

Alumni Association and Alumni Chapter Guide



What are Delta Sigma Phi Alumni Associations and Chapters?

Alumni associations and chapters are important facets of Delta Sigma Phi. Delta Sigma Phi membership is a lifetime commitment. Membership in an alumni association/chapter is a continuation of that commitment. Alumni associations/chapters provide Fraternity alumni with opportunities for continued involvement in Delta Sigma Phi, albeit on a different level, after their graduation.

Alumni associations/chapters—like the Kiwanis, Rotary, and Lions Clubs—are voluntary organizations. No one is forced to be involved. Generally, alumni associations/chapters provide membership benefits that are similar to the organizations listed above. Social, service, and professional development opportunities are the programming mainstays of alumni associations. Alumni associations/chapters, however, provide additional benefits that the aforementioned organizations cannot.

An alumni association/chapter is a continuation of the brotherhood we all experienced as undergraduates. Members who may have completely divergent interests still have the common experience of Fraternity membership. Exciting opportunities, coupled with “that old Fraternity feeling,” give alumni associations/chapters a distinct advantage over other voluntary organizations.

In addition, strong alumni associations/chapters provide a continued link to the Fraternity following graduation. Alumni associations/chapters embody the fact that Delta Sigma Phi is more than a quarterly magazine and memories of days gone by; more than an occasional solicitation and a canceled check. Alumni associations/chapters prove that Delta Sigma Phi is a living, growing organization dedicated to serving its members for life. Alumni associations/chapters keep members in touch with the Fraternity and the Fraternity in touch with its members. That vital communications link, properly employed, can and will make Delta Sigma Phi great.

Types of Alumni Organizations

Alumni associations and chapters serve the same purpose, but have some slight differences. Alumni chapters are related to a specific undergraduate chapter and consist solely of alumni from that chapter. Normally, the alumni corporation board for an undergraduate chapter is directly related to the alumni chapter. Alumni associations, on the other hand, are related to a specific geographic region and are open to all alumni living in that region, regardless of their chapter. Alumni associations have no specific relationship with an undergraduate chapter, although they may choose to assist local groups on occasion.

Purposes of an Alumni Association/Chapter

The purposes of alumni associations/chapters vary from group to group. Most, however, have some basic purposes in common:

- ✓ To advance the name and ideals of Delta Sigma Phi.
- ✓ To provide social and professional contacts for Delta Sigma Phi alumni.
- ✓ To give vocational guidance and placement service assistance to alumni and graduating seniors.

- ✓ To provide support for the Fraternity and the Foundation, both financially and through active participation.
- ✓ To make and maintain contact with other Delta Sigma Phi alumni.
- ✓ To foster healthy Fraternity/community relations.
- ✓ To provide an outlet for community service and civic involvement for Delta Sigma Phi alumni.
- ✓ To assist recent graduates and other alumni new to the area in their transition.
- ✓ To reinforce that Delta Sigma Phi is an organization spanning the lifetime of its members.
- ✓ To provide a representative vote of alumni at Biennial National Conventions.

Chartering Requirements

In order to become recognized as an Alumni Association or Alumni Chapter a group must meet the following criteria.

For Alumni Associations:

1. The Alumni Association must have a paid membership of at least 25 alumni in good standing with the fraternity.
2. The paid membership must include alumni from a geographic area. Membership must include more than one chapter, i.e. Houston Area Alumni Association.
3. The Alumni Association must have at least two business meetings per year. A copy of Meeting Minutes should be submitted to Headquarters.
4. The group must also have elected officers, and a checking account
5. The Alumni Association must operate from a written set of bylaws, a copy of which must be on file at Headquarters.
6. The Alumni Association must formally petition the Grand Council for recognition as a chartered group.

For Alumni Chapters:

1. The Alumni Chapter must have a paid membership of at least 25 alumni in good standing with the fraternity.
2. The paid membership must include alumni from only one chapter, i.e. Alpha Alumni Chapter.
3. The Alumni Chapter must have had at least two business meetings per year. A copy of Meeting Minutes should be submitted to Headquarters.
4. The group must also have elected officers, and a checking account.
5. The Alumni Chapter must operate from a written set of bylaws, a copy of which must be on file at Headquarters.
6. The Alumni Chapter must formally petition the Grand Council for recognition as a chartered group.

