



DELTA TAU DELTA

**DIRECTOR OF ACADEMIC
AFFAIRS**

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INTRODUCTION

Delta Tau Delta operates on the principle of both communal and self-education. Academic development cannot occur in isolation from others. All chapter programming should be a broader holistic academic plan extending from recruitment through new member and member education (i.e. The Road). Only with a holistic approach to chapter operations that includes academics will a chapter reach its full potential.

The chapter director of academic affairs serves as the chief academic officer of the chapter. He focuses on academic programs and monitors the academic content and quality of all chapter operations. By these activities, he establishes a positive fraternal learning community and enriches the experiences of the individual members. He must ensure low academic achievers receive appropriate attention regarding their special academic needs.

He serves as a member of the chapter's executive committee in order to assess chapter programming as appropriate to the academic mission of the Fraternity. He will establish expectations for high standards of academic achievement. Every November he will report the chapter's academic status in the Academic Excellence section of the Fraternity Awards/Accreditation Report (FAAR). It will also be important to work alongside the faculty academic advisor to facilitate his/her involvement in chapter operations.

The primary goal of the director of academic affairs is for individual members to reach their academic potential, encouraged by a positive and supportive learning community. Additionally, he should ensure each member has an appreciation for scholastic endeavors, learns scholastic skills and becomes a scholar in his own major. Also, each member should have an appreciation of the opportunities for cultural enrichment in the chapter, on campus and in the community.

Being the director of academic affairs is one of the most important positions a member can hold in the chapter. He not only helps members achieve good grades but also helps them realize the importance of an academic approach to successful living. The job is to organize the chapter's human and physical resources to address his areas of responsibilities and help members achieve their academic potential.



TRACKING INDIVIDUAL ACADEMIC PROGRESS

To be successful, the director of academic affairs must know the current academic status of chapter members, monitor and comment on the academic content and quality of all chapter operations, and implement academic programs in the chapter's best interest. He will accomplish this by gathering and documenting the academic data of new members and initiated members in order to complete periodic assessments of the chapter's academic status.

It should be made very clear and constantly reiterated what the academic expectation is for membership. Nationally the GPA minimum is a 2.50 on a 4.0 scale, but many chapters have individually decided to raise the bar even higher. Every chapter should be aware of the expectation of membership and be aware of how to hold members accountable if they fail to meet their obligation.

For those who do fail to live up to the academic expectations of membership, the member should be placed on academic probation and put on an academic assistance program. After a semester on academic probation, it is recommended a man is placed on suspension if he does not still meet academic standards. If, after two semesters, he has still not achieved a satisfactory cumulative GPA, he should be referred for expulsion.

It is important to track on a semester GPA basis so you can better track trends and identify members who struggled in one given semester before too much damage is done on their cumulative GPA. Tracking semester GPAs will act as an early warning system.

ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

When creating the academic assistance program, make sure it will assist all members, especially considering some who think, study and learn differently. It's important to realize we are not all academic experts. If an individual is struggling in his studies, it is not the job of the chapter to coach or oversee that the member is studying. What the chapter should be focused on is helping the member find academic resources on campus. Some suggestions would be to find the campus learning center (if applicable), connect the student with his academic advisor, or if the chapter has brothers with the same major, utilize him to direct the member to faculty or staff in the program.

Before you outright suspend someone, you should give him at least one semester of probation while putting him on an academic assistance program. It should be the intent of the assistance program to give the struggling member all the resources he needs to be successful. While it may be tempting to take away privileges, such as social privileges, it is better to positively support than negatively punish. In addition, utilizing an academic contract will help remind the member of his commitment to the Fraternity and what the chapter's minimum expectations are.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

Your institution exists for the academic growth of its students. Professionals qualified and willing to assist you in meeting your goals surround you. Many campuses have a writing center and/or tutoring centers who have paid professionals whose job it is to work with students who need additional support. Many chapters incorporate mandatory utilization of writing center and tutoring centers for 'major' exams and papers for those who are on an academic assistance program. 'Major' can be defined as more than 20 percent of the final grade.

ACADEMIC ADVISORS

The academic advisor is a member on the volunteer advisory team (VAT). Males or females, Delts or non-Delts may serve in this position. Every chapter should identify and recruit an academic advisor. The academic advisor should be able to address any of the chapter's academic needs, both on an individual and chapter-wide level, for example: addressing the chapter on study skills or available resources the university or college offers.

