

CHAPTERS OF EXCELLENCE:

MAINTAINING ACTIVE AND OUTSTANDING CHAPTERS OF THE HONOR SOCIETY OF PHI KAPPA PHI

Phi Kappa Phi chapters can be leaders in recognizing and promoting academic excellence. While chapters function differently on each campus and what works on one campus may not work for another, there are some basic characteristics that active and 'excellent' chapters seem to share.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ACTIVE AND OUTSTANDING CHAPTERS

- Active chapters have a dedicated nucleus of faculty who are willing to devote time to the operation of the chapter.
- Chapters host events and activities in addition to an annual initiation. Chapters engage students and the campus through these additional activities.
- Chapters have a good rapport with the administration of the institution. By presenting scholarships and sponsoring academic, social and service events, chapters gain visibility and establish themselves as institutional assets.
- Students are actively involved and assist with planning activities in active chapters.
- Active chapters charge dues and maintain sufficient funds for meaningful chapter activities and operations. Chapters use dues to support student scholarships and awards.

PROFILES: CHAPTERS OF EXCELLENCE

Following are profiles – a quick glance at some exemplary chapters of Phi Kappa Phi. These chapters and their efforts are presented as a resource to you and your chapter. It is our hope that this information will aid all chapters in advancing the Society's mission to recognize and promote academic excellence, engage the community of scholars in service to others, and let the love of learning rule humanity.

WORKING WITH ADMINISTRATION TO ATTRACT NEW MEMBERS

Mississippi State University has established a long and working relationship with the deans of its respective colleges. After an electronic membership invitation is sent by chapter officers, deans address and sign a personal letter to each invited student in their college. Letters are mailed to the student's home address on file, and at the initiation ceremony, deans introduce students from their respective colleges.

To capitalize on the excitement and importance of the occasion, the date of the chapter's first business meeting is announced at the initiation ceremony. In addition to door prizes, students are told that they will receive a t-shirt if they attend the first business meeting, which is used primarily to discuss scholarship opportunities and begin planning a student-led activity.

The chapter recognizes its members through its web site and broad campus advertising. To date, each of the university's presidents has been initiated.

PROMOTING A LOVE OF LEARNING THROUGH CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

Phi Kappa Phi at **San Diego State University** is immersed in campus culture. The chapter is represented on the University's Honors Council, which is comprised of student and faculty representatives of the University Honors Program and six campus-wide multidisciplinary honor societies. The chapter has made a conscious effort to reach out to and partner with all campus entities dedicated to promoting high academic standards and instilling a love for learning. As such, the chapter, in collaboration with the Honors Council and other campus partners, has played a key role in a number of activities that provide positive and intellectual learning experiences for its members and the campus at-large. Some of these activities include:

Henry L. Janseen Last Lecture - modeled after the popular book, *The Last Lecture*, by Randy Pausch, the SDSU lecture series annually selects a faculty member to speak on a topic close to their heart. The goal is to answer one question: If you could speak about what matters most to you, what would you say?

Student Research Symposium - The Student Research Symposium is open to undergraduate, masters and doctoral students. Participants present their original research, scholarship, or creative activities through poster and oral presentations.

Common Experience - Common Experience cultivates a common conversation, encourages participation, and fosters a sense of community among students, staff, faculty and the broader San Diego Community. This year's Common Experience theme is Science, Ethics, and Moral Courage; the common experience book is *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot. The Common Experience provides resources and events to enrich campus courses and the academic culture. Activities held in conjunction with Common Experience will include: a monthly lecture series addressing science, ethics and moral courage; a discussion with book author Rebecca Skloot; and an international photo contest, *Images of Moral Courage*, to highlight the Experience theme and the work of study abroad students.

In addition to the aforementioned, the chapter has hosted the San Diego State Study Abroad Tanzania Literacy Project. This project installed 6,000 books at a primary school in Tanzania. The trip also sparked the Goats for Kids project, which will allow the school to provide a lunch of porridge and milk (both from fresh goat milk) to students. SDSU students will again travel to Tanzania to assist young learners in the library and purchase goats.

To keep everyone abreast of the numerous chapter activities and opportunities, the chapter meets once per month. Agendas allow time for both socializing and business. Student vice-presidents and the chapter's president attend once monthly Honors Council meetings.

COMMITTED TO HONOR AND EXCELLENCE

The chapter of Phi Kappa Phi at **Brigham Young** is fully endorsed by the university and honors its best students as well as faculty, alumni and administrators through induction and recognition from the Honor Society. Representatives from each college serve on the chapter's board that plans an annual initiation banquet drawing nearly 700 people. University administration is well represented at the ceremony and a number of awards are given to campus and alumni members including: Distinguished Alumni, Distinguished Member, Distinguished Honor, and Student Vice President Outstanding Service. Yearly, the chapter awards a scholarship to an undergraduate student with high academic achievement and moral character (the scholarship is endowed by a chapter member). Other chapter honors include a visual and performing arts award and a Fellowship Nominee and Nominee runner-up award.

