



Phi Sigma Pi National Honor Fraternity Chapter Advisor Manual

Dear Chapter Advisor:

Greetings! I would like to welcome you to our organization; we are happy to have you join us as a Chapter Advisor and we welcome your experience and expertise. Most importantly, I would like to also thank you for giving us your precious time. Volunteering as an active Advisor is not an easy task and we realize the time commitment you have made.

We pride ourselves on developing tomorrow's leaders here at Phi Sigma Pi. We feel that through our Tripod of scholarship, leadership and fellowship, we are helping our Members grow into successful young adults who will impact their community and environment in a positive way. As in life, our Members will experience bumps in the road, but with your guidance these bumps should prove to be nothing more than character building obstacles that should be learned from and used in a positive manner. Through your active role as the Chapter Advisor, you will certainly have the opportunity to impact the Chapter you are advising. I am very excited that our Members will be able to share in your wisdom and learn from your experiences. I truly hope that this experience will be as rewarding for you as it will be for our Members.

If you should ever have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Chapter's Chapter Consultant. You may also contact me at memberservices@phisigmapi.org or call 1-800-366-1916. I would enjoy speaking to you and learning more about your role as a Chapter Advisor.

Again, I would like to thank you for taking time away from your personal and professional responsibilities to assist our Members. Good luck in the school year.

Sincerely,
Anika Jackson
Associate Executive Director

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Chapter Advisors

The Advisor can be a powerful source of information and advice, but many Chapters do not fully utilize the resources an Advisor can provide. The impact they can have on a Chapter is tremendous.

Advisors can serve as a valuable resource, a friend, an advocate, a role model and a historian. They do this by contributing specific knowledge in designing and implementing programs, providing continuity, serving as a liaison and supporting the Chapter's development and activities. The role of a Chapter Advisor is often hard to define. Many times Advisors are pulled in different directions by Chapter Members, which make it very difficult for an Advisor to understand the role.

Purpose of Advisors

Involvement in Phi Sigma Pi allows students the opportunity to develop organizational and leadership skills. Members get the chance to supplement and enhance their educational objectives through important co-curricular activities that allow them the chance to learn about and practice basic organizational development and functions, and learn about human behavior and interpersonal relationships.

In support of these experiences, it is important to have people with experience in Chapters to assist students in making the most of their experience. While Phi Sigma Pi Chapters are diverse, Advisors can be a valuable resource to the Chapter in terms of help with organizational development, University regulations and policies and financial concerns. Obtaining Advisors who are committed to student learning through out-of-class activities and the ideals of the Fraternity is essential to the success of the Chapter.

Chapters of Phi Sigma Pi are encouraged to have an Advisor who is a member of the sheltering institution's faculty, staff or administration. Chapters are permitted and even encouraged to seek additional advisory support from Alumni.

Advisor Responsibilities

It is important that Advisors understand the responsibilities involved before making a commitment to a Phi Sigma Pi Chapter. Please note that these responsibilities can differ depending on the Chapter. Those responsibilities include:

- See the continuity of the organization is preserved through a Constitution, minutes, files and traditions.
- Attend as many Chapter meetings and events as possible.
- Encourage that meetings are run in an orderly, efficient manner.
- Articulate campus policies and procedures and help cut through the “red tape” when necessary, and consult with other University departments when problems arise with the Chapter.
- Be a sounding board for student ideas, especially for Officers and be supportive of all Members.
- Be a facilitator both among Officers and between Officers and Members.
- Be familiar with structure and services of the National Headquarters.
- Consult on programs and program planning.
- Consult with individual students, when necessary.
- Be generally available to assist the organization.

The Chapter’s Responsibility to the Advisor

It is important that the Chapter understands the responsibilities when inviting someone to serve as an Advisor. Those responsibilities include:

- Notify the Advisor of all meetings and events.
- Be clear and open about the Chapter’s expectations for the Advisors role.
- Provide regular communication to the Advisor.
- Consult the Advisor in the planning of projects and events.
- Consult the Advisor before any changes in the structure of the Chapter, or in the policies of the Chapter are made and before major projects are undertaken.
- Understand that although the Advisor has no vote that the Advisor should have speaking privileges.
- Remember that the responsibility for the success or failure of the Chapter project rests ultimately with the Chapter, not the Advisor.
- Talk over any problems or concerns with the Advisor.
- Acknowledge the Advisor’s time and energy are donated and express appreciation.

Building the Relationship between Chapter and Advisor

- The responsibility for building the relationship is shared, but the Advisor should Initiate it.
- Open and direct communication is a must.
- Both sides must be aware of their roles and responsibilities both inside and outside the organization, and must share certain expectations of performance and responsibility.
- Both Members and Advisor must recognize that each are human beings who follow their own value system, have their own work styles, and most importantly, who sometimes make mistakes.
- Members and Advisors are always growing, changing and developing people.

