

INTRODUCTION

Scholastic performance is essentially an individual responsibility, but that responsibility can be maintained and encouraged by a group. As members of a Greek organization at BGSU, you must recognize that you have a personal and group responsibility to achieve excellent academic marks. A strong scholarship program can provide chapter members with the means of achieving this goal. Such a program must receive the support and approval of the entire membership.

A sound learning program must consider the following factors:

- Careful evaluation of potential new members.
- Standards for membership.
- Development of proper attitudes.
- Maintenance of an academic atmosphere.
- Incentives for academic excellence.

Measuring the objective of good scholarship is a difficult task for many chapters. One way to attempt to measure a chapter's effectiveness in scholarship programming is to reply to the following question: "Is everything possible being done to ensure that every member is not only afforded full opportunity to demonstrate his/her true ability, but is also actively encouraged toward that end?" Depending on the chapter's response, one can measure their chapter scholarship program.

SCHOLARSHIP CHAIR

In order for a chapter to excel in academics, it is important to select a good scholarship chair to plan and implement the chapter scholarship program. This individual will lead the chapter throughout his/her term and provide the chapter with the means it needs to achieve its goal of academic excellence.

A scholarship chair should possess the following characteristics:

- Energy.
- Enthusiasm.
- Ability to work with others.
- Personal and academic ability.
- Desire to see the chapter be one of the top Greek organizations on campus.

The following are the major tasks to be accomplished by the scholarship chair:

- Developing incentives.
- Organizing designated study areas.

- Organizing designated study times.
- Managing a scholarship budget.
- Keeping records of all scholarship programs.
- Providing an academic report each semester to the chapter's governing council, the Office of Greek Affairs, and the chapter's headquarters.

Suggestions for the Scholarship Chair

1. **Create a scholarship calendar of events, programs, etc. for each semester.** The Scholarship Chair is responsible for organizing the chapter scholarship program and motivating the members to expand their educational achievement through the chapter. Present the calendar to the chapter executive council. After receiving their feedback, present it to the entire chapter for approval.
2. **Give a weekly report at chapter meetings about past and future scholarship programs.** Maintaining a positive attitude during reports will encourage and motivate chapter members to excel in academics.
3. **Consult chapter Alumni and/or faculty advisors to assist you with your scholarship program.** They can help you reach your goals by assisting the chapter with the development of a wide variety of programs and in advising members who have academic questions.
4. **Consult the Office of Academic Enhancement to assist you with your scholarship program.** The Office of Academic Enhancement at BGSU offers programming on study skills, effective listening, note-taking, and test-taking. It also offers a writing center for students to bring papers to for proofreading and editing. Considerable information can be gained if you invite one of these officials to a chapter dinner.
5. **Consult the Financial Aid Office to assist you with your scholarship program.** The Financial Aid Office provides information on scholarships, grants, and loans for those seeking assistance to finance their education.
6. **Hold at least one scholarship program for the chapter each month.** Educational enrichment and cultural programs can be held monthly involving professors, local business-persons, or alumni who can give presentations on their professional fields.
7. **Create a scholarship buddy program for the chapter.** It is especially important that every new member has a "scholarship buddy" to help him/her transition into their new life as a member of a Greek organization. The best options for matching buddies are: (1) Big/Little Pairs and (2) Academic Major Pairs. It is important that the new members see the designated individual as a mentor, who helps with study plans, coursework, and effective study habits. All chapter members should be matched up. The scholarship buddies should change every semester or year.

8. **Coordinate the yearly calendar with the social chair and new member educator.**
Avoid holding activities during mid-terms and finals to ensure members academic success.
9. **Implementation of a good program requires energetic measures to:**
 - a. Enforce scholarship strategies and policies without reservation.
 - b. Provide leadership so that everyone will accept their responsibility to strive for academic excellence.
 - c. Provide conditions conducive to good study so that each member has the atmosphere in which he can apply himself to best advantage.
 - d. Provide sufficient incentives to encourage members to excel academically.
10. **Enforce scholarship probation.** It is the duty of the chapter to maintain a standard that encourages members to make respectable academic progress. It is no less unbrotherly/unsisterly to suspend a member for unpaid bills than it is to discipline him/her for substandard scholastics which could cost him/her a college degree and tarnish the chapter's academic record. The chapter is interested in helping every individual meet his/her potential. It is the Scholarship Chair's duty to enforce academic policies and seek the support of the entire chapter in this endeavor.
11. **Create a scholarship committee to assist with scholarship efforts.** A scholarship chair will feel the support of the chapter even stronger if a scholarship committee is created to assist him/her with scholarship efforts. The scholarship committee should meet with members who fall below academic expectations and assist the scholarship chair in creating and implementing the semesterly/yearly scholarship program. The scholarship committee should be made up of one chapter member from each class and meet as often as needed. The chapter standards board can also serve as the scholarship committee. It is important to remember that the scholarship committee's goal should be to provide support for members who are struggling academically. It should enforce chapter policies, but also offer advice, suggestions, and recommendations to members. It should be seen as a positive part of the chapter.

