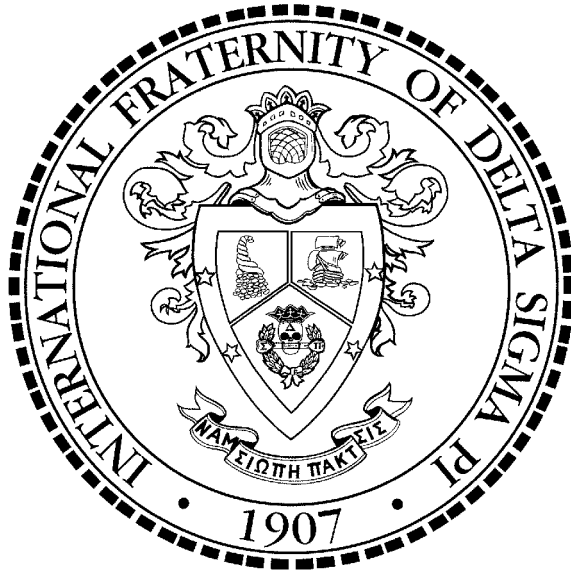


# DELTA SIGMA PI



## BEST PRACTICES

## MANUAL FOR COLLEGIATE CHAPTERS

Updated on June 28, 2006

This manual is designed to be a **quick reference** guide of **tips and good habits** for attaining the highest standards of operational performance in collegiate chapters. It is not intended to be inclusive of all procedures or possible good practices and **is not a substitute** for any policy or instruction found in CEI, Ritual, Bylaws, national policies or other documents.

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A. MEMBERSHIP:  
1. Recruiting New Members

- \*Promote and publicize chapter events year-round.
- \*Just prior to selecting pledges, have several information meetings or “meet the members” events. One is not enough. Use slide shows or powerpoints to highlight recent chapter events. Provide refreshments, name tags, printed Fraternity or chapter information, and introductions to members.
- \*Challenge each chapter member to personally seek out pledge candidates as they agreed to in their oath of membership.
- \*Ask faculty to recommend students for potential membership, especially faculty and staff who are Deltasigs and know what the chapter and Fraternity does.
- \*Have a professional dress day for brothers during special recruiting programs. A visual image of professionalism gets attention on campus.
- \*All posters, flyers, bulletin boards, chapter office doors, and other forms of publicity must have meeting times, locations, and contact phone numbers / email provided on them year-round.
- \*Always take advantage of opportunities to participate in organization fairs, club days, freshmen orientation, and similar campus events.
- \*Have a data form available year-round to provide to potential candidates to collect their name, major, class, and contact information (similar to an application)
- \*Remember, recruiting potential pledges occurs year-round with your visibility on campus; selecting which potential pledges to invite to pledge is a special focus during a period of a few days or weeks.
- \*Be careful to plan your target market for each pledge class so your chapter will represent the same diversity mix as the total business/econ enrollment with all majors as well as race and gender of students.

Reference: 1) [www.dspnet.org](http://www.dspnet.org), click Publications/Manuals, scroll to Recruiting.  
2) FREE Recruiting CD, order item #11-92 from [www.dspnet.org](http://www.dspnet.org), marketplace.

A. MEMBERSHIP:  
2. Pledge Education

\*Follow the Standard Pledge Education Program.....PERIOD.

\*Encourage all members to show interest, concern, and support to pledges; don't leave it only to the VPPE or Big Brothers.

\*Treat pledges like a guest in your home. Be a gracious and welcoming host.

\*Treat pledges like you are a manager who has just hired them to represent your company. Ensure they always speak positively about the experience whether they are initiated or not.

\*The pledge education program must be a minimum of 30 days and no more than ten weeks. Evaluate what length is most effective with your university schedule of classes. Generally, the most effective is about six (6) weeks, assuming two to three weeks of recruiting prior to the pledging ceremony and completing initiation at least two weeks in advance of the exam schedule.

*(If your chapter is small (less than 25) and you need members quickly, it is best to stick to 30 days. If your chapter is larger (70 or more), or your pledge class is large (over 25), you may find eight weeks more practical).*

\*Have a professional dress day for brothers once per week or every two weeks and ask pledges to do the same. A visual image of professionalism to peers and faculty improves everything.

