

Sigma Chi Faculty Advisor Manual



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Introduction

Faculty Advisor Manual Objectives

- ✓ Understand your role and expectations as Faculty Advisor
- ✓ Access valuable resources for your role
- ✓ Learn how to mentor the Sigma Chi Chapter

Faculty Advisor Information

This manual is intended to explain the basic roles and expectations of a Faculty Advisor and his or her relationship with the Sigma Chi Chapter.

This manual is intended to be a useful resource for Sigma Chi Chapter Faculty Advisors by outlining some of the considerations they will encounter, questions they will be asked, answers they will need to give, and the general scope of their possible responsibilities.

☞ This manual cannot substitute for the Advisor's judicious assessment of his/her own work.

Basic Premises

1. All chapter members (i.e., students) are different.
2. All Faculty Advisors are different.
3. Faculty Advisors are volunteers.
4. Faculty Advisors are advisors, not dictators.
5. There is often no right answer from either the advisor or the student.
6. Your common-sense approach to being the chapter's advisor is supreme.
7. You are not the group's only advisor.
 - There are other advisors who are mentors to the chapter's leaders.

Expectations of the Faculty Advisor

1. Form a working relationship with the chapter's president and scholarship chairman to help them enhance their scholarship program.
2. Meet with the chapter's scholarship chairman to review the chapter's scholarship program and academic progress.
3. Meet with the chapter officers early in the fall and winter terms to review the chapter's strategic plan.
4. Create a college/university resource list for tutors, counselors, mentors, etc.
5. Provide academic assistance to members and pledges in need of such help.
6. Make office hours available specifically for Sigma Chi members.



Expectations of the Chapter in Regard to its Faculty Advisor

1. The chapter president should interview the faculty advisor to determine how the advisor can best help the chapter reach its goals.
2. After the conclusion of each summer's Balfour Leadership Training Workshop, the chapter should schedule a review of its strategic plan with its faculty advisor and chapter officers.
3. Convene monthly progress report meetings between the scholarship chairman and chapter president.
4. Update the chapter's faculty advisor on officer elections, contact information, meeting times, chapter needs and other pertinent information.
5. Invite the faculty advisor to dinner with the chapter officers.
6. Offer Sigma Chi as an organization that can help the faculty advisor with any projects on campus.
7. Work with the faculty advisor to host one faculty mixer per academic year.

Faculty Advisor's Role

Possible responsibilities (negotiate these with the chapter)

1. Receive a copy of the chapter's overall grades
2. Review the chapter's strategic plan early in the fall and winter terms, ensuring that scholarship is a key component of the plan.
3. Help the chapter formulate ways to recognize and reward members who excel academically.
4. Review the chapter's scholastic achievements and determine whether it meets the expectations of the university and International Fraternity.
5. A possibility: Provide advice and guidance to chapter officers who are interested in improving the faculty's perception of the chapter as a student organization.

Tips for advising the chapter and its individual members

1. Get to know the executive committee officers.
2. Use the chapter's strategic plan as a roadmap to help them achieve their scholastic goals.
3. Be cognizant of the chapter's expectations of you as its Faculty Advisor.
4. Challenge the group to grow and develop.
5. Be creative and innovative.



How you can benefit the chapter

1. Advise members regarding their career options, and help them strategize their transitions from students to working adults.
2. Encourage members to participate in campus events and organizations outside of their Greek-letter organizations.
3. Review the chapter's scholarship plan and its impact on the members' academic performance.

Meet with the scholarship chairman to discuss his goals for the chapter when it comes to scholastics.

Creative Ideas

1. Provide a "most improved GPA" recognition award for an individual member.
2. Work with the chapter to develop its scholarship program.
3. Mentor the chapter in a mutually beneficial way that results in an enhanced reputation for Sigma Chi on the university campus.

Successful Strategies for building a solid relationship with your particular chapter

1. Discuss the terms of the relationship between the chapter and the advisor.
2. Spend time building that relationship.
3. Spend some "quality" time together with the chapter's members.
4. Be responsible.
5. Follow through on commitments.
6. First meeting — make a good impression.
7. Express sincere interest in the organization and its individual members.
8. Challenge the group to develop academically and in their relationship with the host institution.

Faculty Advisor Liability Statement – Sigma Chi Official Position

In general, Faculty Advisors are not liable for an organization's actions unless the advisor had prior knowledge of the group becoming involved in an illegal or dangerous activity, and/or condoned or participated in any such activity.

"Faculty advisors are encouraged to discuss any possible liability with their college or university legal counsel. Most institutions provide liability coverage to faculty who have been approved by the institution to serve as a faculty advisor."

