



ADVISOR NEWS

Membership selections timeline for temporary OMR reporting in 2009

To assist with the transitional period in anticipation of a new reporting and membership management system, the Mortar Board National Office has provided a helpful timeline for chapters using a temporary Official Membership Report (OMR).

For a letter from the executive director addressing the new chapter reporting system, please see the December 2008 edition of Advisor News.

Recruitment efforts

Ask the registrar to send a message to qualified candidates on your chapter's behalf with the application materials. Additional recruitment efforts include staffing a table in the student union, posting application notices on the university Web site, encouraging students to apply with Facebook messages, sending e-mails to all eligible students, posting fliers and posters, mailing letters to college deans, placing stacks of applications in campus offices or placing an ad in the student newspaper.

Selections process

After the application deadline, members should complete their selections method as reported in the Membership Recruitment and Selection Plan (MRSP). After selecting the appropriate number of candidates the chapter would like to tap for membership, the group must submit the OMR.

Submission of the temporary Official Membership Report (OMR)

At least two weeks PRIOR to tapping, the worksheets labeled Form I and Form II of the temporary OMR must be completed and the entire OMR workbook should be sent to the Mortar Board National Office at mortarboard@mortarboard.org.

These forms ask for data on the candidates including name, permanent home address, e-mail address, GPA and graduation date. If any students do not meet the minimum GPA criteria, be sure to submit a Petition for Scholarship Exception alongside the OMR.

Be sure to save this completed workbook, as its data will need to be used to submit Form III of the OMR at a later date. **Complete details and instructions for OMR submission are available here.**

Approval period

Before chapters can proceed with tapping, they must receive national approval on their candidates submitted on the OMR. The National Office strives to promptly approve candidates and notify chapters of their approval status. Once approved, the National Office will notify the advisor and the person who submitted the OMR via e-mail. A packet of membership materials will be mailed to the shipping address provided in Form I of the OMR.

If your chapter has not heard back from the National Office within one week of submitting the OMR, please call the National Office at 800-989-6266.

Tapping

Tapping is one of Mortar Board's most well-known and time-honored traditions. This process of notifying candidates that they have been selected for membership should be memorable. Tapping may occur after all of the chapter's candidates have been approved for membership. When tapped, candidates should be given a packet of information about Mortar Board including notification of the national membership fee, as well as any local fees.

Mortar Board Lingo

What is orientation?

According to the Chapter Minimum Standards found in the national Bylaws, each chapter must hold an orientation prior to initiation to ensure that candidates are familiar with Mortar Board and the expectations of membership prior to joining.

The outgoing chapter president is responsible for orientation. Some chapters may have an assigned orientation officer or committee to lead the orientation. As the advisor, please be sure to remind your chapter about the importance of orientation.

Although the specific details of orientation vary greatly from one campus to the next, it is important to properly introduce all new members to Mortar Board. The Official Membership Booklet, a great tool to use during orientation, contains important information on the national requirements, history, traditions and benefits of membership. Chapters use the orientation session as a time to introduce their own traditions, outline chapter plans and explain the participation policy. It is also a good idea to hold an icebreaker so all members can get to know each other. For ideas, refer your chapter president to any edition of INK, as an icebreaker is featured monthly.

A sample outline, helpful tips and more are available in the New Member Orientation Guide.

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 brochures, simply e-mail the National Office your name, school name, mailing address and quantity requested.

Orientation

Orientation is a step required in the national Bylaws and is vital to properly educate new members about the organization they are joining. It is often helpful to hold orientation prior to initiation so candidates can have a true feel for the organization before they join. For assistance with orientation, please use the New Member Orientation Guide.

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. Please see the Initiation Ceremony Booklet for planning assistance. The chapter should collect all membership dues from candidates prior to initiation.