\*Again, know the standard pledge education program and stick to it. (See Fraternity Policy, section E. policy 2)

Reference: [www.dspnet.org](http://www.dspnet.org), 1)Policy & Procedures Section E, policy 1 and 2  
2) CEI section II

A. MEMBERSHIP:  
3. Initiation of pledges

\*Initiation should be the most organized and impressive event you ever have.

\*Initiation is the one event you should have 100% attendance from all chapter members and your Deltasigs on the faculty and staff. Post the date of initiation several months in advance so all chapter members, faculty, alumni, and national officers can plan accordingly.

\*The Chancellor (Ritual Chair) should conduct rehearsals for initiation several times to ensure the Ritual participants have memorized their parts and can perform them with excellent speaking tone and confidence.

\*Start on time. Never make pledges or other guests wait beyond the published starting time.

\*Initiation is one time when chapter officers show pledges, other chapter members, alumni guests, and faculty what good leadership looks like in action. Be organized, highly professional, prompt, and demonstrate good teamwork.

\*Remember to order regalia, badges, and reserve rooms well in advance. (Regalia up to 4 months in advance, badges 4-8 weeks in advance)

## B. RITUAL OF DELTA SIGMA PI

\*Always memorize initiation Ritual and conduct several meetings/rehearsals with the Ritual team before initiation day. Never rehearse immediately before the ceremony if pledges and guests are waiting.

\*Always use business meeting Ritual for all chapter meetings.

\*Alternate members as Ritual guides for chapter meetings so everyone participates during the year.

\*Conduct the Ritual officer installation after each officer election.

\*Conduct the Ritual graduating senior ceremony for members graduating each term.

\*Conduct the Ritual memorial service once per year to pay tribute to your deceased alumni members. (This Ritual service is open to the public). This can be a good memorial near Founders' Day, chapter birthday, April alumni day, or university alumni days.

\*Ask each member to read the Ritual book. Each chapter has eight (8) books to circulate. This is a good practice for new members following initiation.

\*Have a "Ritual Minute" at each chapter meeting to emphasize one word, phrase, or meaning taken from the Ritual book. (Remember to do this before or after pledges and guests enter/exit the meeting room)

\*Eight Ritual books per chapter shall be in the custody of the Chapter President. Always keep inventory and know where all 8 books are located at all times.

\* The current ritual book was published in 2002 (stated on inside title page) with a black cover. Only use this edition. If you don't have it, contact Central Office to purchase new copies.

Reference: Delta Sigma Pi Ritual Book, 2002 edition

\*Start on time at the published time.

\*Always open and close with Ritual. Have guides at entrance doors to save time. (Ask pledges or guests to remain in lobby or separate room until the meeting is open to them – when you have completed opening Ritual)

\*Always have a printed meeting agenda to distribute upon entrance or have posted on blackboard or overhead projector. You may also email it to the membership in advance.

\*For weekly meetings, establish your agenda to be completed in one hour. For meetings every two weeks, keep them at no more than 1 ½ hours. (meetings with pledge selection, officer elections, or trials understandably require more time).

\*Never ask for ‘old business.’ If you have any, it should be noted in the minutes of the last meeting and automatically included on your printed agenda for the next meeting. The VP-Finance should always provide a financial report on chapter monetary status. The VP-Pledge Education should always provide a report on the progress of pledges.

\*Every officer and committee chair should give a short report. If they say “no report”, they are telling you they are not doing the job they were elected or appointed to do.

\*Always acknowledge the presence of faculty, alumni, and national representatives with a thank you for attending and supporting them. Your faculty advisor should be included on the agenda for any comments they need to convey. Likewise, any national officer should be asked if they have any messages. Alumni however, should generally not speak in a collegiate chapter meeting except when the floor is open for announcements or comments for good and welfare.

\*Remember the business items in a chapter meeting that are considered confidential. Confidential business includes discussion on recruits or pledges, member discipline or trials, and occasionally some in-depth financial matters. Likewise, pledges, alumni, and non-members should be excused from those portions of the meeting. (A Faculty Advisor, District Director, Regional Vice President, Board of Directors member, or Central Office staff can attend all portions of chapter meetings)

## D. SPECIAL CHAPTER EVENTS

\*An annual formal or semi-formal banquet builds feelings of brotherhood, yields more alumni support, and provides a professional style of social networking with faculty, family, and alumni. Founders Day, Chapter Birthday, and after initiation are common times for banquet events.