MEMBERSHIP STANDARDS

Every chapter should enforce membership standards for its members. Establishing a minimum GPA for membership within the chapter is a must. Chapter officers should be held to a higher than average standard in terms of academics; the minimum GPA for officers should be higher than the minimum membership GPA. In addition, GPA standards should be enforced for participation in chapter events and programs, such as intramurals, social events, and the chapter's Big/Little program. It is the responsibility of the chapter to hold members accountable for their grades and reward them with the "perks" mentioned above. There should be no exceptions made for membership GPA standards for any member, except for unique situations.

In addition, chapters should develop scholarship guidelines and add them to the chapter by-laws. This shows the chapter is committed to academic excellence and to helping chapter members achieve a higher grade point average. It also assists the chapter scholarship board in holding members accountable for their academic marks.

NEW MEMBER PROGRAM

New member programs of strong chapters with outstanding academics are based upon a system of management and guidance rather than rule enforcement. The scholarship chair should discuss the following items with the new member class each semester:

Essential Scholastic Factors:

1. The role of the chapter in the attainment of excellence in education.
2. The role of scholarship in the chapter.
3. Requirements for membership.
4. The structure of the chapter scholarship program.
5. Individual responsibility for scholarship.
6. Outcomes if they do not live up to expectations of the scholarship program.
7. Why study hours are used (if they are) and the details of when, where, etc.
8. The university policy for dropping classes. It is important that you do not encourage them to drop classes, but rather, inform them of the process if the need should arise.

How to Study:

1. Time management.
2. Developing good reading skills.
3. Proper balance between leisure, work, and studying.
4. Note-taking.
5. Preparing outlines.
6. Class participation.
7. Learning to recognize important points of lectures and assignments.

These points will give new members an idea of what to expect concerning scholarship, as well as conveys what is expected of them as a member in the chapter. The “How to Study” topics can be covered by the scholarship chair or the chapter may elect to invite in an outsider to present to the new members. Encourage active members within the chapter to invite new members to study with them in house (if you have one), the library, or other study location. This will not only build relationships, but allow members to study at the same time.

In addition, new members tend to copy the behavior of actives within the chapter. If the actives show the new members a commitment to academics, while still living a balanced life, new

members will most likely exude similar behavior. Positive role modeling by active members is important to the development of new members.

STUDY TABLES/STUDY HOURS

Many chapters hold study tables or require members to fulfill a specified number of study hours per week. While different methods work for different chapters, the important thing is to establish a study policy that the chapter strictly adheres to and enforces. Chapters must hold their members accountable for such a policy to work effectively. A few tips regarding study tables and study hours:

1. Establish a regular study table schedule. Once members get into a study routine, they are more likely to stick to it.
2. Hold study tables at least three days a week and at different times each day. This allows members who have class, work, or other commitments to have a variety of times and days to pick from. Not everyone studies between 7 and 9 pm every night at the library ☺
3. Study tables should be at least two hours and no longer than four hours in length.
Remember: how much time you spend studying is not as important as how you use that time.
4. Encourage members to start earlier or end later than the specified study table times. It is ok to study outside of the designated study hours! ☺
5. Require members to sign in and out of study tables.
6. If using study hours, ask members to keep an “honor log” of their study hours. Provide them with a template to do so. Ask members to submit hours on a weekly or monthly basis.
7. Take into account each member’s year in school and major. For example, a senior music major may not be able to do homework in the library. Allow for flexibility to meet every members’ needs, but continue to hold them accountable.
8. Assign members’ study hours based on grades from the previous semester. Use a combination of proctored (monitored) study hours at study tables and honor study hours. For example:
 - a. $3.75 - 4.0 = 0$ proctored hours; 6 honor hours
 - b. $3.5 - 3.74 = 1$ proctored hours; 8 honor hours
 - c. $3.25 - 3.49 = 2$ proctored hours; 10 honor hours
 - d. $3.00 - 3.24 = 3$ proctored hours; 12 honor honors

