Six: Weekly Chapter Meeting

Day (Time): Sunday (12:00pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Entire brotherhood, new members (Required)

Attire: Casual

Agenda: Weekly chapter updates, officer reports, open discussions.

Week Two (2/9/26 - 2/15/26)

Meeting One: Executive Introductions

Day (Time): Monday (6:10pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Executive Board (Required), new members (Optional)

Attire: Casual

Agenda: Recite the creed, discuss executive roles, and how new members can learn and contribute to these roles.

Meeting Two: Conversations with Brothers

Day (Time): Tuesday (6:10pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: VP, new members (Required)

Attire: Casual

Agenda: Meet brothers, learn executive roles, discuss fraternity values.

Meeting Three: Sacred Purpose

Day (Time): Thursday (6:10pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: VP of Health and Safety, new members (Optional)

Attire: Casual

Agenda: Introduction to sacred purpose and its role in Theta Chi.

Homework: Research sacred purpose.

Meeting Four: Brotherhood Introductions

Day (Time): Friday (6:10pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Other half of the brotherhood, new members (Required)

Attire: Business casual

Agenda: Meet remaining brothers, discuss brotherhood vs. friendship, and receive guidance on selecting big brother.

Meeting Five: Office Introductions

Day (Time): Saturday (12:00pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Treasurer, House Manager, new members (Optional)

Attire: Casual

Agenda: Learn about officer roles.

Meeting Six: Weekly Chapter Meeting

Day (Time): Sunday (12:00pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Entire brotherhood, new members (Required)

Attire: Casual

Agenda: Weekly chapter updates, officer reports, open discussions.

Week Three (2/16/26 - 2/22/26)

Meeting One: Brotherhood Reflection

Day (Time): Monday (6:10pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: New members (Optional)

Attire: Business casual

Agenda: Discuss motivations for joining, define brotherhood, and reflect on recruitment.

Homework: Suggest recruitment improvements.

Meeting Two: Professional Development

Day (Time): Tuesday (6:10pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Scholarship Chair, Professional Development Chair, new members (Required)

Attire: Casual

Agenda: Resume reviews, budgeting tips, LinkedIn group setup.

Homework: Dress for an interview at the next meeting.

Meeting Three: Academic Success

Day (Time): Wednesday (6:10pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Scholarship Chair, new members (Optional)

Attire: Business casual

Agenda: Academic mentor assignments, fraternity GPA expectations, on-campus resources.

Meeting Four: Recruitment & Social Chairs

Day (Time): Thursday (6:10pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Recruitment Chair, Social Chair, new members (Optional)

Attire: Casual

Agenda: Learn about recruitment and social officer roles

Meeting Five: Big Brother Selection

Day (Time): Friday (6:10pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: New members (Required)

Attire: Business casual

Agenda: Discuss Greek families, select big brothers, prepare symbolic plaques.

Meeting Six: Weekly Chapter Meeting

Day (Time): Sunday (12:00pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Entire brotherhood, new members (Required)

Attire: Casual

Agenda: Weekly chapter updates, officer reports, open discussions.

Week Four (2/23/26 - 3/2/26)

Meeting One: Bylaws Introduction

Day (Time): Monday (6:10pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: New members (Optional)

Attire: Casual

Agenda:

- Discuss executive board positions and bylaws.
- Begin reading and understanding both national and local bylaws.

Homework: Finish reading both bylaws by the next week.

Meeting Two: Big Brother Ceremony

Day (Time): Saturday (6:00pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Entire brotherhood, new members (Required)

Attire: Business casual

Agenda: Reveal big brothers in a formal ceremony.

Meeting Three: Charter Trip to NYC

Day (Time): Sunday (9:00am-5:00pm)

Location: New York City

Attendance: Brotherhood, new member, alumni (Optional)

Attire: Casual

Agenda: Bonding trip with fraternity members, including sightseeing and meeting with alumni.

Week Five (3/2/26 - 3/8/26)

Meeting One: Community Service

Day (Time): Tuesday (6:10pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: New members (Optional)

Attire: Casual

Agenda:

- Discuss volunteering and its importance.
- Encourage completion of 10 hours of community service by semester's end.

Homework: Plan a cause for volunteering.

Meeting Two: Conduct Process Overview

Day (Time): Wednesday (6:10pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: New members (Required)

Attire: Casual

Agenda:

- Understand Lehigh's conduct policies.
- Clarify misconceptions about Greek life and administration.