\*It is the duty of the chapter's Vice President – Alumni Relations to plan a program for Founders Day, Alumni Day, and ensure chapter visibility in campus events such as Homecoming. Learn to expect more than cake at a regular chapter meeting.

\*Nice banquets or dinner parties are expensive! They require months of planning. You should establish a budget at least 6-12 months in advance and you should invite alumni and faculty at least 4 months in advance.

\*Establish per person ticket prices for banquets and dinner programs. Never assume these types of events are included in your member dues. Chapters should plan for banquets to be self funding and paid fully by ticket sales.

\*Maintain a detailed history on major chapter events including cost of meals, cost and name of DJ/band, number of hotel rooms used, dates, etc. This information is highly valuable in working with venues, negotiating, and helping future officers.

\*Always check insurance needs for special events off-campus. Hotel, banquet, or restaurant contracts can be proofed by Central Office staff to ensure no risky clauses or policy violations are likely to occur or cause financial loss to the chapter.

\*More significant events such as your chapter's 10<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup>, 75<sup>th</sup>, etc. anniversary deserve planning two years in advance and lots of promotions. A special committee for such an occasion is appropriate. Additional special programs, such as decade alumni reunions, campus (or business school) tours, chapter history presentations, as well as meal functions add value to alumni and family participants. Be sure to invite the Board of Directors and Central Office staff at least 12 months in advance. Arrange overnight hotel room blocks up to 12 months in advance of these momentous occasions.

\*Never imply or convey to chapter members or pledges that banquets, parties, or other socials or social expenses are required for pledging or membership. These events are all invitational.

\*The chapter members must remind and educate alumni, pledges, family and friends about the alcohol section of the Fraternity Risk Management Policy and that their attendance at an event conveys their agreement to comply with our policy.

\*Founders Day and Chapter Birthday are perfect times to involve family in Fraternity celebrations.

\*Founders Day is a great time to have a Deltasig Parents Day on campus and provide a powerpoint presentation during a luncheon to show what activities the chapter is involved in.

\*Founders Day and Chapter Birthday are both great times to place red roses on faculty Deltasig's desks, challenge alumni to make donations to the Leadership Foundation in the chapter's honor, make a chapter gift to the Foundation, and write articles for print in the campus newspaper.

\*Formal events are good times to recognize brothers with chapter awards such as Brother of the Year (selected by secret vote of the members and counted/determined by advisor), or Officers award (selected by the Executive Committee for a non-officer)

\*Use Alumni Day in April to connect all spring graduates with a representative from the alumni chapter in the city they will relocate to after college. Invite alumni chapter representatives from all alumni chapters within a four hour radius of your campus to attend your chapter Alumni Day celebration.

\*Attending or hosting professional receptions with faculty, area businesses, the Chamber of Commerce, or other professional clubs and fraternities builds professional networking skills and provides a forum for networking among other business professionals.

\*Informal, but organized socials such as bowling, ball games, movie nights, gathering for lunches, shopping, campus intramural teams, monthly birthday parties for brothers, art exhibits, holiday celebrations, and picnics/games in the park, etc. are good socials to build feelings of brotherhood and camaraderie. Avoid parties in private residences with no theme or purpose as those are usually when problems develop with alcohol, hazing, property damage, injuries, or pranks.

## E. MOTIVATION AND MEMBER PARTICIPATION

\*People find a way to do what they want to do. Chapters need to have events and organizational skill that cause members to want to be there and be involved.

\*All students and business people are busy. Being “too busy” to attend is often someone’s way of telling you the event is of no interest or value to them.

\*Survey members once per year to determine what the interests or desires are for professional and service programming. Planning events they suggest or request helps improve their support of the event.

\*Survey the basic schedules of all members each term. This includes class schedule, work schedule, family and religious commitments, and allow for normal sleeping and eating needs. After combining all schedules, the most common open slots are the best available times to plan meetings and events.

\*Expecting 100% attendance all the time is impractical. Accept the reality of it and move on with a goal to achieve 90% participation.

\*Have an established communications procedure so all members are clear on exactly whom to convey their absences to. Avoid trying to approve or disapprove excuses; instead focus on getting communication from all members on a consistent basis.