- e. 2.75 – 2.99 = 5 proctored hours; 14 honor hours
 - f. 2.74 and below = 6 proctored hours; 15 honor hours
9. Choose a specified area in the chapter house or university library that is designated as the chapter study area. Try to establish the area as a 24-hour quiet area.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

Many chapters set their own policies regarding scholarship for members who are on academic probation. These policies range from encouraging the use of study tables and meeting with professors, to requiring that tutoring be sought and prohibiting attendance at chapter social events. It is important to remember that any action taken in regards to a member’s scholarship responsibility is taken for, instead of against, his/her welfare.

Members not only need discipline to develop academic responsibility, but peer pressure (the good kind) and support as well. By combining all of these, the member has the potential to live up to his/her potential. It also assists the member in remaining active within the chapter and as a student at the university.

GOAL SETTING

The key to academic achievement for any chapter and its members is attitude. Once a positive atmosphere is established, setting academic goals will be much easier. Goal setting is important for the individual, as well as for the chapter.

Setting chapter goals is extremely important. Chapters can decide what academic goals they would like to establish on a semesterly or yearly basis. Examples of goals include:

- Improve overall GPA by .10 (or more).
- Achieve a 3.00 (or higher).
- Become on of the top three chapters in your council/among fraternities or sororities/in the entire Greek community.
- To be above the all-men’s/women’s average.
- To be above the all-undergraduate average.
- To be above the all-Greek average.

Chapters should set a GPA goal every semester. There are two ways that chapters can establish this standard:

1. The entire chapter establishes what they believe is a realistic goal. It should be voted on by all members to reach a consensus.

2. The scholarship chair collects the individual GPA goals each member sets and averages them all together to come up with the chapter average GPA goal.

One of the most important parts of goal setting is following up on the goals you set. Once a goal is set, chart the chapter’s progress. If you do not attain the goal, ask yourself why. Did you set the goal too high? Did members agree upon the goal as a group? Did members forget about the goal? It is important to examine the reasons why the goal was not achieved and learn from this process. Reexamine the goal with your new knowledge and adapt it. If you achieve a goal, reward it. Hold a special scholarship dinner (and invite faculty, university administrators, chapter advisors, etc), buy something for the chapter house, or hold a chapter brotherhood/sisterhood for achieving the goal. Also, be sure to let your chapter headquarters of your success in achieving your goals.

MOTIVATION

As mentioned earlier, it is important to develop a positive attitude regarding scholarship. A step toward developing a positive attitude would be the identification of various motivating factors which might affect an individual’s attitude toward scholastic attainment. These might include:

1. Personal pride in achievement.
2. Hope for future employment and advancement.
3. Group recognition and approval.
4. Parental recognition and approval.
5. Sense of duty or obligation.
6. Expectation of reward.
7. Fear of punishment or penalty.
8. Desire for respect and approval.

Once the motivating factor(s) are identified, the scholarship chair and executive committee may take appropriate steps to plan and implement effective scholarship programs. A sound scholarship program will use this information in developing and maintaining the proper attitude.

INCENTIVES

It is vital to provide members with a variety of incentives because what motivates one member might not motivate another. Incentives should be both monetary and non-monetary. Set aside a specific percentage (such as 10%) of the semester/annual budget for academic incentives.

Review the academic incentives your chapter provides every semester/year to account for changing chapter goals, and in order to improve their effectiveness and efficiency. All chapter members should be involved when determining incentives so that they “buy in” to the incentives program.

Also, the scholarship chair should monitor the incentives program the chapter utilizes to ensure that its value for improving academics does not become subordinate to the purely competitive aspect (if competitive incentives are used).

See the “Academic Incentives” page under the “Resources” link on the Greek Affairs website – www.GreekBGSU.com. If you have additional incentives you would like to add to the list, please email them to jennig@bgsu.edu.

SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS NIGHT

Chapters should hold a “Scholarship Awards” dinner or dessert reception each semester. This program should be planned by the scholarship chair and his/her scholarship committee. All members should be invited along with key University officials, such as:

- Council officers.
- Greek Advisor.
- Dean of Students.
- Alumni/alumnae.
- Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- Vice President for Student Affairs.
- Faculty members.