ONE-ON-ONE MEETING

Sometimes members need to talk through their personal academic goals with someone else for it to resonate. Many chapters incorporate mandatory one-on-one meetings with the director of academic affairs as a part of their academic assistance program. These meetings may occur monthly or during major semester milestones like the beginning of the semester, midterms and finals. The purpose of this meeting should be to review the member's academic goals for the semester, but remember the director of academic affairs is not an academic expert. If the member is not meeting his goals, the director of academic affairs should help the member find resources to achieve them. It's important that individuals have their academic goals written as S.M.A.R.T. goals. These goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and tangible. This may also be a great opportunity to utilize the academic advisor.

Example:

S.M.A.R.T. Goal: I will raise my semester GPA from a 2.6 to a 2.7 by April.

Non- S.M.A.R.T. Goal: I will improve my grades.

OUTSIDE SPEAKERS

Often qualified guest speakers are available through the academic affairs office. Suggested topics would include advice on scheduling classes, working with individual counselors, being aware of the services of library resources, and a myriad of other topics that could provide valuable insights to your members. Be specific about your needs and plans. Don't simply ask for a speaker. The director of academic affairs should work with the chapter's Road chairman to coincide with the chapter's member education programming.

COMPARATIVE STATUS

Comparing your chapter's academic status with that of other fraternities, the institution and other chapters of the International Fraternity makes good sense. It will bring your chapter's successes, failures and potential into focus.

Your chapter should maintain, at the minimum, a respectable academic position among fraternities on your campus. Focus particularly on chapters you consider your top competitors academically. The all fraternity average is usually a good comparative gauge pending it is above the all men's average. The all fraternity average is just that-- an "average." Delta Tau Delta should strive to be above this average on all campuses. If the all fraternity average falls below the all men's average, ignore it as a comparative gauge and work with your inter-Greek organizations to change the situation.

The all men's average represents a broader gauge of expectations. It measures the overall campus academic environment among male students. Again, in this case, "average" cannot be considered a strong performance. The all men's average represents the average male student on the campus. On some campuses this average may include the performances of up to 40 percent of the male students who will never graduate. Your membership should not include anyone who does not have a reasonable chance of graduating.

Delta Tau Delta expects chapters to exceed the all men's average; in fact, this is a constitutional requirement for the chartering of a new chapter. Persistent performance below this average will eventually bring close scrutiny by the Arch Chapter. Where this comparative information is available, being significantly above the all men's average should be the chapter's goal of bringing "every member to his full academic potential within the arms of the Fraternity."

Full potential of each member cannot be achieved in a chapter operating as a group below the all men's average. Some campuses, as a matter of policy, do not make any averages public. In that case, ask your Greek advisor to determine a suitable estimate of an all men's average for you to use as a minimum target. Report this in your FAAR as an estimated average and its source.

ACADEMICS AND CHAPTER OPERATIONS

ACADEMICS & RECRUITMENT

Assistance programs will not solve some problems. The first place to start is with recruitment. Do you have member eligibility standards that weed out potential members that are not fit to be a Delt? If your chapter is mired in a mediocre to poor academic status, you will not escape this status without such safeguards. Students with academic problems attract other students with academic problems and, as this group grows, it controls the academic politics in a chapter. A chapter with academic problems can reshape its academic profile gradually for the betterment of its membership by limiting the risks it takes during recruitment and by holding members accountable.

NEW MEMBER EDUCATION

Your duties go beyond active members. You should also make sure new members are given direction and expectations appropriate for academic achievement as new members of the Fraternity. It may be a good idea to sit down with each new member and go over personal academic goals. It would also be appropriate to organize a speaker for the new members on academic topics that would be pertinent to students just starting college. These topics could include time management, academic goal setting, and how to approach office hours. This could be a way to incorporate the faculty academic advisor into chapter operations.

Academic Scholars

It is not only your job to focus on those who are struggling academically. You should also focus on ensuring high academic achievers receive appropriate attention regarding their achievements and their value in molding the chapter's academic environment. You could offer a scholarship, financial incentives, recognition at a banquet, social media recognition, or recognition through your campus newspaper, etc. for members who are meeting their academic goals and excelling.

KERSHNER SCHOLAR

The Kershner Scholar Award was created in the 1970s to encourage consistent academic achievement and improvement. It is named after Fred Kershner (Butler University, 1937), who is a past International President of Delta Tau Delta and the longest serving director of academic affairs in the Fraternity's history.

Every year the director of academic affairs should review the following information with the chapter about the Kershner Scholar Program:

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO BE A KERSHNER SCHOLAR?

