



Scholarship

OFFICER GUIDE



advocate - collaborate - educate



Congratulations!

You have been chosen by the representatives of your Interfraternity Council to represent the fraternity community for the upcoming year. Becoming the IFC Vice President of Scholarship is a duty not to be taken lightly, and is one that should be met with great responsibility, patience, and diligence. As the IFC Vice President of Scholarship, it is your responsibility to oversee the promotion and recognition of academic excellence among member fraternities and individuals. Emphasis should be placed on the development of a continuous scholarship program that will enhance and supplement any member fraternity academic endeavors.

This guide was created by the North-American Interfraternity Conference (NIC) with the intention of providing you with the materials you will need to be a successful IFC officer. The NIC was founded in 1909 and is the trade association that represents 75 International and National men's fraternities. The NIC serves to advocate the needs of its member fraternities through enrichment of the fraternity experience, advancement and growth of the fraternity community; and enhancement of the educational mission of the host institutions. The NIC is also committed to enhancing the benefits of fraternity membership through its relationship with Interfraternity Councils.

While this guide was intended to be used in conjunction with the Interfraternity Council, the information in this guide is meant to be fully inclusive of the fraternity communities led by the Inter-Greek Councils and can be easily shared with NPC, NPHC, NALFO, NMGC, NAPA, and other organizations. This type of interfraternal cooperation will increase the likelihood of successful implementation and maintain positive relations between all elements of the fraternity community.

For further information, you can visit www.nicindy.org or use the contact information that is located in the appendix of this guide.



IFC's relationship with the NIC

The NIC has a storied history of collaboration with Interfraternity Councils to offer its expertise and guidance in ensuring operational success. Given its unique position within the industry, the NIC has a responsibility to utilize its collective knowledge and experience to connect with councils in order to assist in their development of optimal operations and effective educational opportunities. The hope of the NIC is that our efforts to raise each local fraternity community will collectively raise the global fraternity community.

What can IFC expect from the NIC?

At any host institution where two or more NIC Member Fraternities have established undergraduate chapters, an Interfraternity Council (IFC) shall be established which will be chartered by the NIC. An IFC will be composed of all undergraduate chapters of NIC Member Fraternities present at a host institution. The NIC will provide staff, resources, and services to assist Interfraternity Councils in instituting optimal operations, officer competencies, and best practices. The NIC will provide IFCs with an IFC Resource Manual and will assist IFCs in reviewing and establishing model governing documents that are in accordance with NIC Standards and policies and do not infringe upon the sovereignty of Member Fraternities and their chapters.



How will the NIC help campus IFCs?

The NIC assists councils by providing increased training and resources for IFC Executive Board officers and IFC Representatives. This support focuses on the individual development and skills of officers, as well as providing training and resources designed to advance the role of the Interfraternity Council as the primary advocate, governance and educational body for the fraternity experience within a campus and local community.

Through better interactions with IFCs, the NIC will be able to work with IFCs and host institutions to:

- Develop optimal IFC operations through dedicated staff (Coordinators of IFC Services) and volunteer positions (Regional Advocates) responsive to IFC operational needs, advocacy concerns, and policy inquiries from students and/or host institutions;
- Deliver base-level training, education, and ongoing services for all IFCs and IFC officers;
- Provide guidance and support in constitution/bylaws/policy changes, recruitment processes, and officer transitions;
- Develop resources and tools to assist IFCs with recruitment, marketing, and public relations to augment interest in joining fraternity, to better educate the potential recruit and his parents, and to promote fraternity on campus;
- Assist IFCs in crisis intervention and response, brand management, and values-based decision-making;
- Offer guidance in identifying and preempting impending issues concerning campus relationship statements, recognition agreements, and indemnification clauses;
- Provide all IFCs with IFC best practices, NIC Standards education, and other generally accepted industry policies established by the NIC;
- Provide host institutions with highly qualified volunteers who have close proximity, local expertise, and institutional knowledge; and
- Establish formal reporting mechanisms for campus data and statistical information to better track industry information and trends for use by IFCs.