Alumni Association/Chapter Organization

Elected Officers

Alumni associations/chapters should have at least four elected officers. Each association should have a President, Executive Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. These elected officers should perform, at minimum, the duties outlined below.

President

The President is responsible for the overall functioning of the association/chapter. He presides at all business meetings of the associations and should provide a written agenda for each meeting. He should ensure that members remain active in the association/chapter and that the association/chapter maintains an active meeting and event schedule. Finally, the President should file the alumni association/chapter annual report with the Fraternity Headquarters by March 15 of each year.

Executive Vice President

The Executive Vice President serves in the absence of the President. In addition, he should coordinate and direct the Vice Presidents and any other appointed officers of the association/chapter. Of special note is his work with the Vice President for Membership. The Executive Vice President should work closely with the Vice President for Membership in the planning, coordination, and implementation of the association's or chapter's annual membership drive.

Secretary

The Secretary should maintain a file of addresses and phone numbers for all area or chapter alumni. He should also maintain a current roster of all paid association/chapter members. In addition, the Secretary should record and report the minutes of each business meeting. Finally, the Secretary is responsible for sending notices, invitations, and other association/chapter correspondence to current members.

Treasurer

The Treasurer must coordinate the collection of association/chapter revenue and the disbursement of same. The Treasurer should develop a yearly budget for the association and report on the financial status of the association at each business meeting. Finally, he must file the proper tax forms with the government as outlined in the "Tax Requirements" section of this publication.

Appointed Officers

The following officers should be appointed by the President within two weeks of his election: Vice President for Membership, Vice President for Service, Vice President for Social, and Vice President for Programs. These officers, along with their committees, are responsible for specific programs outlined below. Well-established associations/chapters may choose to appoint other vice presidents and committees as the need and/or desire arises.

Membership

Chaired by the Vice President for Membership, this committee is responsible for recruiting new members into the association/chapter. The annual membership drive should be concentrated at the beginning and end of each fiscal year. This will focus intensive recruitment efforts into a period of a few months, leaving the remainder of the year open for planning. The association/chapter will receive alumni address updates from Headquarters periodically. The membership committee should contact these alumni and inform them of the existence of the association/chapter as soon as the address update is received.

Community Service and Involvement

Chaired by the Vice President for Service, this committee is responsible for organizing the community service activities of the association/chapter. They should attempt to organize at least three community service events each year. The great thing about most community service events is that they provide both a social and a service function. Major local events such as March of Dimes WalkAmerica or the Muscular Dystrophy Telethon are tremendous opportunities for involvement. Likewise, local service organizations such as a Boy's Club or Big Brothers of America provide many opportunities to serve the local community.

Education and Professional Development

Most associations/chapters schedule speakers on a monthly or bi-monthly basis, in conjunction with their regular business meetings. Chaired by the Vice President for Programs, this committee is responsible for coordinating the educational and professional development speakers for business meetings. Many educational opportunities exist in most communities. Speakers can range from local celebrities to association members with an expertise in a specific area. As an added benefit, interesting speakers usually help maintain good attendance at association meetings. With an educational or professional development speaker, members are more likely to feel they are getting something in return for their time.

Social and Recreational

Chaired by the Vice President for Social, this committee is responsible for coordinating association/chapter social events. Great care should be taken in this area because social events are the backbone of many associations. When planning these events, keep in mind that alumni have many different interests. Some alumni may enjoy a regular "Happy Hour" gathering. Others may prefer more family-oriented events such as attending local sporting events, family picnics, and theater nights. Associations/chapters should strive to maintain a balance in their social programming in order to appeal to the many interests of their membership base.

Alumni Association and Chapter Administration

Fiscal Year

Alumni associations/chapters should coordinate their fiscal year with the calendar year. This makes administration easier for both the association/chapter and the Fraternity Headquarters.

Reporting Requirements

In order to remain in good standing with the Fraternity, alumni associations/chapters must submit an annual report by March 15 of each year. The annual report is a summary of association/chapter activities for the previous fiscal year. Annual reports should include, at minimum, the following information:

1. Roster of paid membership
2. Copy of association/chapter bylaws
3. Copy of association/chapter calendar of events
4. Copy of association/chapter budget
5. Copy of Form 990, filed with the IRS (if applicable)

In addition to the information listed above, associations/chapters should feel free to highlight any outstanding events from the previous year.

Associations/chapters will receive periodic requests for information from the Headquarters. Officer and membership updates should be sent to the Headquarters on a regular basis throughout the fiscal year.

