

AWARENESS TIPS: The Pledge Education Program

The Pledge Education Program, along with the Pledge Education Guide, teaches pledges our history and operations and orients them to our organization and its culture.

- ▲ Make sure the VPPE has read the Standard Pledge Education Program in its entirety and reviews it with the entire chapter each term.
- ▲ The pledge education program is standardized, but pledge education has changed over the years due to changes in laws, technology, diversity, societal needs, educational styles, etc. The experience a pledge has with your chapter should be the same experience that every other pledge is having across the nation.
- ▲ All pledges must receive two official publications: (1) *The Crown & Delta* and (2) a printed copy of the chapter's pledge education program as approved on the chapter's Hub Dashboard. *The Crown & Delta* becomes the personal property of the pledge and is not refundable if not initiated and is not collected by the chapter if the pledge is not initiated. Manuals and programs should both be ready for distribution immediately following the Pledging Ceremony.
- ▲ Provide each pledge with a copy of Chapter Bylaws, a chapter calendar, a roster of chapter members and faculty members, etc. This is not for quizzing or specific study, but it allows the pledge to see on their own what the chapter has planned and the governing structure.
- ▲ Focus on building brotherhood and Fraternity loyalty through chapter and Fraternity events. Brotherhood is not taught. Brotherhood is heartwarming emotion felt through participation in Ritual, committee groups, leadership roles, professional and service events, group gatherings with other brothers, LEAD events, and so on. Pledges will see it in the brothers if the brothers are active participants, courteous, and cooperative. They will feel it at the right time for them as they participate in chapter programs that are high-quality, enjoyable, and inclusive.
- ▲ Pledge education should be a professional approach, educational and informative in nature, simple, straightforward, well-organized, impressive, and encouraging. It is not the time or place to be creative (or continue unacceptable traditions) with the use of games or pranks, competitions, misleading information, time-consuming tasks, or varied instruction from many different brothers.
- ▲ Although a pledge is not yet a brother in the Fraternity, they should be treated graciously and as an equal. The brothers must reach out to pledges to welcome them, acquaint them with procedures and opportunities, encourage their involvement, etc. The pledge has an obligation to follow the written pledge education program and should show reasonable initiative and interest, however, they still have the uncertainty of membership and the unknown factors of initiation, thus the brothers bear the responsibility to comfort and encourage the pledge in a professional and brotherly way. By being invited to pledge, the individual should have already "proven themselves" worthy.

National Requirements

- ▲ Pledge pins are chapter property; thus not paid for by pledges. The chapter should have enough pledge pins available for presentation at the Pledging Ceremony. The chapter only needs to order new pledge pins to replace lost ones or when the pledge class is larger than the inventory of pins on hand. Pledges only pay the chapter for a pledge pin when they lose one.

- ▲ Big Brothers must be assigned to each pledge before the Pledging Ceremony as Big Brother Introductions happen immediately following the Pledging Ceremony.
- ▲ Use Big Brothers effectively. The Big Brother is a mentor for a few weeks like a trainer or buddy on a new job. But...this relationship will have a direct impact on the pledges future involvement and dedication to the chapter and the Fraternity. Be sure your Big Brothers are very dedicated, responsible, and qualified to be the kind of mentor that everyone will admire and respect.
- ▲ Pledges may be invited to participate in a regional or joint initiation but it is not be required of them. The chapter must provide the option to be initiated on campus if a pledge cannot or chooses not to travel, or cannot afford the additional travel expenses.
- ▲ All pledge fees must be paid prior to initiation. The maximum allowed pledge fee is \$150. Pledges may be invited to chapter banquets, LEAD events, or purchase shirts or similar, but they cannot be automatically charged for any of these optional events or products. Be sure these options are not construed as pledge requirements or that any money for these options is communicated as a pledge fee or part of pledge fees.

**REMEMBER – THE BROTHERS SET THE EXAMPLE FOR
APPROPRIATE CONDUCT AND ATTITUDE**