Vice President of Scholarship Responsibilities

The IFC Vice President of Scholarship responsibilities should include a mission or goal statement that encourages high academic achievement for individuals and member fraternities as well as specific programs or tasks that are to be accomplished throughout the term.

Some of the responsibilities of the Vice President of Scholarship should include:

- Coordinating a member fraternity scholarship chair orientation program for member fraternities
- Collecting and distributing academic performance rankings
- Maintaining current information for accurate fraternity rosters
- Publishing important academic dates and deadlines
- Collecting and distributing information about campus academic services, tutors, the writing lab, math lab, learning assistance programs, interest tests, career counseling, placement workshops, unique library resources, and many others
- Working individually with scholarship chairs of member fraternities below the all-men's grade point average
- Build and maintain relationships with faculty, academic offices, and academic honorary societies
- Provide advice and support to member fraternity scholarship chairs
- Finding a faculty member to serve as an academic advisor for the IFC



Scholarship Workshops

The IFC should sponsor a scholarship workshop once each term involving all member fraternity scholarship chairs and new member educators. Ideas and suggestions should be generated and distributed for enhancing new member scholarship programs. New member educators should be invited to the member fraternity scholarship chair orientation and programs, or you could also hold as separate orientation session each semester for new member educators. Scholastic programming and resource information should be a large part of this orientation program. All IFC efforts should continually focus on reducing the number of new members who are academically ineligible to be initiated or who are removed from the school for academic reasons.

The focus of this combined session with scholarship chairs and new member educators should be on effective programming ideas that will better prepare new members for the demands of college academics. Representatives from member fraternities with strong academic performance should openly share their experiences and rationales for their successes. Discussing what has worked well in the past is sometimes just as enlightening as talk about what has worked. This allows member fraternities to learn from each other and begin to share in the exchange of information.

When possible, partnering with academic services staff would be ideal as they would be able to provide the scholarship chairs and new member educators with the most accurate information.

Tutoring Services:

The IFC Vice President of Scholarship should identify individuals from all member fraternities willing to tutor and make a list of available tutors for distribution to new member classes. By using resources from all member fraternities, a greater variety of tutors will be available to those students really in need of academic assistance. A simple survey of first year and second year students will indicate the most common or difficult courses and an appropriate need for the tutorial service.



Academic Support Center Orientation

The IFC should co-sponsor an annual orientation meeting for member fraternity scholarship chairs with the campus academic support center.

During this session, outstanding and effective scholarship programs are shared and individual counseling sessions are provided to help scholarship chairs with program design and implementation.

Every fraternity has a scholarship chair or officer; however some may not have an idea of how they can provide assistance for their fellow members. The IFC can assist in this role and provide some structure for the individual to follow, the information should include:

- Sample job descriptions
- Outstanding scholarship programs from member fraternities on campus
- Important academic dates and deadlines
- Listing and giving an explanation of all related campus resources

After this scholarship chair orientation, allow each chair to develop a specific plan of action. This plan should be shared with the IFC Vice President of Scholarship, IFC Advisor, and the IFC faculty academic advisor. The member fraternity scholarship chairs should then be ready to fully implement a high quality and effective scholarship plan.



Resource Directory

Along with the academic support center orientation, a resource directory would be a great way to get out pertinent information to member fraternity scholarship chairs. The directory and how it can be used should be incorporated into the scholarship chair orientation program at the beginning of the year. A directory of who to contact, where an office is located, office phone numbers, and a description of the services offered would be very helpful for any member fraternity scholarship chair planning an effective program. The directory could either summarize the relevant campus information or be a compilation of information already printed by each office and made available to the IFC for distribution.