The chapter sponsors both service and academic enrichment activities. Its Fall Meeting is a presentation – The Honored Faculty Lecture. Selected by university administration, the faculty lecturer receives recognition and an honorarium from Phi Kappa Phi. Additionally, the chapter hosts a university-wide research paper competition for all undergraduate students. Papers written for any regular academic course and nominated by the faculty member or administrator for whom it was written are eligible for the outstanding paper award. For each class level, Phi Kappa Phi members select first and second place winners. Winners names are inscribed on a permanent plaque displayed on campus in the library.

In addition to student vice-presidents (who undergo a vetting process), student members gain a voice in the chapter through the chapter's student council, represented by a council chair and vice-chair. Students play a large role in coordinating service initiatives, which generally focus on literacy and elementary education. Aligned with the university's core values, the chapter recognizes first good character, followed by academic excellence. The chapter is connected to the university's Honors Program.

USING THE PRESENCE OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD TO RECOGNIZE AND PROMOTE SCHOLARSHIP

East Carolina University strengthens its tradition of scholarly engagement and campus prestige by maintaining an executive board of the chapter that is large, diverse in discipline, and includes high level administration. Board members span the entire campus and are involved in chapter planning and oversight.

In addition to the traditional positions of president, secretary and treasurer, the chapter's Executive Committee, which meets monthly, is comprised of: directors for academic disciplines, a public relations officer, administrative assistant, faculty and staff selection committee, alumni and distinguished merit award committee, national and local awards committee, public affairs committee, initiation committee, recognition area committee, and archives committee. Students are represented on the board, and the chapter maintains a professional and current web site that lists current scholarship and award winners, recent inductees, faculty members and chapter officers.

Priority for the executive board is a grand and formal initiation ceremony and reception, usually attracting 700-800 people. Students receive invitation letters from the chancellor, a committed member of the chapter and Society. Additionally, the chancellor keynotes the initiation with administrators and deans actively involved. Each initiate's honors and accomplishments are announced during the ceremony.

To stimulate the campus' academic environment, the board plans a significant multi-disciplinary educational event each year. The board also awards several chapter scholarships including a first year scholarship and graduate fellowship in honor of a former chapter member. The chapter remains distinguished on campus with symbols prominently displayed in the walkway of the largest classroom building.

RECOGNITION FOR THE CHAPTER

Phi Kappa Phi at **Louisiana State University** has more than doubled its membership in the past two years. How? Chapter officers have worked to raise the visibility of Phi Kappa Phi on campus, and promote the prestige and opportunities available to student members.

The chapter plays a unique role on campus by recognizing academic excellence, offering students meaningful ways to engage, and publicizing the chapter and its members. The chapter engages in volunteer community service and regularly hosts a lecture series. The chapter also maintains an active Facebook page.

Most notably, the chapter hosts an ‘Evening with Great Authors,’ a fundraising event and seminar that benefits charity. Following remarks by the chapter and a given author, a book signing and reception are held. Last year the chapter raised thousands for the local charity Adult Literacy Advocates. Adult Literacy Advocates offer tutoring and group instruction in adult basic literacy, English as a Second Language, GED preparation, and basic employment skills.

To distinguish the society, chapter officers have made Phi Kappa Phi one of only three campus scholastic organizations whose student members are allowed to wear Honors cords at commencement. The chapter awards several scholarships to students: outstanding junior, outstanding senior, outstanding master’s student, outstanding doctoral student, fellowship nominee, fellowship first and second place, as well as three non-tenured professor awards, outstanding alumni award and chapter appreciation awards. All chapter events, activities and awards are promoted broadly through campus and local media.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP FUELS ACTIVITY

A Student Group of Phi Kappa Phi - The chapter at **The Ohio State University** is fueled by activities to engage students, many of which are led by the Student Group of Phi Kappa Phi. The Student Group of Phi Kappa Phi (distinct from the chapter of Phi Kappa Phi) is a full fledged campus student organization. The student group is led and managed by students, and receives all the offerings and resources from the university’s Center for Student Leadership and Service at the Ohio Union. These offerings include a leadership library, meeting space, student organization offices and graphic and multi-media services. The President and Vice-president of the student group serve as vice-presidents on the chapter’s executive board.

The student group of Phi Kappa Phi has led numerous campus and local activities including Princeton Review workshops, Phi Kappa Phi informational booths at student fairs, the creation of chapter tee shirts, and community volunteer service. After the chapter partnered with a local elementary school to raise funds for education, the student group began tutoring at the school, helping K-5 students with math, reading and music education.

