Fraternity & Sorority Blueprint: Standards Committee

Committee Members
Ashley Harris (alumna, Chi Beta Epsilon)
Cesar Giralt (alumnus, Kappa Kappa Delta)
Jennie Hance Leon (alumna, Spurs)
Caroline Roberts (student, Gamma Chi Delta)
John Pederson (student, Omega Phi)
Briana McGlamory (staff; alumna, Phi Delta Kappa)
Jamie Thompson (chair; alumna, Gamma Chi Delta)

Executive Summary
The recommendations below reflect the work of the committee members and provides both a detailed description of the Alumni Advisor role as well as updates for the standards and judicial processes.

Recommendation highlights include:
- Definition and description of alumni advisor role (see Appendix A)
- Information regarding the selection of alumni advisors (see Appendix A)
- Insurance information and coverage for alumni advisors (see Appendix A)
- An increase from 1 to 2 lead alumni advisors per organization
- Training resources for alumni advisors (anticipated in spring 2015)
- Standards and Judicial board clarification and changes (see below)

Definitions and Recommendations (as determined by the committee):

Alumni Advisor Role: See Appendix A

Standards: A process through which organizations are measured and hold themselves accountable to a rubric designed by Greek Council which aligns with the four pillars of fraternity & sorority life: camaraderie, leadership, scholarship, and service. Each semester, organizations are required to attain minimum standards in order to remain in good standing with Greek Council the following semester. Note: Current Greek Council standards were reviewed in fall 2014. Greek Council utilized ideas and data from the committee to inform their decisions and changes.

Judicial Boards (internal): The committee recommends that each fraternity and sorority have an internal judicial board. The purpose of the internal judicial board is to hold members accountable through a review and hearing process for each organization. The judicial board will have purview over situations including, but not limited to when members do not meet minimum membership standards (as defined by the organization), do not complete officer responsibilities for which they were elected, fail to represent the organization in an appropriate manner, or violate a Greek Council, student organization, or campus policy. Determinations and decisions made by internal judicial boards do not prevent or preclude a Greek Council, Campus & Community Involvement (CCI), or University judicial process.

Judicial Boards (external—Greek Council): In the event that a complaint is received by Greek Council and the judicial chair of Greek Council finds validity in the complaint, the Greek Council judicial board will convene to hear the case. If the board finds the organization or individual responsible for the violation, the responsible party will now have an opportunity to appeal. In summer 2014, a Greek Council executive board committee drafted a written appeals process that was introduced and approved fall 2014. Based upon need/availability, CCI or University Conduct Board may hear a case if Greek Council is unable to hear it in a timely manner.
Appendix A
Trinity University Fraternity & Sorority Alumni Advisor Role

Preface

Trinity’s fraternity and sorority organizations need you! Advisors are an extremely important asset to a fraternity/sorority. They serve as a link from the past to the present and play a critical role in ensuring the continued, long-term success of the community. At Trinity University, fraternity and sorority alumni represent a seasoned group of individuals who can share perspective and support undergraduate students. Alumni advisors provide consistency and continuity and may fill a variety of roles from time to time: consultant, information source, clarifier, counselor, or facilitator. The alumni advisor can offer advice to graduating seniors on career opportunities and can positively impact the organization’s academic performance by reviewing the scholarship plans of those students who are struggling. The alumni advisor can advocate for the fraternity/sorority experience to other faculty, university administration, and/or parents as well. While the nature and style of the advisor role will be unique to each organization, successful advisors will challenge and support organizations to grow and develop.

Definition:

The alumni advisor is a person who is selected by alumni and undergraduate members of the organization to serve as a sounding board for current active members, as well as a liaison between Trinity University and organization members. This person should be a member of the organization they are advising; however, organizations may ask a non-member to advise them. The advisor serves as a facilitator and helps to promote the consistency and continuity of the organization by acting as a resource and mentor to undergraduate members. Each organization will have two lead advisors who will be the main points of contact with the University. One of these lead advisors must have graduated five or more years ago unless the organization is less than five years old. Although not required, it is strongly recommended that one of the two advisors live in or near San Antonio to be available in-person when needed. It is expected that alumni advisors be available via e-mail, telephone, or video chat as needed.

Alumni Advisor Duties and Responsibilities

The advisor will:

- Attend a meeting once per semester (in person or virtually).
- Meet with the Coordinator for Fraternity & Sorority Life as necessary (in person or virtually).
- Approve and sign on the Orientation calendar before it is submitted to Greek Council each fall semester.
- If local/able, attend a minimum of one recruitment and one orientation event.
- Communicate regularly with the alumni network within the organization (i.e. share the information shared with advisors via the coordinator for fraternity & sorority life monthly newsletter).
- Be knowledgeable about the constitution, mission, and values of the organization.
- Be aware of internal and external judicial sessions and conduct issues occurring within the organization or through Greek Council and attend judicial hearings, if necessary/able.
- Correspond with student leaders each semester, specifically: president and alumni chair.
- Provide advice and support for the executive board and general organization as needed.
- Be a Campus Security Authority and be knowledgeable of the reporting role for issues of sexual assault.
- Understand Title IX regulations for sexual assault reporting on college campuses.
- Become familiar with the policies and procedures pertinent to student organizations by reading the Student Organization Handbook annually.
- Be knowledgeable about, and comply with applicable federal, state and local laws and ordinances, as well as Trinity policies and procedures. Review pertinent policies with the organization on a regular basis.
The advisor should:

- Attend multiple orientation and recruitment events as your schedule allows.
- Offer to host a dinner for active members at your home.
- Make an effort to meet the new members during orientation or in their first semester.
- Attend Bid Day, if possible.
- Ensure traditions, history, objectives, and philosophy are continued and be responsible for ensuring the sanctity of the events.
- Provide/facilitate leadership training with assistance from Campus & Community Involvement or from other alumni members.