All advisors to our chapters who utilize best judgment and appropriate techniques to ensure the safety of the activity's participants will usually not be judged liable.



International Fraternity Officials

Grand Praetor — Regional Director

Supervise and direct all chapters, chapter advisors and house corporations according to germane Governing Laws.

- a. Requires each chapter to establish a written action plan for all areas of chapter operations, and to submit that plan to the Grand Praetor by Sept. 1 each year.
- b. Make at least one, but preferably more than one, official visit to each chapter annually.
- c. Effectively communicate with every chapter and stay informed on its members' progress and status toward achieving their goals.
- d. Require strict adherence to the Fraternity's Ritual, Constitution, Statutes and Executive Committee Regulations.
- e. Endeavor to strengthen the standing of the respective chapters in the province in scholarship, morals, discipline, conduct of activities, campus leadership, faculty and school relations, community and public relations, alumni relations, and relations with the General Fraternity.

Chapter Advisor

1. Appointed by the respective Grand Praetor for a term of one year, to act as a direct guide to the undergraduate chapter(s) assigned to him by the Grand Praetor. Expectations for the chapter advisor are that he:
 - a. Acts as an untitled but actual assistant Grand Praetor for the particular chapter.
 - b. Possesses an intimate knowledge of the activities, accomplishments, problems, alumni, officers, members and pledges of each chapter.
 - c. Endeavors to strengthen the standing of the chapter in scholarship, morals, discipline, conduct of activities, campus leadership, and relations with the International Fraternity.
 - d. Be directly responsible to the Grand Praetor and the Fraternity for the operations, activities and conduct of the advisor's constituent chapters and members.
 - e. At least once each month, and preferably more often, visit the chapter(s) under his supervision.
 - f. Make himself available as needed to offer guidance, counsel and direction to the particular chapters, officers and members.
 - g. Maintain a close relationship with all university officials on the campus on which the chapter is located.

Headquarters Staff

By mail: 1714 Hinman Avenue
Evanston, Illinois 60201-4517
Phone: (847) 869-3655
Fax: (847) 869-4906



Online: sigmachi.org and sigmachi.com- Please refer to the Headquarters contact list located at the Fraternity's website for the International Fraternity's most up-to-date staff contact information.

For Reference

Active Chapter Contacts

Chapter Advisor	Name: Email: Phone number:
Chapter President	Name: Email: Phone number:
Chapter Vice President	Name: Email: Phone number:
Chapter Scholarship Chairman	Name: Email: Phone number:
Grand Praetor	Name: Email: Phone number:
House Corporation President	Name: Email: Phone number:
Chapter Pledge Trainer	Name: Email: Phone number:



Resource Documents

Chapter Assessment Worksheet

Frequently Asked Questions

Faculty Advisor and Chapter Goal Setting — Scholarship

Chapter's Faculty Advisor Agreement

Academic Recovery Strategy and Commitment



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What should I do if the chapter's new members have poor grades?

First, you must examine the new members to discover how much time they actually put into their schoolwork. If they are putting in a low number of hours, suggest that they implement study hall hours as a solution, or arrange for a speaker to come in and address the chapter. If the new members are putting in the requisite effort with little results, suggest that they reach out to the university's counseling and testing center for help.

What if the chapter's GPA has continuously been above average?

This is definitely an excellent problem to have. When a chapter's grades are above average on a regular basis, it has an excellent opportunity to create an incentive program. (Incentive programs can be used for low GPAs as well) Meals at the advisor's home, money off of monthly dues, certificates, or a simple card are all ideas to provide appreciation for achieving a high academic performance.

What if the chapter won't do what I ask of them?

First, make it known to the chapter's president and his chapter advisor that the chapter's members are not meeting your expectations. Attend a meeting and discuss with the chapter to learn how they are not following your instructions. Listen to their thoughts and ideas, then provide yours and see what happens.

What should I include in a scholarship program?

An appropriate scholarship program would require a standard minimum GPA, provide sources for assistance, recognize students with awards for academic excellence, schedule study hall hours, and create other appropriate stipulations to be enforced by the advisor and the chapter's leadership.

I was not a member of a Greek-letter organization in college. Where can I get some basic background information about fraternities and sororities?

Many of our faculty and staff are not members of Greek-letter organizations, and most have trouble with Greek letters, etc., at first. Please contact either the chapter advisor or Grand Praetor for assistance. You can also speak with your college or university Greek-letter community's advisor.



Faculty/Staff Advisor and Chapter Scholastic Goal Setting

This information is intended to be a useful resource for the first meeting between the faculty advisor and the chapter. You can use it as a guideline for the meeting and as a document to keep records to assure that the chapter's goals are set and met.