Awards given at the scholarship event can include:

- 4.0’s for the semester.
- Dean’s List Members.
- Highest GPA in chapter.
- Most Improved GPA in Chapter.
- Highest Big Sis/Little Sis or Big Brother/Little Brother GPA.
- Highest New Member GPA.
- Class with the highest GPA.
- Faculty Member of the Semester/Year Award.
- Chapter Scholarship Recipients.
- Outstanding Mentor.
- All members who achieved their scholarship goal.

Other scholarship items worth mentioning include:

- Other campus academic awards the chapter has won over the past year.
- National academic awards won over the past year.
- Names of members accepted into professional schools.
- Names of members accepted into campus honor societies.

- Overall chapter GPA progress.
- Programming initiatives, and workshops.

STUDY HOURS

Academic success can be enhanced by providing members with a positive study atmosphere. By creating a positive atmosphere, chapter members has the potential to create a positive attitude and realize their potential. The following are suggestions for creating a positive study atmosphere.

1. **Establish a designated study area.** Instead of using the chapter library, which is usually a collection of old books and outdated tests, find a space where quiet and effective studying can take place. Within this area, keep an organized collection of up-to-date study resources. There should be a variety of furniture in the area as well, to allow members to study comfortably. Some members prefer to lay on a couch and read, while others like to work sitting at a table. Providing a variety of study options will encourage all members to use the space. Try to choose an area without a television to avoid distractions. Also choose an area where little traffic passes by so members who are studying are not distracted by those who are not.
2. **Establish courtesy hours.** If the chapter has a house, establish nightly courtesy hours. It is important that the chapter enforce quiet hour policies to ensure that all members are able to study and sleep in a peaceful atmosphere.
3. **Establish special quiet hours during finals.** During finals week, the best solution is to establish 24-hour study hours. If the chapter does have a designated study area, keep in clean and provide refreshments and snacks for members who utilize the space.

INSTRUCTOR FILES

Instructor files (also called a syllabus file) should be kept in the library or resource room. It should be organized in alphabetical order by subject. Each subject should be in one large file folder and divided into sub-files by the course level number. For example, all accounting classes should be in the same large file folder and separated as Acct 200, Acct 201, Acct 330, Acct 490, and so on. Each syllabus should be no more than two years old and should be updated at the end of every semester. The scholarship chair should ask each member of the chapter to turn in all their syllabi to him/her, as well as a personalized evaluation of the course. The personal evaluation should answer the following questions:

1. What was the course like?
2. Tests based on lectures? Books? Notes?
3. Average amount of reading assigned?
4. Assignments and how often they are due?

5. Interesting class meetings?
6. A likeable and/or intelligent instructor?
7. Grade received? (optional)

An example evaluation is as follows:

“Class is mainly lectures off of PowerPoint slides that are posted on Blackboard. Tests are multiple choice and questions are a combination of information from the book and the lecture notes. Professor allows you to turn in the final paper early for proofreading and comments. It just has to be turned in 2 weeks before it’s due. I did that and I think that really helped me get an A in the class. I really like the course and I’d recommend the professor.”

It is important that you do not allow members to take the files out of the designated room where they are kept. This will ensure that everyone has access to the instructor files. Having up-to-date instructor files will assist members when it is time to register for classes the following semester.

Remember: instructor files are NOT test files. They are only to provide members information about different instructors and courses at BGSU.

COMMUNICATION

Communication about both academic struggles and successes should be a primary concern of the chapter. Individuals must be urged to talk with their professors and academic advisors about scholastic problems. There should be an open line of communication between chapter members and the scholarship chair about academic progress.

Indeed, chapters should also communicate their academic accomplishments in various ways. Include information in chapter newsletters to alumni/alumnae, parent’s newsletters, and on the chapter website. Lastly, inform chapter headquarters of academic needs, goals, and successes. They will appreciate the updates on academics!

FACULTY ADVISOR

The faculty advisor works closely with chapters on their scholarship program. This vital individual should provide guidance and support to the chapter. The expectations of the faculty advisor include the following:

1. Assist the chapter in developing an overall scholarship program.
2. Meet with the new members each semester to review their academic progress.
3. Assist the chapter in developing an Academic Incentives program.
4. Attend any scholarship receptions the chapter hosts.
5. Be available to meet with individual members who are in need of academic assistance.

- Attend two chapter meetings/dinners each semester to get to know the members and the members to get to know the Faculty Advisor.

Faculty Advisors are also able to apply for a Faculty Advisor Grant each semester for \$150. The grant can be used to purchase academic incentives such as book scholarships, plaques, or dinner for members who excel academically. Encourage your faculty advisor to take advantage of this excellent opportunity every semester!