Campus resources to include in the **directory** include the following:

- Career planning and placement office
- Testing office
- Counseling services
- Library
- Learning assistance/academic advising (tutors, peer advisors, writing and math labs)
- Faculty advisors (individual fraternity member use)
- Academic deans (grievances, withdrawals, grade changes)
- Campus online resources



Incentives

The IFC should recognize individuals within the fraternity community each term. Fraternity members who achieve academic excellence should be publicly recognized at least once a year during Greek Week, a scholarship reception, Parent's Weekend, or at a national Greek academic honorary society such as Order of Omega or Gamma Sigma Alpha.

The most important element of recognition is the environment in which it is conducted. A separate occasion if possible should be set aside for the recognition of scholarship. Continue to enlist the support of the faculty, campus administration, and alumni office in these events. Very few administrators will decline an opportunity to recognize superior academic performance by students, and an even greater benefit is the positive public relations and enhanced informal relationships between them and the fraternity community.

Recipients for awards should include the following:

- Men who earned a 4.0 GPA
- Men who earned a 3.75 GPA or higher
- Men who earned a 3.5 GPA or higher
- Men who made the dean's list
- Member fraternities who have a GPA above the all-men's average
- Improved member fraternity GPA's
- Improved individual GPA's
- Member fraternities who are consistently above the all-men's average

Keep in mind that each individual should be presented with a certificate or some other small token. To promote interfraternalism, recipient names should be announced in alphabetical order or by major rather than in fraternity clusters.

Names of recipients and member fraternities can also be published in the in the campus newspaper as a nice supplement to the awards presentation. The IFC should also utilize technology and social media to promote the academic success of member fraternities. It's important to get the message out for parents, non-affiliated students, and incoming students.

A note about FERPA...

It is important that before you recognize members and member fraternities for their academic accomplishments that you check with your IFC Advisor to ensure that you are in compliance with FERPA. FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records.



Faculty Members

The IFC Advisor often has more responsibilities that time allows and unfortunately cannot always meet with every need of the fraternity community immediately. Having a faculty member serve as an academic advisor to the IFC can fill an important need. Depending on the size of your fraternity community, you may even desire more than one faculty academic advisor.

In addition, occasional movements to eliminate or further regulate fraternities on campus have come from faculty members. It is important to involve this influential group in IFC programming activities whenever possible. If you involve faculty members from the beginning in your efforts to promote scholarship and academic achievement, they will have greater confidence in the value of the fraternity community and the ability to be a better advocate for the fraternity experience in other situations.

Recognizing Outstanding Faculty Members:

The IFC should recognize outstanding faculty members annually for their excellence in teaching. In doing so, a positive image is perpetuated among the faculty in addition to campus officials and the rest of the student body. Furthermore, a faculty recognition program is one additional step in an effort to open communication channels that are sometimes misunderstood or closed entirely.

Individual member fraternities should nominate professors who exhibit high standards and commitment to classroom instructor. Criteria may include the following:

- Innovative classroom instructional techniques
- Creative course assignments and required readings
- Dynamic lectures which challenge students
- Availability outside classroom for individual or group assistance
- Dedication to current research and information for classroom use

To recognize a number of faculty while maintaining the integrity of the ward, the IFC could select a recipient from each school or department with the number based upon actual enrollment. For example, if one-third of all students are in an engineering curriculum and one-fifth are in education, a higher number of faculty should be recognized from engineering than education. Avoid selecting a majority of recipients from one particular discipline such as business. Recognition of both tenured and non-tenured faculty is also suggested.

Faculty awards may take on many forms such as:

- Recognition at an all campus awards program or reception during Greek Week
- Recipients could be presented with a small plaque and framed certificate
- The IFC could make a monetary donation to the library for the purchase of books in the faculty members field



Scholarship Policy

The IFC should have a written scholarship policy which includes **minimum standards for member fraternities, specific incentives and sanctions for performance below these standards, and is in alignment with the NIC Standards.** The design and implementation of a comprehensive IFC scholarship policy is highly suggested as a good starting point.