Tax Requirements

Each chartered alumni association/chapter is exempt from Federal Income Tax. However, if alumni association/chapter income exceeds \$25,000, this exemption does not relieve the group of its responsibility to file an annual return. Failure to do so may result in the loss of tax exempt status and make the association/chapter liable for payment of income tax.

The income tax return mentioned above, Form 990, is actually an information return that can be obtained at the local office of the Internal Revenue Service. It must be filed annually by the 15th day of the fifth month following the close of the association's or chapter's fiscal year. It needs to be filed only if the chapter's income exceeds \$25,000.

Failure to submit Form 990 will cause IRS penalties of \$10 per day (not to exceed \$5,000) to be assessed against the association and a similar penalty assessed against the officer who failed to file the return.

Business Meetings

Alumni associations/chapters should strive to hold business meetings on a regular basis. The definition of "regular," however, varies from group to group. Some associations/chapters meet monthly. Others meet on a bi-monthly basis. Still others meet quarterly. The key is to select the

same day, time, and place for each business meeting. For example, the association/chapter may choose the first Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. in a local meeting place to hold its business meetings.

In order to remain in good standing, associations must hold at least four business meetings each year. More frequent business meetings, however, are usually the norm at the most successful alumni associations/chapters.

“Special” Events

Other association/chapter events should occur on a monthly basis. Most associations/chapters find success in having one “special” event each month, in addition to the regular business meeting. “Special” events fall into one of three categories: social and recreational; community service and involvement; and education and professional development. Please note that these categories are similar to the association/chapter committees suggested earlier in this publication.

Recruiting Members

Recruiting alumni to become involved in your association/chapter is very similar to recruitment in an undergraduate chapter. Alumni associations/chapters do, however, have an advantage over the undergraduates—the alumni who are being recruited are already members of the Fraternity. They have experienced Delta Sigma Phi as undergraduates and, if sold appropriately on the benefits of alumni association/chapter membership, are sure to become involved. The real difficulty is creating the benefits, which are a direct result of the quality and appeal of the association’s or chapter’s programming.

The most important thing to remember when attempting to recruit association/chapter members is that alumni come in all ages and stages. What is appealing to the recent graduate will often not appeal to the retirement-age alumnus. In order to recruit across all of the ages and stages, associations/chapters must plan events and activities that will appeal to the different needs and desires of alumni. A gross generalization of the different ages and stages of alumni, along with corresponding interests follows:

Age	Stage	Interests
25-30	Recent Graduate	May be new to area Usually have no children Unmarried or newlywed Social and networking opportunities are selling points
30-40	Thirtysomethings	Career advancement a top priority Usually married with young children Educational and professional development opportunities are selling points
40-50	Settled Mid-lifers	Career track firm Family-oriented events, educational and professional development opportunities, and community service are selling points.

50-60	Empty Nesters	Close to high point in career Children leaving home Professional development, community service are selling points
60-70	Retirement-aged	May have much spare time Children usually on their own; may have grandchildren Usually avocational interests and personal expertise may appeal to these alumni
70+	Retired	Involvement may slow Enjoy consistent contact Social opportunities, helping younger alumni are appealing

Remember—these are generalizations and will not reflect the interests of all alumni in any category. The best way to determine the interests of an alumnus is to ask him. A sample survey is included in the appendices as an example.

Another important factor to consider in recruitment is participation. Successful alumni associations/chapters realize that only a small core group will be very active and participate in the vast majority of association/chapter events. Most members will be moderately active and attend five or six events each year. Finally, some alumni will be barely active and attend only one or two association/chapters events each year. Associations/chapters should keep this in mind and refuse to measure the success or failure of the association/chapter on the number of members attending each event. Conversely, the measure of success for an alumni association/chapter should be the number of total members and the quality of each event. All alumni should be embraced and continuously contacted by the association/chapter. An association/chapter can collect membership dues from even the barely active members!

The final aspect of recruitment is persistence. While most of the association's or chapter's recruitment efforts should be concentrated at the end and beginning of each fiscal year, regular updates from the association/chapter can be successful in generating mid-year members. Associations/chapters should send information, through a newsletter, postcard, email, or by phone, to all area alumni on a quarterly basis. Nothing sells the benefits of membership more effectively than publicizing the great events non-members miss. Let them know what they are missing by not being involved!

