

DEAR SIGMA CHALLENGE COORDINATOR,

As the Sigma Challenge Coordinator, large opportunities lie ahead. New members are excited and have high expectations. If you work hard, your actions could directly improve your chapter for the next several years. You are literally creating, building, and shaping our new members who will create, build, and shape our Fraternity.

Your duty is to provide new members a foundation on which they can build a successful fraternity experience. This foundation includes a knowledge of Sigma Phi Epsilon, as well as an understanding of how SigEp fits into both personal collegiate experiences. You also have the responsibility, along with the rest of the chapter, to clearly articulate the expectations of membership in Sigma Phi Epsilon.

Try to remember when you first joined the Fraternity. You wanted to know what SigEp was all about. You wanted to know all of your new brothers. This must remain the focus of Sigma Phi Epsilon whenever it educates its newest members.



The Balanced Man Program takes member education a step further. Not only are we concerned with a young man's orientation into Sigma Phi Epsilon, but we know that our best members are good students and concerned citizens with many outside interests.

You and your chapter must create a Sigma Challenge that builds unity between new members and old members of the chapter, while at the same time allowing for individual development.

For a chapter to successfully educate new members, it must instill a sense of obligation and belonging. Also, with this obligation and tradition, new members must feel they are valued as individuals.

There are specific objectives outlined for the Sigma Challenge that you must ensure are addressed. Members in this challenge must:

- Register with Headquarters.
- Develop goals and an action plan.
- Review and understand the symbols and the history of the Fraternity.
- Complete the Covenant and Milestones sections in *The Quest*.
- Be active participants in the chapter's recruitment efforts.
- Become acquainted with the men of the chapter.
- Participate in community service.
- Participate in chapter meetings
- Participate in the chapter's campus orientation program.
- Recruit a mentor for the Phi Challenge.

Along with helping new members meet their expectations, you have expectations of your own to meet. You should:

- ❑ Read the Sigma and Phi Rites of Passage.
- ❑ Meet with the mentors for members in the Sigma Challenge and explain their role.
- ❑ Develop or update a campus orientation program and guide.
- ❑ Develop or update a chapter orientation program.
- ❑ Work with the Vice President of Programming to create a calendar at the beginning of each term.
- ❑ Distribute the calendar to all chapter members and include it in the new members' orientation handouts.
- ❑ Assist members in transitioning to the Phi Challenge. Help members keep track of their journey by using the *Sigma Challenge Tracker* located at the end of this guide.
- ❑ Help ensure that the new member forms and fees (\$220) are sent to Headquarters within 48 hours of the Sigma Rite of Passage.
- ❑ These objectives are best achieved through Sigma Challenge meetings held once a week for about an hour each time.

Encourage the members to bring a personal calendar or schedule to each chapter and challenge meeting. Try hosting Sigma Challenge meetings after chapter meetings each week for 30 minutes.

Sigma Challenge meetings provide an opportunity to cover material in *The Quest*, as well as organize events for the coming weeks and check on the progress of Challenge members.

Challenge yourself to put together a program that is fun and educational. Many SigEp alumni claim that their best college memories come from when they joined SigEp. As always, there is no place for hazing or substance abuse in new member education. A good new member program is vital to chapter operations.

If you have any questions, call your Balanced Man Steward, your Regional Director, or the Director of the Balanced Man Initiative for assistance. Good luck!

Keys to Success

- One long activity is not as effective as several shorter ones.
- People remember a huge amount of what they **hear, see, and physically do**.
- Lecturing is unquestionably the least effective form of teaching.
- More effective teaching/meeting techniques include small group discussions, journal writing, individual and group presentations, use of a variety of media, and a variety of speakers.
- **START MEETINGS ON TIME!** There is no better way to turn off a sharp guy than to waste his time because the “slackers” are late.
- Start each meeting by telling the membership what the goals are you want to accomplish during the meeting.
- End the meeting summarizing important things to remember.
- Encourage members to have a specific folder or binder to keep fraternity stuff in, or things may get lost.
- Inside jokes do not have a place at chapter and challenge meetings.



THE ORIENTATION PROGRAM

What we want is to see the youth in pursuit of knowledge, not knowledge in pursuit of the youth.

~ George Bernard Shaw

Every chapter is unique. Every campus is different. It is a critical step in a new member's adjustment and assimilation period for the chapter to provide guidance in this area.

There are two types of orientation programs that should be conducted. The first, a campus orientation that provides each member with tips for campus success. The second, a chapter orientation that allows new members to meet and interact with the rest of the chapter.

GUIDELINES

Campus orientation:

- ❑ Each member of the Sigma Challenge is expected to participate in the program.
- ❑ A campus orientation program should be developed by the chapter and revised each year. This program should include a list of each member's current campus activities. This list will help younger members discover potential activities of interest.

Chapter orientation:

- ❑ Each member of the Sigma Challenge is expected to participate in the program.
- ❑ The Vice President of Member Development and the Sigma Challenge Coordinator are responsible for organizing and conducting a chapter orientation program.