1. What are the scholastic strengths of the chapter?

2. What scholastic challenges are present for the chapter?

3. Set measurable scholastic goals. (Example: The chapter is to meet a cumulative GPA of 2.90)

Scholastic Goal 1:

Responsible:

Scholastic Goal 2:

Responsible:

Scholastic Goal 3:

Responsible:

Scholastic Goal 4:

Responsible:

4. When will these goals be met? How will you know if they are reached or not?



Chapter Assessment Worksheet (Semester or Annually)

Chapter _____ Date _____

Academic Achievement Assessment:

Chapter Overall GPA Fall _____ Spring _____

 Last Fall _____ Last Spring _____

1. What is the chapter's minimum GPA requirement prior to affiliation?

2. What is the chapter's GPA requirement to be elected to, and to hold, an office?

3. Does the chapter have a scholarship program with written scholarship goals?

4. Does the chapter have an elected or appointed scholarship chairperson?

5. Describe any academic workshops provided and/or attended by this chapter.

6. What is the chapter's scholarship budget?

Documentation:

Have you:

- Reviewed chapter scholarship policies and current academic standing?
- Met with the scholarship chairman to discuss his job description and goals?
- Become familiar with the policies of the university's office of Greek-letter affairs?



Chapter/Faculty Advisor Agreement

(Sample should be modified annually to reflect agreed upon expectations)

Fall _____ to Spring _____

I, _____, agree to be the faculty advisor to _____
 (Print Name) (Fraternity)
 for the _____ academic year.
 (Year)

I understand that I am to advise the chapter to my best ability by assisting them with their overall scholarship/academic program. I will do this by providing support and guidance in coordination with their organizational mission and goals outlined in their constitution/charter. I have received and reviewed the Faculty Advisor Manual and have discussed specific goals with the chapter’s leadership team that they can accomplish in the coming year. I have made arrangements to meet with the leaders and members of the chapter on a regular basis during the academic year. I will attempt to work closely with all of the chapter’s other advisors (International support, local alumni or the local alumni chapter, among others) so that we can work collectively in better assisting the chapter to accomplish its overall academic goals.

Advisor Best Practices:

- Be knowledgeable of your university or college community, and the organization’s academic standards.
- Serve as a mentor and advisor to the members of the organization.
- Be available to the members of the organization that you advise, particularly the scholarship chairman and academically at-risk members.
- Work with the membership of the organization that you advise to develop, implement, and maintain a system to monitor and, if needed, improve the grades of the members throughout the semester.

Fraternity Expectations

- We accept the expectations agreed to by our advisor.
- We will work with our advisor to enhance the quality of our organization.
- We will welcome our advisor and include him/her at appropriate chapter functions.

Advisor Signature _____
 Date _____

Chapter President Signature _____
 Date _____

Advisor Name _____

Chapter President Name _____

Phone _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Email _____



Academic Recovery Strategy and Commitment

(Sample should be modified annually to reflect agreed upon expectations)

Student's Name _____

Reason for recovery strategy:

_____ Student's semester or cumulative GPA dropped below the chapter's grade requirement

_____ Student's semester GPA dropped significantly below his previous semester averages

Course being taken currently (list course number and credit hours, plus hours in class and labs)

Other out-of-class commitments (list work, other organizational memberships or leadership positions, volunteer commitments, significant other, etc.)



Recovery Strategy Commitment (statements to be written by student – be specific):

1. **Distractions:** What activities do you spend time on that hinder academic success and how will you adjust your time management? (Examples: video games, parties, TV, Facebook, instant messaging, etc.)

2. **Use of Campus Resources:** How can you make better use of resources such as supplemental instruction, tutorial services, study groups or partners, working in advance, changing study locations, adjusting office hours, etc.?

3. **Study Habits:** What have you discovered to be your best place, time, and method of studying, and how will you commit to making studying a part of your routine? This may include use of a planner, organizing your desk/study area, identifying a study partner who will hold you accountable and encourage you to stick with your plan, cleaning, etc.

4. **Personal Wellness:** What can you do to ensure that you stay healthy, and physically and emotionally fit to accomplish everything that you need to? Speak about your physical activity, sleeping and eating habits, leisure/hobbies and how you can balance your social life with your academic and leadership responsibilities.



By signing below, I commit to following the plans outlined above so that I can progress academically and balance my responsibilities within the organization. I understand that my academics will be monitored by the scholarship chairman and faculty advisor during the semester.

Signature of Student Date

We have reviewed this member's academic recovery plan for the semester, and agree that its goals are realistic. We will check in with the member throughout the semester to support his efforts.

Faculty Advisor Signature Date

Scholarship Chair Signature Date