Kershner Scholars must meet one of the following criteria:

- 3.5 GPA or better on a 4.0 scale
- Dean's list or campus equivalent
- Kershner Scholar Awards are awarded by term (semester or quarter with at least 12 credits) and can be awarded multiple times. When grade information from the previous term becomes available, your chapter should submit its list of brothers to be recognized.

HOW CAN I APPLY TO BE A KERSHNER SCHOLAR?

The Kershner Scholar Award application is available on DeltsConnect and should be submitted by the chapter director of academic affairs or chapter president. Look under "tasks" on the DeltsConnect homepage.

COURSE MATRIX

One tool that could assist both struggling members and high achieving members is a course matrix. Every semester the director of academic affairs should survey the membership on which courses they are taking that semester. That data should then be put into a spreadsheet so the membership can see which courses each member is taking. As semesters are added to the spreadsheet, members will be able to look historically at which courses members have taken in the past and reach out to those members for support on courses they are taking in the present. This matrix would give any member a competitive edge and allow for the easy facilitation of study groups and tutoring relationships.

ACADEMIC INCENTIVES

Many chapters incentivize members who perform academically. While it may be tempting to just give out gift cards or another prize, there is an opportunity to reward men for academic performance while at the same time increasing visibility on campus. Many chapters accomplish this by giving away custom academic letter shirts or letter sweatshirts to members who meet a certain semester GPA bar set at the beginning of the semester. Every time a member wears his academic apparel, he is not only encouraging other members to earn their academic gear and strive for academic greatness but displaying to everyone who sees him that Delts should be associated with academic success.

ARCH CHAPTER DIRECTOR OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

This member of the Arch Chapter is available for strategic guidance and academic program assistance. Contact information for the Arch Chapter Director of Academic Affairs can be found on www.delts.org.

SCHOLARSHIPS

You can follow this link to the Delta Tau Delta Scholarships homepage.

- Kershner Scholar recognition program <http://www.delts.org/scholarship/>
- Educational Foundation Scholarships <http://www.delts.org/scholarship-list/>

CONCLUSION

Delta Tau Delta is proud of you and your sincere desire to improve your chapter. As a leader of the chapter, your success will be determined by your actions, words and thoughts. The Fraternity expects you to work diligently to build a positive experience for yourself and your brothers. Please take these final thoughts with you as you begin what will be a great year for you and your chapter:

COMMUNICATION IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS:

It will be vital for you to communicate with your brothers and your peer officers. Many of the goals you will set will require you to work with other individuals. If you continue to focus on improving your communication skills throughout your officer term, you will not only be a more effective officer, but you will also be better prepared to lead in the future.

RESOURCES ARE ALWAYS AVAILABLE TO YOU:

There will always be someone willing to help you as you encounter obstacles. This person may be a chapter advisor, a campus advisor, a chapter consultant, an older member of the chapter or even a student in the campus community. It is important to realize all of these people want you to be successful. Please include and utilize these people as often as you can.

THE FRATERNITY WANTS YOU TO ASK QUESTIONS:

This manual will not cover every concern you encounter and each obstacle is different. If you have a question, please do not hesitate to contact any the resources previously mentioned or to the Central Office. The Fraternity wants you to have all of the information you need to be successful.

“AS YOU ADVANCE, REMEMBER OTHERS FOLLOW”:

This concept is so important as a leader. In order for the chapter to be successful for a long period of time, you must recognize your responsibility to be a role model and mentor for members of the chapter. By teaching and encouraging other members to achieve, the chapter will achieve. Do not lose sight that you joined because of the men around you; you should feel a special responsibility to do your best for and with these men.

USE THE VALUES OF DELTA TAU DELTA TO GUIDE YOUR DECISIONS:

Truth, Courage, Faith and Power should be ever present in your decision making as a member of Delta Tau Delta. These values are not exclusive to the *Ritual* of the Fraternity, but they should be embodied in your everyday work as an officer of the chapter to motivate, encourage and lead your brothers.

THE FRATERNITY KNOWS YOU WILL DO MUCH TO BETTER THE CHAPTER AND DELTA TAU DELTA THANKS YOU FOR YOUR TIRELESS EFFORT AND YOUR STEADFAST COMMITMENT. THE FRATERNITY WISHES YOU NOTHING BUT SUCCESS AND HAPPINESS AS YOU LEAD YOUR CHAPTER TO EXCELLENCE.