Selection process

Alumni and actives collaboratively select the alumni advisor(s) via a process that best fits each organization (e.g. nomination, election, etc.). If the organization needs assistance in finding someone to serve in this role, the Coordinator for Fraternity & Sorority Life (who will work with the National Alumni Board Fraternity & Sorority Life committee chair and Alumni Relations) will help to identify individuals who might be a good fit.

An organization may choose to have two alumni advisors or a team of advisors fulfill the responsibilities listed earlier. Two advisors act as the points of contact for the organization; however, multiple advisors may be utilized to fulfill this role.

Training

Alumni advisors will be supported with electronic resources regarding campus policies and procedures, anti-hazing training, and sexual assault training/resources. It is an expectation that all alumni advisors utilize these resources, are familiar with them during their tenure, and assist the students when problems arise based on this information. Other training items will be available online for those who wish to utilize them, but will not be required. It is anticipated that training resources will become available during the 2014-2015 academic year.

University Responsibilities to the Advisor

The University will:

- Provide liability insurance coverage to alumni advisors as volunteers of Trinity University (details below).
- Provide access to an advisor manual and resources.
- Provide access to campus space.
- Provide staff support.
- Provide resources from Alumni Relations.
- Possible recognition as a National Alumni Board Fraternity/Sorority Advisor of the Year.
Fraternity & Sorority Alumni Advisor Insurance

The University provides liability insurance coverage for Alumni advisors through a third party insurance carrier. So long as the Alumni advisors are properly identified as Alumni advisors in the University’s records and are acting within the course and scope of the alumni advisor duties and role, they are covered under the University’s existing liability insurance coverage which is currently the Educator’s Legal Liability policy which includes coverage for officers, directors, employees and volunteers. All alumni advisors are responsible for completing this online form immediately upon assuming any duties of an alumni advisor.

Alumni advisors must comply with all applicable laws and Trinity policies and procedures. Please feel free to direct questions regarding insurance to Jennifer Adamo, Director for Risk Management, (210)999-7486. Questions regarding the Advisor role or responsibilities may be directed to Jamie Thompson, Director of Campus and Community Involvement, (210)999-7547 or Briana McGlamory, Coordinator for Fraternity & Sorority Life, (210)999-7500.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. As an Alumni advisor how am I covered under Trinity’s insurance policy? Volunteer Alumni advisors are insured in the same manner as an employee, that is, the general liability insurance policy is in place to defend and protect the volunteer for any bodily injury claims against the volunteer so long as the volunteer was acting within the scope of the volunteer’s duties as an Alumni advisor for Trinity. Actions by an Alumni advisor that are outside of the course and scope of the Alumni advisor’s duties are not insured by the Trinity policy.

2. What happens if an undergraduate member of the organization is injured while participating in an approved event at which alumni advisors are present and the Alumni advisor is sued in a civil lawsuit? If an Alumni advisor is sued individually and was acting within the scope of the volunteer position’s duties for Trinity, then the individual should be covered by the University’s insurance policy.

3. What happens if an undergraduate member of the organization is injured at an event at which alumni advisors are not present and that has not been approved or sanctioned by the University and may violate University policy (and possibly state law) and a civil lawsuit is filed naming an individual Alumni advisor? If the Alumni advisor did not know or have reason to know of the event and was otherwise acting in accordance with all applicable laws and Trinity policies and procedures, there should be coverage under the University’s insurance policy.

4. If I act within the scope of the volunteer role and one of the two above scenarios occur, will I be required to hire my own counsel or will the University and/or its insurer indemnify and defend me in the lawsuit? Generally, the University’s general liability policy will provide a defense and counsel for all of its insureds. In some instances it will be provided through a joint defense. If an individual insured feels that it is in his/her best interest not to participate in the joint defense, that individual is welcome to seek his or her own representation. Depending upon the circumstances, the cost of that defense and any liability from that individual may not be insured under the University’s insurance policy.

5. Are Alumni advisors covered under the University’s Directors and Officers (D&O) coverage? Yes, Alumni advisors are considered volunteers and as such, are covered under the university’s Educators Legal Liability policy which contains the Directors and Officers coverage. This coverage insures any past, present or future director, officer, trustee, employee, volunteer…solely when acting in his or her capacity as such.

Note: The foregoing FAQ’s are to provide you with general information and this document does not represent a binding contract. As with any insurance policy, the specific terms of the policy dictate whether coverage exists and what exclusions may apply. If you have additional questions, please contact Jennifer Adamo at (210)999-7486 for more information.