\*Ask members to serve. Some people are natural volunteers; whereas others need to be asked, encouraged, and advised on where the needs and opportunities are. Establish the understanding that every chapter member will serve on one committee. Ask them to volunteer on the committee where their interest or talent is greatest.

\*Plan enough opportunities for the building of trusting friendships. This begins during recruiting and pledging and carries forth into membership with trips to LEAD events, social events, birthday recognition, effective committee teamwork, class study groups, and perhaps even secret pal efforts.

Reference: FREE Motivation CD, order item #11-93 from [www.dspnet.org](http://www.dspnet.org), marketplace.

\*Ensure the Vice President-Finance provides some specific dollar amounts in their weekly report to the chapter. A summary of income and expenses since the last meeting and an estimated checking balance should be provided at every chapter meeting.

\*Remember, that the chapter's income comes from member dues and member fundraising efforts. All members, therefore, also need to know how their money is spent.

\*Review the semester, quarter, or annual chapter budget with the entire chapter once per semester or quarter. (Be sure you have a budget).

\*Review the fixed chapter expenses to the National Fraternity at the beginning of each term with the entire chapter. This is provided to the President and VP-Finance from Central Office staff in September each year.

\*Evaluate and set the price of chapter dues based on need, budget, and member's ability to pay. The average price of chapter's individual dues is near equivalent to national dues. National dues per person are \$37.50 per term and most chapters charge chapter dues of \$35-45 per term for a total ranging from \$65-\$85 per member per term. If fundraising is outstanding, you may charge much less, but try to never charge more than \$99.00. Raising chapter dues more than \$99 can be discouraging and affect membership growth while also not showing a significant financial distinction from social Greeks. High member dues could also show lazy, non-productive fundraising. As a business Fraternity, raising and managing money should be an ongoing productive effort, above and beyond the success of any other campus organization.

\*Offer members dues discounts if the annual dues are paid in full with the fall payment. This helps the individual, while also aiding with the cash flow of the chapter early in the year before some fundraising takes place.

\*Never initiate a pledge that has not paid their initiation and badge fees in full in advance.

\*After 30 days of each new term, take immediate action with any member who has not paid dues. The longer it goes, the more difficult it becomes.

Reference: 1) CEI sections III, and XI  
2) Duties of VP-Finance, Policy & Procedures Section B. 12 and policy 21  
3) Policy & Procedures, Section R. policy 1,2,3,9,10,11,12

## G. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP

\* The 10 elected officers of the chapter which are required nationally (see policy & procedures section B policy 8.) make up the chapter's executive committee (not a board or council). The chapter may add additional local officers to the committee as desired. Once elected, the chapter should install these officers according to Ritual page 70.

\* The Executive Committee should meet at the same frequency that chapter meetings are held. Ideally this is weekly or every two weeks and preferably within 24-48 hours prior to the chapter meeting. The Executive Committee will discuss and finalize any special items for the chapter meeting agenda and ensure their reports are as current as possible.

\* The Executive Committee is a committee on chapter policy, finance, and overall chapter management. Committee members must provide regular and accurate reports to chapter members at each chapter meeting, know where to reference information in policy, bylaws, ritual, etc. and uphold policy.

\* Each officer has a responsibility or obligation to correspond or submit a report to the Central Office (via CEI usually) or to the Regional Vice President, or to other members of the chapter. Understanding CEI reporting is essential for all Executive Committee members.

\* Each officer should keep two lists of tasks done during their term of office. One for things done well that you would recommend your successor to continue with. The other, less than admirable items that you want to challenge your successor to improve upon in the future. The overall success of the chapter from year to year is the objective of these lists which will aid in effective transitions with officers that follow you.

\* An extended executive committee meeting or day retreat will allow officers to establish and monitor chapter goals and keep chapter goals current and visible. This time together will also establish teamwork and relationship skills that are necessary for the committee to be an effective leadership body.

\* At the end of the officer term the outgoing officers should ensure an effective transition meeting occurs with the newly elected officers.

\* The length of term of office is determined by the chapter and stated in local chapter bylaws. The most effective is usually annual elections December – December which reduces turnover and allows spring graduates to remain a resource for newly elected officers during spring term.