CAMPUS ORIENTATION

The chapter should create an orientation program and accompanying folder for each member to keep as a reference throughout his college career. The program should function as an introduction into these areas:

- Physical
- Intellectual/academic
- Social
- Occupational
- Emotional
- Spiritual



To be effective, the orientation program must concentrate on teaching individuals the importance of assuming responsibility to engage each of those areas.

The program itself should consist of two parts:

1. A guided tour by a member of the chapter
2. A set of written materials prepared by the chapter pertaining to its specific community.

Use the following forms as guidelines when preparing your own unique, creative orientation program.

Remember, in addition to generic categories of information, your orientation program and handouts should include information that really helps new members (especially freshmen) learn the “ins and outs” of your school. Include information on:

- Professors
- Classes
- Places to study around campus
- Academic Resources (i.e., writing center, math lab, chemistry lab)
- Where to find job opportunities on and around campus
- Cool and unusual facts about the school and community

Utilize the older members of the chapter for their knowledge and experience. Provide enough interesting and helpful information that will make the campus start to feel like home for your new members.

INCLUDE	ON THE TOUR	IN THE HANDOUT
Physical:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The campus recreation/athletic complex • Intramural facilities • Campus safety department • Student Activities Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hours of the athletic complex • List of the intramural sports that the chapter participates in, including the chapter's coach • Information on the importance and advantages of exercise
Intellectual/Academic:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic/tutoring resource center • Campus and/or department library Provide or arrange for a separate library tour if it is not part of the curriculum. • Department office for the appropriate major 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedure for obtaining tutors and assistance from the resource center • Outline of the chapter's tutoring program • Hours of operation of the library
Social:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Activities Center • International Affairs Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter's calendar including dates of activities, homecoming, etc. • Information on shopping, local restaurants, a map of town, etc.
Occupational:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career placement center • Co-op office or internship resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sample résumé from one of the men in the chapter
Emotional:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Counseling Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some information about the center and when an individual should seek assistance
Spiritual:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus ministry offices • Local churches/synagogues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of members who participate with spiritual organizations

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Shopping:

Local mall
Address:

Wal-Mart
Address:

Hardware store
Address:

Other important or interesting shopping places
Address:
Address:
Address:

Entertainment:

Golf course
Address:

Bowling alley
Address:

Arcade
Address:

Other fun and interesting places to visit
Address:
Address:
Address:

Dining:

\$\$\$	\$\$	\$	Chapter Favorites
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL

Student Counseling Center

Location:

Phone:

Hours:

Religious Opportunities

RELIGION

MEMBERS WHO ATTEND

Jewish

Catholic

Lutheran

Baptist

Methodist

Episcopalian

CAMPUS CULTURE

Student Activities Office

Location:

Phone:

Hours:

Campus Activities and Organizations

ORGANIZATION

CHAPTER MEMBERS WHO ARE INVOLVED

CHAPTER ORIENTATION

The chapter is responsible for creating an orientation program that will facilitate the speedy assimilation of new members into the chapter. The method you use should be tailored to your specific chapter. Develop creative programs or use the suggestions provided.

To begin, use the Experiential Learning section of *The Lexicon* or use one of the two exercises described here.

MEMBERSHIP MATRIX

Selecting a good mentor can only be accomplished after you have gotten acquainted with the older men in the chapter. One of the ways to facilitate this is for the chapter to provide a “Membership Matrix.”

Procedure: Create a chart with a grid. List the members’ names in a column on the left side. List the names of the new members across the top of the grid. Post the chart conspicuously. Ask each member and new member to shade his half of the square when he feels he knows the other person well. This is a visual reminder to the entire chapter to make an effort to know the new members, and it identifies those who may need a push in getting to know others.

FRATERNITY ORIENTATION

The Sigma Challenge provides a great opportunity to educate new members on the history and philosophy of the national Fraternity. They are joining an



organization much larger than the local chapter. A successful fraternity orientation program should include a history on our founding, the specifics of the Balanced Man Program and the Leadership Continuum, opportunities each member is afforded as both an undergraduate and alumnus, as well as resources available at Headquarters. Additionally, a great way to introduce your members to the national Fraternity is to sign up for a New Member Camp near your chapter. The Camp offers your new members an opportunity to meet other members, learn some new skills, as well as more about the national Fraternity and the Balanced Man Ideal.

The Fraternity’s Little Instruction Book

One of the best ways to introduce new members to the culture of the chapter—its history, its character, its personality—is to create a fraternity Little Instruction Book. This idea is based on the book, *Life’s Little Instruction Book* (1991) written by H. Jackson Brown, Jr. (Rutledge Hill Press, Nashville, Tennessee).

Life’s Little Instruction Book was written from a father’s point of view. H. Jackson Brown collected his thoughts, suggestions, and reminders on how to live a happy and rewarding life. Brown neatly typed all of his notes and presented them to his son on the day his son embarked on his journey through college.

Procedure: The chapter members should each write down one suggestion on how to have a good fraternity experience and how to make the most of one’s college years. The members should sign their names next to their suggestion.

Gather these quotations and suggestions and compile them into one book to be presented to all the Fraternity’s new members. This book should become a meaningful fraternity tradition with some quality quotes and suggestions. Each year it should be added to by the new men of the chapter.