



Mortar Board

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

INK: Important news for chapter officers and advisors

Mortar Board Officer Guide: Chapter Secretary

It may seem like a simple task to keep notes during meetings and transform them into minutes, but serving as your chapter secretary is one of the most important jobs a member can hold. If you fail to keep accurate minutes and distribute them to your members, your chapter will be uninformed and no permanent record of your chapter's activities will be left behind for the future.

In order to fully understand your position and responsibilities, you should download and read the secretary portion on page 15 of the Officer & Advisor Handbook.

Chapter responsibilities

- Record minutes of each meeting and distribute copies to all members
- Keep accurate roll of members' attendance at all official functions (especially important for monitoring chapter participation policies)
- Notify all members and advisors of place and time of meetings
- Notify (in coordination with membership chair) new members of their selection
- Notify (in coordination with membership chair) new members of their orientation date and time
- Orient successor and turns over all materials

National responsibilities

- Verify that any essential chapter correspondence is sent to the National Office (i.e. reports, member documentation, etc.)

Start off right: stay in touch with the Mortar Board National Office and your section coordinator

While your Mortar Board chapter has strong local traditions and obligations to fulfill, it is also a vital part of the national society. In order for Mortar Board to continue to grow and improve as an honor society, regular communication with both the National Office and your regional section coordinator is key.

- If your chapter sends out regular minutes, updates or newsletters, please add your section coordinator to the distribution list.
- Pay close attention to all required and optional reports as well as important dates. The Mortar Board report forms page and national Google calendar may help you keep track of these responsibilities. You may need to assist the chapter president in ensuring that all necessary reports are submitted in a timely manner.

What to include in your chapter minutes

Standard information

- Type of meeting (whether it is a general chapter meeting or a special meeting)
- Name of the organization
- Date, time and place of the meeting
- Names of the presiding officer (usually president or vice president) and secretary (or the names of any substitutes)
- Whether a quorum (usually a majority of members or different number as determined by the chapter) was present
- The actual start time of the meeting
- The time of adjournment

This is not intended to be a complete officer guide, but is a condensed version to give specific officers an idea of what to expect throughout the year. All officers and advisors should download and thoroughly read the Officer & Advisor Handbook for a complete list of responsibilities.

Download the Officer & Advisor Handbook



Deadlines & Reminders

Check your files and with the National Office to see that all reports from last year have been submitted to reports@mortarboard.org!

October 15

- *Forum* submissions due

January 31

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

March 15

- *Forum* submissions due

May 15

- Officer Address Information Form due
- Historian Annual Report due

Helpful Tips

Keep all members in the loop -

Take great care in ensuring that e-mail or newsletter distribution lists include the preferred e-mail addresses for all members and advisors and address are free from typos.

Use available campus

resources - Utilize any training your student activities office on campus may provide.

Can't find something? Ask

the National Office - Contact us if you have any questions regarding materials your chapter

Questions to answer in your minutes

- Were previous minutes read and approved? (they must be in order to be considered valid)
- Which reports were presented (and by whom)? Was any action taken based on the report?
- Were there any points of order or any rulings that set precedents for future meetings?

When motions are made

- What is the exact motion, verbatim?
- Who moved and who seconded?
- What is the disposition of each main motion, including any amendments?
- Was the motion adopted, failed, postponed, referred to a committee or disposed of in some other manner?
- Any notices of motions to be introduced at future meetings

When voting

- All counted votes should be recorded in the minutes (for example: 59 yes, 13 no or 59 in the affirmative, 13 in the negative)

Storing and sharing your minutes

- Type your minutes and save to a CD or flash drive to pass on to the next chapter secretary.
- Remember that minutes do not become an official record until they have been approved (typically at the following meeting)
- When the minutes have been approved, type or write the word “approved” with your initials and date below the minutes
- Keep the participation records of chapter members. That is, note in the minutes who is in attendance and who is not.
- In a timely manner, communicate information about your next meeting (including date, time and location) to your chapter by putting it at the end of the minutes. Send minutes to all chapter members, advisors and administrative liaison.

Sample timeline for chapter secretary

This timeline is meant to serve as a guideline only and does not incorporate all necessary responsibilities, such as those required by individual colleges and universities.