Meeting Three: Bylaws Deep Dive

Day (Time): Thursday (6:10pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Bylaws Chair, new members (Optional)

Attire: Casual

Agenda:

- Discuss executive board positions.
- Review and understand Theta Chi and Beta Sigma bylaws.

Week Six (3/16/26 - 3/22/26)

Meeting One: Weekly Chapter Meeting

Day (Time): Monday (6:10pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Entire brotherhood, new members (Required)

Attire: Casual

Agenda: Weekly chapter updates, officer reports, open discussions.

Meeting Two: Leadership and Standards

Day (Time): Tuesday (6:10pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Standards Chair, new members (Required)

Attire: Business casual

Agenda:

- Leadership opportunities within and outside executive roles.
- Standards process overview.

Meeting Three: Reflection Activity

Day (Time): Thursday (6:10pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: New members (Required)

Attire: Business casual

Agenda:

- “Man in the Mirror” reflection on personal growth.
- Reminder of brotherhood expectations.

Meeting Four: Initiation Ceremony

Day (Time): Sunday (12:00pm)

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Entire brotherhood, alumni, new members (Required)

Attire: Business

Agenda:

- Formal initiation into Theta Chi.

Additional Events:

Note: The dates of these additional events are subject to the start of our new member education program. If the date of one of these events conflicts with a scheduled meeting the meeting will be canceled and the contents of the meeting will be moved to a different meeting. These events are programs that we will strive to host, however pending brother availability and the schedule of new member education may be canceled. We hope to incorporate as many of these events as we can, as it is highly unlikely that we have the time required to host all the events listed.

Sexual Assault Prevention Workshop

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Brotherhood, new member class, new member educator

Description: We have an agreement to host a Chapter House presentation regarding sexual assault prevention. The event will be open to our brotherhood; however, our entire New Member class will be required to attend.

The Group

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: The new member class, and the new member educator

Description: At the Group, the new member class and new member educator venture to a spot in the chapter house, dim the lights, and form a circle. Starting with the new member educator, each participant faces away from the group and talks about whatever comes to their mind. Having a specific target to focus on and being faced away from the group produces an organic state of vulnerability, and participants often talk about their families, insecurities, and fears. It is, in my opinion, the most powerful event we run.

Why: In college, especially in a male Greek setting, students are afraid to express their vulnerabilities and emotions. The Group is a setting removed from the noise and chaos of everyday life, in which you can be supported by your friends without having to look them in the eye. Perhaps, most importantly, The Group shows the new members that they can bond on a spiritual level, as well as a social one.

Dinner with our FSL AD

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Marshal, new member class, FSL AD

Description: We will invite our FSL AD to speak at the Chapter House one night during new member education. We will work to find a night that works best for both the new member class and our FSL AD. The new member class should be familiarized with our FSL AD and the purpose of FSL. The dinner will be an open dialogue conversation between the new member class and our FSL AD.

Counseling Center Outreach Presentation

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Marshal, new member class, representative from the counseling center
Description: The counseling center offers a wide variety of outreach presentations that can cover topics such as recognizing the signs of depression and suicide prevention. We will work to schedule a presentation that can be tailored to problems affecting the Greek community. The presentation will be held in Chapter House and be available to all members of our chapter. We will work to find a time that works for both the new member class and the counseling center.

Peer Health Advisors Calling the Shots

Location: Chapter House

Attendance: Marshal, new member class, representatives from peer health advisors
Description: Peer health advisors offer a presentation titled "Calling the Shots." We will work to schedule this presentation with peer health advisors and find a time that works for both our new member class and peer health advisors. The presentation will be made available to our entire chapter. The presentation is designed to be an interactive discussion regarding alcohol awareness and drug abuse. In our chapter's experience this presentation has been beneficial as it is hosted by students trained in the subject. Having students who are familiar with the campus climate come present makes the material relatable and feel less like a lecture.

Programs Unique to Chapter:

Academic Mentor Groups

Each New Member will be paired with an academic mentor in the house. The mentors will be the brothers in the house with good academic work ethics who have the same or a related area of study. The Scholarship Chair will pair the New Member with a brother who can help meet his direct academic needs during these mentor sessions. This partnership will allow the New Member to work with a brother to keep their grades up during New Member Education, while developing good work habits for the future. The New Member will now have someone they can easily go to when they need help studying, or with any other issues they may have. The Scholarship Chair will be responsible for making these pairs and will also serve as a mentor and resource for the New Member. This educational opportunity allows New Members to connect with brothers and develop their work ethic. The Scholarship program has been revamped this year to provide brothers struggling academically with support and oversight. The New Member will be immediately included in these efforts to build an enhanced support system.