Appendices

Contents

Appendix A *Association Bylaws*

Associations/chapters must have bylaws in order to be chartered by the Fraternity. Bylaws assist in the maintenance of an efficient organization and provide procedural consistency. Associations/chapters should feel free to adopt the enclosed bylaws as a starting point. As the need arises, bylaws can be added or deleted at the discretion of the association/chapter. Try to avoid creating a bureaucratic nightmare with the bylaws. Keep things as simple as possible.

Appendix B *Survey*

A useful method of assessing the needs and desires of current and potential association/chapter members is through a survey. These can be printed and mailed as a part of the yearly membership drive or as a separate mailing. Not only does a survey provide input from area alumni, but it also reminds non-member alumni that an association/chapter is functioning in their area. Surveys should be kept short, easy to complete, and easy to return. The Headquarters can put together and mail surveys similar to the sample in the appendices.

Appendix C *Announcements/Newsletters*

An easy method of announcing the formation of an association/chapter or communicating association/chapter activities is through a newsletter similar to the example in the appendices. The Headquarters will customize, publish, and mail newsletters or announcements for alumni associations/chapters. The cost of such a mailing will be worked out upon inquiry by the association.

Sample Bylaws

Note: These can be easily adapted for a Delta Sigma Phi Alumni Chapter.

Bylaws of the _____ Alumni Association of Delta Sigma Phi

Article I—Purpose

The purpose of the _____ Alumni Association of Delta Sigma Phi, hereafter referred to as the Association, is to provide social and recreational, community service and involvement, and educational and professional development opportunities for all Delta Sigma Phi alumni living in the _____ area.

Article II—Membership

Section 1. Qualifications

Membership of the Association shall be open to any alumnus of Delta Sigma Phi Fraternity living in the _____ area and in good standing with the Fraternity.

Section 2. Current Membership

Current membership shall be defined as an alumnus who has paid either lifetime or outlined in Article III, Section 2. The term of annual membership is the fiscal year of the Association as outlined in Article III, Section 1.

Article III—Finances

Section 1. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Association shall be January 1 through December 31.

Section 2. Dues

Lifetime dues are \$_____ and entitle Association membership for life, provided the member remains in good standing with the Fraternity. Annual dues are \$_____ and entitle Association membership for the duration of the fiscal year. Annual dues are due by the first meeting of the fiscal year.

Article IV—Meetings

Section 1. Regularity of Business Meetings

Business meetings shall be held on a bi-monthly basis during the fiscal year. A minimum of six business meetings shall be held during each fiscal year.

Section 2. Quorum

Quorum shall be defined as the number of members present at a regular business meeting.

Section 3. Voting

Only current members present at a regular business meeting may vote on business matters of the Association. No vote may be cast by proxy.

Section 4. Procedure

Business meetings of the Association shall be run in accordance with the Delta Sigma Phi Ritual. All other procedural matters will be determined by generally accepted rules of parliamentary procedure.

Article V—Officers

Section 1. Elected Officers

The elected officers of the Association shall include the President, Executive Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Officers shall be elected to the last meeting of the fiscal year.

Section 2. Appointed Officers

Appointed officers of the Association shall include Vice President for Membership, Vice President for Service, Vice President for Social, and Vice President for Programs. The President shall appoint these officers within two weeks of election.

Section 3. Other Officers

The President may appoint other officers from time to time as the need arises.

Section 4. Term of Office

The term of each office shall correspond to the fiscal year as defined in Article III, Section 1. No member may serve more than three (3) successive terms in any one elected or appointed office.

Article VI—Duties of Officers

Section 1. General Duties

It shall be the general responsibility of the officers to act as and for the Association in the advisement and direction of the financial, organizational, and programmatic affairs of the Association. In addition, it is the duty of each officer to strive toward the purpose of the Association as outlined in Article I.

Section 2. President

The President shall preside over all regular and special meetings of the Association, direct and carry out the policies of the Association, and oversee the general workings of the Association. He shall act on behalf of the Association in all appropriate activities and provide written agendas for all business meetings.

Section 3. Executive Vice President

The Executive Vice President shall serve in absence of the President. In addition, he shall direct and coordinate any of the appointed officers of the Association.

Section 4. Secretary

The Secretary shall maintain a roster of all current association members as well as a file of all _____ area alumni. In addition, the Secretary shall record and report the minutes of all regular and special meetings. Finally, the Secretary shall coordinate notices, invitations, and other correspondence to Association members and the Fraternity Headquarters.