Benefits of Being an Advisor

Do not forget that while the Chapter benefits from having a dedicated Advisor, Advisors also receive some benefits, such as:

- The opportunity to become better acquainted with students outside of the classroom and across disciplines; increasing involvement in the community.
- The opportunity to get to know students outside the classroom or office.
- The rewards of watching the Chapter develop and become successful.
- The satisfaction of watching students develop interpersonal and leadership skills.
- The chance to informally share knowledge and expertise on relevant subjects.
- Personal sense of satisfaction and accomplishment through the contribution made to a certain group of students.
- Observe the development of students throughout their college career.

What Advisors Should Expect

Many Chapters simply have an Advisor because their University mandates that they have one. Whether your relationship with your Chapter is very interactive or casual at best, it is important to keep in mind the basic expectations Advisors have of their Chapter.

- To be kept informed of all your Chapter's activities and events.
- To have meetings with them on a regular basis.
- To respect fellow student leaders, general members and the Advisor.
- To take care of potential problems in an efficient and proper manner.

Involvement Opportunities for Advisors

Chapter Members and Advisors are asked to interact with one another in a variety of ways. As a result, it is very important that both the Advisor and the Chapter understand what they expect from each other.

Clearly defining the role of the Advisor is critical for building a good Chapter-Advisor relationship. It also reduces ambiguity and frustration. After these expectations are clarified they may serve as guidelines for the Chapter-Advisor partnership. The following are a few questions that must be addressed.

1. How often is the Advisor expected to be at meetings?
2. Is the Advisor expected to speak or report at meetings?
3. How often is the Advisor expected to meet with the Chapter's Officers or leaders?
4. Is the Advisor supposed to be directly involved in the decision-making process?
5. Is the Advisor required to attend every event?
6. Is the Advisor expected to check everything the Chapter is doing?

Work with the group to decide: which role is expected of the Advisor?

1. Provide suggestions, input and ideas
2. Teach leadership skills
3. Act as a resource about policies, procedures and bureaucracy
4. Serve as all of the above

The Role of the Advisor Checklist

This form is designed to help Advisors and Chapter Officers determine a clear role for Advisors in matters pertaining to Chapters.

Directions: The Advisor and the President of each Chapter should respond to the following items, then meet to compare answers and discuss any differences. For any items, which are determined not to be the responsibility of the Advisor, it would be valuable to clarify which Officer will assume that responsibility. For each statement, respond according to the following scale:

1. Essential for the Advisor
2. Helpful for the Advisor to do
3. Nice, but they don't have to do it
4. Would prefer they not do
5. Absolutely not an Advisor's role

The Advisor is Expected to:

- _____ 1. Explain University policy when relevant to the discussion.
- _____ 2. Attend Executive Committee meetings when requested.
- _____ 3. Attend as many Chapter activities as possible.
- _____ 4. Attend general meetings when requested.
- _____ 5. Speak up during discussion when the Advisor has relevant information or when the Advisor believes the group is likely to make a poor decision.
- _____ 6. Be quiet during general meetings unless called upon.
- _____ 7. Assist Chapter by signing any necessary forms.
- _____ 8. Attend the series of Advisor workshops sponsored by the University.
- _____ 9. Take an active part in the formulation of the goals of the group.
- _____ 10. Initiate ideas for discussion when the Advisor believes they will help the group.
- _____ 11. Require the Treasurer to clear all expenditures with the Executive Board and the Advisor before making financial commitment.
- _____ 12. Request to see the Treasurer's books at the end of each semester.
- _____ 13. Receive a copy of all official correspondence.
- _____ 14. Store all group paraphernalia during the summer and between changeover of Officers, if applicable.
- _____ 15. Keep the official files in the Advisors office.

- _____ 16. Inform the group of infractions of its Bylaws, codes and standing rules.
- _____ 17. Keep the group aware of its stated objectives when planning events.
- _____ 18. Mediate interpersonal conflicts that arise.
- _____ 19. Be responsible for planning a leadership skill workshop.
- _____ 20. State perceptions of the role as Advisor at the beginning of the year.
- _____ 21. Let the group work out its problems, including making mistakes and "doing it the hard way."
- _____ 22. Take the initiative in creating teamwork and cooperation among Officers.
- _____ 23. Let the group thrive or decline on its merits; do not interfere unless requested to do so.
- _____ 24. Represent the Chapter in any conflicts with members of the University staff.
- _____ 25. Be familiar with University facilities, services and procedures.
- _____ 26. Recommend programs, speakers, etc.
- _____ 27. Take an active part in the orderly transition of responsibilities between old and new Officers.