Study/Gym Hours

Our optional study hours for Brothers and New Members go hand in hand with the time management plan. It is highly encouraged to take advantage of the two hours set aside every weekday to keep up with academics. Furthermore, any member whose previous semester GPA is below all men's average is required to log at least 15 hours a week with the Academics Chairman to ensure academic improvement. If the New Member or brother feels on top of all their class work, it is suggested that they use this time for exercise. It is our belief that a person should be constantly striving to improve their personal fitness, as well as their academics. Aside from the obvious health benefits, exercise has been shown to aid in mental health, as well as to improve self-confidence and provide a host of other benefits. If someone chooses to use this time for the gym, he is encouraged to go with a partner, both for safety as well as for fostering personal bonds. However, it will be made clear that this is an optional activity, and that the New Member may spend this time however they see fit. While the Chapter rents a local study space on campus and allocates two hours for study every day, members are encouraged to allocate as much time as needed for their academic success. It is an important part of "Identity Development" and "Professional Growth and Success" to identify one's strengths and weaknesses and set up a course of action for growth as a student and a brother of Theta Chi. By spending time either studying or working out with the brothers, the New Member will be developing "Collaborative Connections." Through mentorship and time management, the Marshal will enable the New Member to get the most out of his time, and to use it most efficiently.

Textual Analysis of the Creed

The New Member will have a written copy of the creed. He will be instructed to read and analyze what he believes the creed means and how it applies to him individually. These

ideas will be discussed one on one in a private setting with the Marshal and linked to past fraternity subjects that we have talked about. These meetings persist bi-weekly throughout the Program, as the New Member's interpretation of the creed grows and evolves. In essence, the Marshal aims to build on members "Identity Development" as they align their values to the values expected from a brother of Theta Chi.

Wednesday Night Shirt & Tie Dinner (Chapter House)

All members are encouraged to attend Chapter Dinner every Wednesday night. These dinners will sometimes be accompanied by a speaker from the University. This allows our Chapter to maintain relations with university staff and faculty, as well as improve our knowledge about the happenings of our campus community. The New Member and brothers are highly encouraged to invite any facility member (professor, coach, LUPD, etc.) to these dinners. Sometimes a local alumnus will be invited, allowing the brothers to reconnect with past generations of our Brotherhood. The dinners will also serve to increase Brotherhood bonding. A strict shirt and tie dress code is mandated. This event develops "Collaborative Connections" and "Professional Growth & Success" by encouraging a sense of community in the Chapter and by reaching out to the University community.

Conversations with Brothers

The Marshal will encourage the new member class to meet and familiarize themselves with the brotherhood through one-on-one conversations. These conversations are unstructured and thus can be anything the new members and brothers would like to discuss. Positive conversations can include school topics, career topics, life before college, plans for after college, etc. These conversations are intended to be two-way conversations between the new members and the brothers. It will be made clear to both the brothers and the new members that these conversations are completely optional and can last for as short or long as person desires. It will be made clear to the brothers that they should make these conversations available at their and the new members convenience. There is to be absolutely no quid pro quo in having these conversations. The conversations are intended to be an opportunity for the new members and brothers to meet each other in a more personal and private setting. These conversations should assist the new members in choosing who they would like to select as their big brother.

Executive Board Shadowing Program

A cornerstone of our chapter's commitment to leadership development and continuity, designed to bridge the gap between current and future leaders. This program invites new members to closely observe sitting executive board members as they fulfill their duties, providing a firsthand understanding of the responsibilities, challenges, and

decision-making processes inherent to each role. Through structured mentorship, new members attend meetings, assist with tasks, and engage in one-on-one discussions with officers, fostering a deeper understanding of leadership dynamics. This initiative not only serves as an educational tool but also encourages new members to envision themselves in leadership roles, preparing them to seamlessly step into these positions in the future. By creating an environment where new members can learn and ask questions directly from experienced leaders, the program builds institutional knowledge, strengthens chapter operations, and fosters personal growth. Ultimately, it ensures the chapter's longevity by cultivating confident, well-prepared leaders who uphold the values and traditions of Theta Chi while contributing fresh perspectives to drive the fraternity forward.