



Mortar Board

Scholars...Chosen for Leadership...United to Serve

INK: Important news for chapter officers and advisors

Tapping, Orientation and Initiation: keys to membership success

Membership selection is vital to the success of your Mortar Board chapter. Beyond the selections meeting and submitting candidates to the National Office for approval, the events that follow are essential to future membership involvement:

Tapping

Tapping is a time-honored tradition, dating back before the birth of Mortar Board to the founding of its oldest chapter at Cornell University. The term, taken from the literal act of tapping a new member with a mortarboard, has become synonymous with membership in the organization. For many alumni, one of their fondest Mortar Board memories is how they were publicly tapped. Here are some great examples of tapping at different universities:

- Northwestern University personally taps selected candidates at their residences and places congratulatory posters with a special treat on their door
- After obtaining permission from professors, Wichita State University will visit one of each selected candidates' classes. There, they will make an announcement, present the applicant with initiation information and a yellow rose.
- On multiple occasions, Purdue University posted tapping videos on YouTube for new members who were either studying abroad or otherwise unable to attend initiation.

Review the Membership Selection Handbook for tips or download a sample tapping script.

Orientation

Orientation, a step required in the national *Bylaws*, is vital to properly transitioning your chapter year after year, as well as educating new members about the organization they are joining. A forgotten orientation or improper transition can lead to the downfall of a chapter, as the chapter's existence relies on the talents of new initiates.

At orientation, it is important to properly inform new members about their obligations to their new Mortar Board chapter. New members should be made aware of the participation policy, dues and other chapter requirements.

The goals of orientation are:

- To inspire and motivate
- To build new members' pride in Mortar Board membership
- To share knowledge about national Mortar Board
- To learn about the local chapter's traditions, projects and structure
- To develop a commitment to active membership in Mortar Board
- Mortar Board has created a guide that can assist in smoothly welcoming the future of Mortar Board, the New Member Orientation Guide. Be sure to refer to this guide when planning an orientation agenda.

Initiation

Initiation should be a special ceremony that members and their families can look back on fondly for many years to come. Robes, candles, music and refreshments add to this honored ritual. Plan every detail, and if the ceremony is held outdoors, plan what would be done in the case of rain. The Initiation Ceremony Booklet, complete with sheet music for Mortar Board's songs and a complete script of the national initiation ceremony, will guide your chapter to success.

Complete resources and information related to the membership selections process can be found at www.mortarboard.org/membership.

What are you doing for Mortar Board Week?

Mortar Board Week, held Feb. 15-21, 2009, is a great time to celebrate Mortar Board on your campus. What is your chapter doing? Even if you didn't submit an activity on your Chapter Planning Calendar, let Mortar Board know about it now! All information, including photos, can be sent to mbforum@mortarboard.org.



Deadlines & Reminders

PAST DUE: December 15

- **Membership Recruitment and Selection Plan (MRSP)

***Please exhibit timeliness when submitting your MRSP, as each chapter **must receive approval** on their MRSP before proceeding with selections.*

January 31

- Applications for national Mortar Board post-graduate fellowships are due

March 15

- Excellence in Advising nominations due
- Alumni award nominations due
- Conference assistant applications due
- Forum submissions due
- Conference registration opens

Icebreaker of the month Questions

Materials: Envelope/hat, paper, writing utensil

Procedure:

Type or write several different questions on a piece of paper. The number of questions written should be the number of members in your chapter plus a few extra. For example, if your chapter has 50 members, you should write 55 questions.

Some sample questions:

- What city are you from?
- What is your favorite food?
- What is the last movie you saw?
- What is your favorite sport?
- What is your least favorite sports team?

Cut or tear the paper so each question is on its own, individual

Fellowship deadline rapidly approaching

Each year, the Mortar Board National Foundation awards fellowships to members to assist in financing their post-graduate education. Thousands of dollars will be available for Mortar Board fellowships for the 2009-2010 academic year, with applications due on January 31, 2009.

Recipients are chosen for academic excellence, recommendation, promise, financial need and Mortar Board involvement. Since the establishment of the Mortar Board fellowship program in 1941, more than \$500,000 has been awarded to members pursuing further study in graduate or professional school.

Apply now or learn more at www.mortarboard.org/opp/fellowships.html.

New chapter reporting methods on the horizon

Change is in the air for Mortar Board. A new, easier method for reporting members and chapter progress is currently under development, including an updated Official Membership Report (OMR). The new Web-based system will save significant time and effort required to collect fees, decrease reporting time to the National Office, as well as help ease the transition of chapter leadership from one year to the next.

However, this change is not scheduled to take place until later this month. As some chapters have already started their selections process, we would like to make this transitional period as easy as possible for all of our chapters. A temporary Microsoft Excel version of the OMR has been created and will be used instead of the current, outdated form. During this interim period, chapters may also choose to collect individual member fees and pay with one check to the National Office.

As the enhanced membership process is finalized and the new system installed and tested, the Mortar Board National Office will be providing additional training and detailed instructions about the new procedures. We are absolutely thrilled to be able to build additional capacity to serve our members, officers, advisors and alumni with this new system. If you have any questions while we make the transition, please do not hesitate to call the Mortar Board National Office at 800-989-6266 or e-mail a staff member at mortarboard@mortarboard.org.

Chapters who need to submit their OMR before the new system launches should view these temporary instructions.

White t-shirts on sale now

Does your chapter need something to wear to show your Mortar Board pride this February? If so, the National Office has the perfect sale for you! Our white screened tees are on sale now through February 21 for just \$7 each, or a special bulk rate of \$6 each when chapters order five or more! ***Get your t-shirts today!***

Helpful recruitment brochures available

Updated Mortar Board brochures are available, free of charge, to each chapter. These are great for displaying at informational tables during the selections process! To request your brochures, simply e-mail mortarboard@mortarboard.org with the following information: school name, mailing address, quantity requested, name of chapter representative requesting brochures.

Chapter Spotlight: University of Nebraska - Kearney

The Xi Phi chapter initiated the academic year by packing the fall season with events. These events, epitomizing scholarship, leadership and service (and supporting the "Reading is Leading" national project, included a trick-or-treat for books, a faculty appreciation dinner, and community service events such as Kearney's honey sale, "Honey Sunday." This spring, the chapter plans to tack on more service projects and host a special Last Lecture Series presentation.

The chapter, one of 2008's Ruth Weimer Mount Chapter Excellence Award finalists, was asked what piece of advice they would offer other Mortar Board chapters. President Amanda Calleroz responded, "Try new things that have not been done before by your chapter. Continue to support your community and donate your time to a project or organization that needs volunteers. It ways feels nice knowing that you helped others in need."

piece of paper.

Fold and place all the questions in an envelope and pass around to all chapter members.

Each member must draw a question from the envelope/hat and say their name, major, any Mortar Board office they hold, and answer their question.

About INK

The Mortar Board INK e-newsletter is distributed monthly throughout the academic year (September - May). All chapter officers and advisors reported on the Officer Address Information Form receive the newsletter. If you think an officer or advisor in your chapter is not receiving the newsletter, encourage them to sign up here.

To ensure that you promptly receive the newsletter each month, Mortar Board recommends adding enews@mortarboard.org to your address book or safe-senders list.

Archived editions of Mortar Board INK are available online.

Your National Council student representatives

Two student representatives are elected to hold seats on the Mortar Board National Council.

Joseph Rodriguez serves as the chapter president at the University of Arizona. His term will end in July 2010.

Katie Schirmer, a recent graduate of Drury University, will serve as student representative through July 2009.

If you have any ideas or input that you would like shared with national leadership, please feel free to e-mail them.