An **IFC scholarship policy** can take the following forms:

- 2.5 minimum grade point standard for member fraternities to maintain full IFC recognition
- 2.3 minimum grade point standard to be eligible for fraternity membership
- Member fraternity grade point averages equal to or greater than the all-men's average to receive awards recognition
- Member fraternities submit a written scholarship program
- Member fraternities below the all-men's average meet with the IFC scholarship committee and faculty or administrative representatives to discuss methods for improvement

To add credibility to an IFC scholarship policy, good performance should be consistently rewarded and substandard achievement should result in educational sanctions. When considering punitive measures, the IFC should create sanctions which parallel the fraternity community's desire to improve scholarship. Such a policy could entail the denial of social privileges for two weeks for each .05 grade points that a member fraternity falls below the all-men's average.

If the current all-fraternity grade point average is not close to the all men's average, a grade point standard somewhere between the all-fraternity average and the all men's average is a logical starting point; however, it must be at or above the 2.5 minimum.



Scholarship Reports

Scholarship reporting is increasingly becoming a more crucial component of successful fraternity communities. Many constituencies have complained recently of the lack of academic progress by fraternity members. In some instances, the fraternity community has lacked the ability to accurately report the facts to the detriment of the member fraternities on campus. It is the responsibility of the IFC and IFC Advisor to see that academic grade ranking information is accurately maintained and made accessible.

Member fraternity rosters can be kept in a variety of ways. The fraternity is responsible for submitting the **names of all initiates and new members** along with their applicable student number, grade release form, and organizational affiliation. In addition, the release should state to whom specifically the information can be released, the dates in which the release is valid (normally the duration of their undergraduate years), and the process by which an individual can cancel the release.

The IFC or IFC Advisor should also measure the **graduation rate** of fraternity members and share this research with the appropriate campus officials and the NIC. The measurement of graduation rates can easily be maintained with information gathered from the member fraternity roster reports. Any time a member fraternity removes a man from its roster, they should state a reason such as graduation, school transfer, inactive, or otherwise.

New member classes from the previous four or five years should be reviewed annually. Of the men who joined that year, determine the **percentage that graduated** with a degree from the school, the **percentage that transferred** to another institution, the **percentage that terminated** their membership, and the **percentage that dropped out** for academic, financial, or personal reasons. If the community can document that fraternity members graduate in higher numbers than non-affiliated men (which is the case on almost all campuses who have conducted retention studies), the campus community is more likely to support the overall efforts of the fraternity community.

The most forgotten element of academic ranking information is the effective communication of the data. The academic statistics should be distributed to the member fraternities, member fraternity advisors, appropriate campus officials, and general fraternities in a timely manner. The member fraternities should understand the importance of the information, and the IFC should use the distribution of grade rankings each term as an opportunity to work with member fraternity scholarship chairs and advisors on an evaluation of where they are and where they would like to be.

Fraternity advisors should also report this data when submitting **grade reports** to the NIC headquarters. This is a part of the NIC standards for host institutions and is due annually.



Calendar Planning

The IFC calendar should be given to all member fraternity presidents and representatives and provided at any orientation or training program sponsored by the IFC. Important dates to include on the IFC calendar include:

- Scholarship due dates for departmental and university wide scholarships
- Financial aid due dates – priority registration, the date to accept awards, when to turn in the FASFA, etc
- Last day to add a class
- Last day to drop a class
- Last day to change grades from pass/fail
- Pre-registration dates
- Academic advising times
- Early fee payments
- Midterms
- Final exam week

The timing of major campus fraternity activities should not interfere with heavy academic times, especially midterm and final exam preparation.

Collaboration

The IFC should collaborate with any Greek honorary society that exists on campus, such as Order of Omega or Gamma Sigma Alpha. The natural role for these organizations could be scholarship programming sponsorship. Any effort undertaken should be mutually agreed upon by the IFC Vice President of Scholarship and Order of Omega or Gamma Sigma Alpha officer responsible for programming. The IFC Vice President of Scholarship should also be aware of the membership requirements and should encourage men who meet the criteria of either organization to apply.