

# **ALPHA GAMMA RHO FRATERNITY**

## **CHAPTER RETREAT PLANNING**

So your Chapter wants to know where it's going and whether it's headed in the right direction. You want to see things "not as they are and ask why, but as they can be and ask why not?" Sounds great and clever and all that -- but how does your Chapter accomplish this important self-accuracy approach? A good place to start is with a CHAPTER RETREAT.

### **Set A Date**

Select a weekend when it will be possible for 100 percent of the Chapter membership to get away. Avoid big campus weekends and avoid busy seasons on home farms and ranches. Plan at least six weeks in advance so brothers too can plan accordingly -- including getting school work caught up before they go.

Probably the most successful length for a retreat is two days -- one day retreats have, however, produced satisfactory results as well. The prime example would be a Saturday afternoon, evening, and Sunday morning retreat.

### **Pick A Place**

Different opinions exist as to the best place to conduct a retreat. The most common selection is a remote cabin or brother's home away from the Chapter house. Get away from radio, television, highways and social life. Generally, the more remote the location the more successful the retreat. Most often either an alumnus or collegiate brother will have access to such a place. If at all possible -- don't pay for a location.

Some Chapters charter a bus; others drive in cars, park and put away the keys for the duration of the retreat.

On occasion Chapters have held retreats in their Chapter house. They simply lock all doors and close the house to outsiders.

### **Plan A Program**

While the word "unstructured" is popular today and while the unstructured retreat has proven to be extremely beneficial to Chapters, some planning is still required. Appoint a chairman and give him a committee to work with. Food must be coordinated, sleeping arrangements outlined (use sleeping bags and camping gear) and transportation arranged.

Every retreat should start with the Ritual. Immediately following the Ritual you may want to have some discussions concerning certain parts of it and how it applied to you. A re-reading of the Oath of Membership and Charge are also very helpful to set the correct mood for the retreat.

Some Chapters have invited a sensitivity expert to break the ice and to get the retreat going. Other Chapters would rather do it themselves. At any rate, think ahead and plan a few definite subjects to launch the discussions. Allow time for some athletic activities and allow time for the brothers to simply sit around and talk. Remember, an informal atmosphere that is organized can induce good discussion.

### **Discuss your Goals**

Obviously, those items deemed most important as subjects for discussion will vary from Chapter to Chapter. Evaluate the Membership Education program; review what is right or wrong with recruitment; criticize the budget and consider your financial situation; vow to begin expanded alumni/collegiate communication and review your relations with IFC and the university. Ahead of time, notify several key officers to be prepared to submit reports of what's ahead in the school year. Give each individual brother an opportunity to challenge and praise these reports -- something that, of course, cannot feasibly be done during Chapter meetings. Permit no offense to be taken from criticism.

### **Set Some Rules**

During the retreat, no alcoholic beverages should be present -- a party atmosphere will sabotage any retreat. Although enjoyable, the Chapter retreat is for a serious purpose. Require the attendance of every brother and require any absentees to fully explain their absence to the Chapter. Use reasonable punishment for those not attending without a sound reason.

### **Ask For Assistance**

Write to the Home Office or other Chapters for more specific retreat guidelines. Don't forget to invite the Chapter Adviser(s) as well as any other alumni who desire to participate and/or are close to the Chapter.

### **Review The Retreat**

After this year's retreat, take the time to sit down and evaluate just what good the retreat accomplished. Make notes to insure the success of the next one. Retreats can provide an added impetus to a good Chapter -- they simply bring each brother a little closer to the Chapter's soul.

## OFFICER TRANSITION....AN ESSENTIAL TASK

### One Day Retreat

*An officer transition meeting takes place following elections and prior to installation.*

A smooth officer transition can greatly assist incoming officers and allow outgoing officers to receive credit for a job well done. At minimum the officer transition should be a time for outgoing officers to pass notebooks and records to their successors. Too often IFC officers complete several months in office before tracking down materials of past officers. This meeting must be made a priority.

A more elaborate officer transition will allow new and old officers to spend time together. Discussion topics may include:

- . review of all projects undertaken by officers in past year
- . review of pending projects which new officers will need to complete
- . identification of key individuals with whom the officer interacts
- . explanation of budgetary procedures and reimbursements
- . suggestions for success and common mistakes to avoid
- . communication with IFC, Panhellenic and NPHC counterparts
- . resources of Greek Adviser, student activities office, and room scheduling office

*A day-long officer retreat takes place following elections and prior to installation.*

An officer retreat will enhance the exchange of knowledge from old to new officers. By going on a retreat, the transition process is seen as a priority rather than "just another meeting." A good use of time is the inclusion of old and new offices for the first part of the retreat, followed by new offices working alone.

In attendance: all officers and advisers

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| 9:00 AM        | Arrive at retreat location, orientation.   |
| 9:30-10:00 AM  | Energizers, ice breakers, get-acquainted exercises.  |
| 10:00-11:30 AM | Former officers pair up with newly elected officers to review notebooks, position responsibilities, completion of weekly reports, office policies, and review of last year's program and activities. Also use an alumnus to participate with each officers discussion. |

11:30-12:00 PM	Lunch
12:00- 1:00 PM	Confrontation 101 Workshop--How to deal with effectively (NIC) resource, Golden Crescent (1992) resource.
1:00- 2:30 PM	"Seeing the Big Picture" - understanding the need for Executive Council teamwork, the cooperative relationship with the University IFC, and the Alumni Corporation.
2:30- 3:00 PM	Budgeting - understanding the allocation process, budget proposals.
3:00- 5:30 PM	Goals and activities for upcoming year (individual group).
5:30- 6:30 PM	Dinner - time to eat and informally discuss meeting management.
6:30- 7:00 PM	Review resources available and key campus contacts. Evaluate retreat format.

**ALPHA GAMMA RHO**  
**CHAPTER OFFICER TRANSITION RETREAT**

Place:	Adviser's home
10:00 AM	Orientation -- Why are we here?
10:15 AM	Break into Officer sub-groups  Noble Ruler VNR-Activities VNR-Alumni Relations VNR-Finance VNR-Management Operations VNR-Membership Development VNR-Planning VNR-Recruitment VNR-Scholarship
Review:	What is your job, rules of the job, what needs to be done when, paperwork to file with National Headquarters, University, Alumni, other officers, <i>Crescent</i> , and hints to improve the job or how to do it?
11:30 AM	Planning a calendar for all members.
12:30 PM	Dinner
1:30 PM	The Alumni Association and its meaning to the chapter; who's responsible for what, traditions, etc.
2:00 PM	The Executive Council and their responsibilities. Risk Management Meetings and house management Decision making
2:30 PM	Budgeting and what's needed, how to make a budget, who makes the budget? Tax forms?
3:00 PM	Questions of Values and Ethics.
3:30 PM	Adjourn