The chapter kicks off its year with an annual OSU football tailgate in partnership with an OSU Alumni Club. The tailgate is open before and after the game and offers an opportunity for members to socialize and network. Alumni usually attend the tailgate, which builds connections between alumni and campus members. Together, with students, the chapter has organized hockey nights, pizza parties, and jazz sessions for campus members and alumni. The chapter also hosts an annual meeting with a prominent speaker.

Utilizing Student Vice-Presidents - **Indiana University of Pennsylvania** utilizes students to drive chapter activity. With ten to twelve motivated student vice-presidents the chapter stays active and remains visible on campus. Responsibilities for students (undergraduate and graduate) include maintaining the chapter’s *Facebook* page and web site, and coordinating social events, community service, fundraising, photography, and professional development. Students also serve as liaisons between the chapter, student organizations, and their respective academic departments.

Thus far, LSAT strategy sessions, GRE strategy sessions, mixers, and workshops on academic writing and publishing have been sponsored by the chapter and planned by student vice-presidents. Activities are central to the chapter’s success, and students are currently considering a community service project – adopting a local public library that has been downsized due to budget cuts.

To further promote its presence across campus, the chapter honors the author from of the university’s Common Freshman Reader Lecture and co-sponsors Research Appreciation Week. Outstanding research by faculty and graduate students and scholarly work by graduates and undergraduates is acknowledged and rewarded during research appreciation week. Phi Kappa

Phi recognizes one student from each college for their exceptional work and accomplishments, and sponsors their research award.

Of note, to make induction a real celebration and recognition of student accomplishment, the chapter is considering more intimate initiation ceremonies by college.

SHOWCASING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

The University of West Alabama actively plans to recognize students and faculty who excel.

To date the chapter has participated in or sponsored a number of activities to recognize outstanding students through colloquiums with the School of Graduate Studies, scholarship fundraising dinners, fall socials, and the Honors Day Convocation, to name a few.

- During the fall and spring semesters, the chapter co-sponsors a Colloquium that provides a forum for faculty and students to share original research, scholarship and creative work with the university community. Immediately following the colloquium a Phi Kappa Phi Academic Scholarship fundraising dinner is held. This event allows the chapter to demonstrate its value, and raises funds for student awards.
- At its Fall Social, which is held in the President's house on campus, the chapter showcases its scholarships and awards. The social is for all members but planned to attract new and potential Phi Kappa Phi members (invitations are sent to eligible undergraduates). The evening provides an occasion for the chapter to present its members, efforts, opportunities and benefits. Information about the chapter is displayed and potential members are invited to ask questions.
- At the University's Honors Day Convocation, faculty and staff recognize students for their honor society memberships, and several scholarships and special awards are presented. The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi announces its current members and inductees. The chapter also presents awards and fellowships, including two awards to entice potential members – the *Emerging Sophomore* awards.

To further showcase academic excellence, the chapter's initiation ceremony includes deans announcing and presenting students from their respective colleges and provosts presenting faculty, staff and honorary memberships. Rising sophomores are recognized at the initiation ceremony, and a Great Minds Award is given to a faculty member who has excelled in scholarship and service.

The chapter displays its awards in campus buildings at the University of West Alabama, and at graduation the provost is dressed with only one stole – Phi Kappa Phi.

THE SOCIETY'S CHAPTER RECOGNITION PROGRAM

The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi annually recognizes and awards chapters of excellence. Awards are given to chapters that comply with the Society's national standards. By receiving the Chapter of Excellence distinction, a chapter is being recognized as a thriving organization that recognizes and promotes academic excellence and engages scholars.

2010-2011 Featured Chapters of Excellence

Headquarters thanks the following chapter officers for sharing information about their chapters:

Scott Howell, Ph.D. (chapter president)

Director, Salt Lake Center

Brigham Young University

Missy Hopper, Ph.D. (chapter president)

Curriculum, Instruction, and Special Education

Mississippi State University

Glen G. Gilbert, Ph.D. (chapter president)

Professor and Dean, College of Health & Human Performance

East Carolina University

Christopher Frost, Ph.D. (chapter President)

Associate Dean, Division of Undergraduate Education

San Diego State University

Dennis Giever, Ph.D. (chapter president)

Professor, Department of Criminology

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Cheria V. Dial, M.A. (chapter vice-president)

Associate Director, University Honors and Scholars Center

The Ohio State University

Richard Vlosky, Ph.D. (chapter president)

Crosby Land and Resources Professor in Forest Sector Business
Development

Director, Louisiana Products Development Center

Louisiana State University Agricultural Center

Mark D. Davis, Ph.D. (chapter president)

Chair, Department of Behavioral Sciences

Assistant Professor, Psychology

The University of West Alabama

The following chapters are also 2010-2011 chapters of excellence:

Austin Peay State University

University of Michigan

Youngstown State University

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