Section 5. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall administer all revenues and disbursements of the Association. He shall prepare a yearly budget and report on the financial status of the Association at each business meeting. Finally, he shall complete and file all appropriate tax forms with the government.

Section 6. Appointed Officers

Appointed officers are responsible for planning, directing, and implementing the specific program areas delegated to them and their committee by the President.

Article VII—Amendments

This document shall be amended by a two-thirds affirmative vote of current members present at a regular business meeting.

Sample Survey

Note: These can be easily adapted for a Delta Sigma Phi Alumni Chapter.

_____ *Alumni Association of Delta Sigma Phi*

A group of Delta Sig alumni in the _____ area are starting an alumni association. We are identifying other area alumni who would be interested in a leadership role and, at the same time, gauging the types of events alumni would like to see the association sponsor. Please use this questionnaire to tell us what you think and how you would like to be involved. This questionnaire is a great way to start your involvement, so please take a couple of minutes to complete and return it. Thanks for your valuable time!

1. I am interested in seeing a strong Delta Sigma Phi alumni association in the _____ area.
Yes No
2. I am interested in taking a leadership role in the alumni association.
Yes No
3. The day for me to attend business/organizational meetings is:
Mon. Tues. Wed. Thurs. Fri. Sat. Sun.
4. The best time of day for meetings is:
Morning Afternoon Evening
5. Location preferences (type of facility, e.g. home of alumnus, local restaurant, etc.):
6. The association should sponsor the following types of "special" events:

	<u>Great</u>	<u>Maybe</u>	<u>No</u>
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 - a. Concert/Theater/Museum Trip
 - b. Family picnic
 - c. Golf outing
 - d. Local community service events
 - e. Sporting event attendance (football, etc.)
 - f. Happy hours at a central location
 - g. Sponsor a Little League team
 - h. Luncheon with an interesting speaker
 - i. Outdoor activity (hiking, biking, etc.)
 - j. Participate in a sports league (softball, etc.)
 - k. Other suggestions:
7. "Special" events should be held on (mark as many as apply):

Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
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8. Individual cost for "special" events should be limited to:

\$5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30
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9. Individual cost for annual membership dues should be limited to:

\$25	\$30	\$35	\$40	\$45	\$50
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10. Additional comments or suggestions:

Name:

Address:

Day phone:

Email

This is a new address

Chapter:

City, State, Zip

Evening phone:

Six Simple Steps To Creating an Alumni Association/Chapter

- Step 1: Create a Core Group
- a. contact alumni you know personally
 - b. contact alumni from different chapters
 - c. contact alumni from far way chapters
 - d. get 5-10 strong commitments
 - e. set date, time, and place of planning meeting
 - f. send written reminders of planning meeting
- Step 2: Hold a Planning Meeting
- a. with core group
 - b. determine purpose of alumni association/chapter
 - c. determine best method to contact other area alumni
 - d. review chartering requirements and process
 - e. review sample bylaws and organizational structure
 - f. set date, time, and place for organizational meeting
 - g. set agenda for organizational meeting
- Step 3: Contact All Area Alumni
- a. by phone and/or by mail and/or personally
 - b. notify of intent to start alumni association/chapter
 - c. notify of alumni association purpose
 - d. notify of date, time, and place of organizational meeting
 - e. see attached sample announcement that the HQ can customize to your association/chapter
- Step 4: Hold an Organizational Meeting
- a. discuss purpose of alumni association/chapter
 - b. send around attendance list
 - c. brainstorm ideas for possible events/activities
 - d. review chartering requirements and process
 - e. set yearly dues
 - f. announce officer positions and responsibilities
 - g. set date, time, and place for regular meetings
- Step 5: Continue Recruiting Members
- a. contact by phone, mail, personally
 - b. notify of results of organizational meeting
 1. dues structure
 2. people who attended and chapter
 3. potential events
 4. chartering requirements
 5. regular meeting dates, times and places

- c. play up benefits of membership
- d. have regular contact (monthly) for first six months
- e. update on who has paid dues/joined the association
- f. update on upcoming events
- g. consider sending an interest survey

Step 6:

Continue Meeting Regularly

- a. even if attendance is poor at first
- b. elect officers and appoint committees
- c. adopt bylaws
- d. plan yearly calendar of events
- e. introduce any new participants to everyone at meeting/event