Summer (May - August)

- Prior to the end of the academic year, meet with the outgoing chapter secretary to obtain their notes (saved in a binder/folder, data CD or flash drive) and get any tips for the coming year
- Meet with your chapter's president after he or she returns from the annual national conference in Chicago to discuss plans for the year
- Set up a template to use for chapter minutes or newsletters throughout the year
- Designate a binder or area to keep chapter minutes and notes throughout the year

Fall (September - November)

- Meet regularly with the chapter executive board and/or advisors
- Attend all chapter meetings (held at least monthly throughout the academic year) and take detailed notes. If you are unable to attend a meeting, delegate this duty to an alternate secretary or chapter member
- Send out chapter minutes or newsletters following meetings
- Participate in fall campus and chapter activities, events and service initiatives
- If your chapter does not have a director of communications and/or historian, you may be responsible for submitting chapter updates for publication in the Mortar Board Forum magazine by October 15
- Regularly back up files to a data CD or USB flash drive

Winter (December - February)

- Help the membership chair or committee create any applications, fliers and/or membership materials (if necessary)
- Continue to attend all meetings, take notes and distribute minutes or newsletters to chapter members
- Participate in winter campus activities
- Apply for a Mortar Board Week visibility grant (optional) by December 15
- As necessary, assist with the membership selections process, typically headed by the membership chair (Specific tasks include: practice the selections process, publicize applications, accept applications, select members, report selected members to the National Office on the Official Membership Report, tap members approved by the National Office, hold an orientation, collect dues, initiate new members and submit all fees to the National Office)

has submitted in the past, as important chapter records are kept on file if submitted by previous chapter officers or advisors.

Stay organized - Keep a binder of all printed minutes, correspondence, and chapter paperwork. You should also keep an electronic back-up of important e-mails and documents on a CD or flash drive in case of computer mishaps.

Read the monthly Mortar Board INK

The Mortar Board INK, distributed September through May from e-mail address enews@mortarboard.org, serves as a resource for officers and advisors of Mortar Board. This important newsletter includes:

- National deadlines
- Important reminders
- Chapter highlights
- Important announcements
- Ideas for projects, fundraisers and more

Officers and advisors reported in the Officer Address Information Form receive this newsletter. Please make sure all officers are reported on this form and subscribe.



- Encourage chapter members to apply for Mortar Board's national post-graduate fellowships by January 31
- Celebrate national Mortar Board Week February 14-20, 2010
- Regularly back up files to a data CD or USB flash drive

Spring (March - May)

- If your chapter does not have a director of communications and/or historian, you may be responsible for submitting chapter updates for publication in the Mortar Board Forum magazine by March 15
- Continue to attend all meetings, take notes and distribute minutes or newsletters to chapter members
- Regularly back up files to a data CD or USB flash drive
- Attend officer election and take notes, recording detailed contact information for all new officers elected
- Work with the chapter president following officer election to submit the Officer Address Information Form
- Participate in a chapter and officer transition; be sure to meet one-on-one with the new chapter secretary to pass on your binder and files from the academic year and exchange contact information so they can contact you for assistance if needed

Assist the chapter president in overseeing that all reports due throughout the year are submitted

Report form	Due date	Responsible officer
Officer Address Information Form	May 15 (or ASAP if not yet submitted)	President
Chapter Planning Calendar	October 15	President
Chapter Project Grant application*	October 15	President or other member or officer such as a service chair or director of communications
Forum submissions*	October 15	Director of communications, historian or president
Virtual Book Drive ends*	November 16	President, service chair or other officer
Membership Recruitment and Selection Plan (MRSP)	December 15	Membership chair, vice president or president
Mortar Board Week Visibility Grant*	December 15	President or other member or officer such as a service chair or director of communications
Fellowship applications and recommendations due*	January 31	Any member
Excellence in Advising nomination*	March 15	Any member or officer
Alumni award nomination*	March 15	Any member
Conference assistant application*	March 15	Any member
Forum submissions*	March 15	Director of communications, historian or president
National conference registration	May 15	Newly-elected chapter president (or other officer in his/her absence)
Official Membership Report (OMR)	Immediately after member selection, before tapping	Membership chairperson, vice president or president
Chapter Annual Report	May 15	President
Chapter Financial Report	May 15	Treasurer
Advisor Annual Report	May 15	Advisor
Historian Annual Report	May 15	Historian
Final OMR and fees	Varies, no later than May 15	Membership chairperson, treasurer
Officer Address Information Form	May 15	President (outgoing or incoming)
Golden Torch Award nomination form*	May 15	Chapter officer or section coordinator
Project Excellence Award nomination form*	May 15	Any chapter officer or member
Most Improved Chapter Award nomination forms*	May 15	Chapter officer, section coordinator or other national representative
Chapter Project Grant application*	May 15	President, advisor or other representative

*Optional