A common problem with many chapters in their relationship with their faculty advisor has been due to a simple failure of communication. The Faculty Advisor should not be merely a figurehead. Make certain that he/she understands what you want of him/her, and always follow through to see that he/she is treated with respect, invited to the house periodically, and kept full informed. Do not contact your Faculty Advisor strictly because you have a form for him/her to sign (even worse, it has to be signed and sent in by tomorrow); this will certainly frustrate the Faculty Advisor. Your Faculty Advisor should receive copies of all reports and correspondence that relate to the scholarship program.

An active Faculty Advisor can be a great asset to the chapter in its efforts to achieve academic success. Do not abuse his/her role or take him/her for granted. Remember, he/she is a volunteer and deserves appreciation, cooperation of chapter members, and recognition for their contributions.

Important notes about Faculty Advisors:

- Faculty Advisors serve for one-year terms with possible extensions based on a mutual agreement between the fraternity or sorority and the faculty advisor.
- Faculty Advisors are not expected to serve as the chapter advisor nor to serve on the alumni board.
- Faculty Advisors are not on call nor are they responsible for the social aspects of the chapter.

DEVELOPING SCHOLARSHIPS

The central purpose of education is learning, and the apex of learning is scholarship. Each chapter should recognize that learning is a holistic experience – one not limited to just book, exams, and grades – and develop a standard for determining scholarship awards which take into account the most noteworthy learning achievements within all of the following areas of college life: academic accomplishment, campus and chapter leadership, and community involvement. What students learn in the classroom is enhanced, extended, and exemplified by active experience.

The selection committee should be made up of university administrators and professors and/or alumni/alumnae from the chapter. This will ensure that recipients are chosen by an impartial selection committee. Applicants should be informed of when their application was received by

the selection committee, as well as when they will receive information regarding the status of their application.

Each chapter should strive to offer at least one scholarship to chapter members, though many offer more. Scholarships can be restricted to number of years in the chapter, number of years in college, chapter leadership positions, or personal contribution to the chapter.

Alumni/alumnae are excellent resources to assist chapters in funding chapter scholarships. Each chapter is eligible to establish an alumni/alumnae scholarship fund with the University Foundation through the Miletu Alumni Office. Staff members at the Alumni Office are available to assist chapters with this process. By processing scholarships through the University Foundation, the donations are tax deductible and eligible for matching gifts from the donor's place of employment.

FINANCIAL AID

It is important for every chapter to recognize that scholarship is not just about academic achievement. It is also about rewarding members for their commitment to excellence in academics. That said, the scholarship chair should also be responsible for informing chapter members of financial aid assistance throughout the year. This includes announcements of local and national scholarships, university financial aid packages, and outside funding. The scholarship chair should make available all applications regarding scholarships and financial aid.

For more information, see the BGSU Financial Aid Homepage: <http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/sfa/>

CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING CHAPTER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

- _____ Chapter requires minimum GPA of _____ before any member can be offered a bid to the chapter.

- _____ Chapter requires minimum GPA for all members to remain active within the chapter, which is _____.

- _____ Chapter requires minimum GPA for members to hold office, participate in intramurals, attend social events, etc, which is _____.

- _____ Chapter maintains and encourages the use of a study room/area.

- _____ Chapter has quiet hours for chapter house.

- _____ Chapter provided incentives to encourage academic achievement, such as:
 - _____ Awards
 - _____ Scholarships
 - _____ Reduction of dues or membership fees
 - _____ Chapter privileges
 - _____ General recognition

- _____ Members are instructed the procedures for obtaining tutors and are encouraged to do so.

- _____ Chapter holds at least one workshop a semester on study skills, time management skills, or similar topics.

- _____ Chapter invites outside constituents, such as the university Greek Advisor, the chapter faculty advisor, or Career Counselor, to speak to the chapter about scholarship at least once a semester

- _____ Chapter officers are expected to meet higher standards to provide evidence that they \ strive to improve the quality of leadership and set an example for membership.

- _____ Chapter has a discipline process for members below minimum GPA.

- _____ Chapter house has a resource room or library.

- _____ Chapter encourages members to use the university libraries and study facilities.

- _____ Chapter has a calendar of events, showing that chapter members are able to lead a balanced life of academic commitment, social opportunities, and free time.

- _____ The chapter scholarship chair regularly reviews the scholarship program, as well as the chapter's academic progress each semester.