Submission of the finalized Official Membership Report (OMR)

Within one week following initiation, it is mandatory to complete additional data in the OMR workbook previously submitted to the National Office. Chapters are first required to mark candidates as paid, refused, honorary or abroad in Form II, then complete the entirety of Form III. Form III will assist in automatically calculating fees the chapter must pay. The entire workbook should be e-mailed to the National Office at mortarboard@mortarboard.org. A printed copy of Form III and payment should be remitted to the Mortar Board National Office at 1200 Chambers Road, Suite 201; Columbus, Ohio 43212.

Chapter transition

A thorough transition for both officers and chapter members should be executed prior to the end of the academic year. The transition helps new officers to understand responsibilities and encourages new members to continue all the great things the previous class started. 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.

Mortar Board Week visibility resources available

With Mortar Board Week (Feb. 15 - 21) right around the corner, chapters may need some last-minute publicity assistance. To help with gaining visibility on and around the campus community, Mortar Board has provided a helpful Visibility Resources Folder of materials that can help, including:

- The **Mortar Board Week logo** in a variety of resolutions in both color and black and white
- **Several poster designs** are great for posting in classrooms, dining halls, and residence halls.
- **E-postcards** ready to be filled with your chapter's event information can be sent to campus media or students to help promote the week's events.
- **Promotional help** including a template for Mortar Board Week news releases, a sample release for a fictional chapter, a handy Mortar Board Week fact sheet and a useful Mortar Board Stylebook for writing consistency

Read more about publicity and visibility for Mortar Board Week here.

Orientation and membership materials to be received after OMR submission

Last year, the Mortar Board National Office sent two separate mailings of membership information. The first, sent to all chapters simultaneously, contained orientation and membership materials. The second mailing, sent after the Official Membership Report (OMR) was approved by the National Office, contained membership certificates, pins and other important information. In 2009, all membership materials will be sent in one complete mailing after a chapter's OMR has been received. This package will contain:

- The New Member Orientation Guide to assist with orientation planning
- Ten informational Mortar Board brochures
- Official Membership Booklets for new initiates, to be used as a part of orientation
- A merchandise brochure for chapters who may choose to order items for new initiates
- An Initiation Ceremony Booklet to assist with initiation preparation
- Two copies of Mortar Board's official governing documents
- Membership certificates
- Official Mortar Board pins for each new initiate

Overview of national fees

Mortar Board requires members to pay national membership fees, in exchange for valuable support, services and the honor of lifetime membership in one of the most prestigious national senior honor societies. Fees are a requirement of membership and all chapters are required to collect the listed fees on behalf of Mortar Board and submit to the National Office:

| Fee | Amount | Paid by |
|-------------------------|----------|--|
| National new member fee | \$60* | Member to National Office |
| Continuing senior fee | \$25 | Member to National Office |
| Local new member fee | Varies** | Member to chapter (chapter keeps) OR member to National Office (National Office will mail a check)** |
| Conference fee | \$200 | Chapter from funds |

**Based on financial need, each chapter is permitted to waive one new member fee annually. The Coral V. Stevens Gift Membership is selected confidentially, and may be awarded to one new member or a few, up to a maximum of \$60.*

***Some chapters charge local fees in addition to the \$60 national membership fee to support local initiatives. The Mortar Board National Office is currently researching the ability to offer chapters the opportunity to have individual members submit this fee directly to the National Office with the launch of the new OMR. If a chapter chooses this option, they will be mailed a check for the total amount of local chapter dues after all members have submitted payment. Advisors, presidents and treasurers should have received a link to a survey regarding this transition. If your chapter has not yet completed this survey, please do so now.*

Following the submission of Form III of the OMR, the total amount your chapter owes will be calculated automatically. An electronic version of the entire workbook should be e-mailed to mortarboard@mortarboard.org. A printed copy of Form III and payment should be mailed to the National Office at 1200 Chambers Road, Suite 201; Columbus, OH 43212.

Recognize an outstanding Mortar Board alumnus

Mortar Board's extraordinary alumni members are at the heart of the organization as it continues to grow year after year. In order to show appreciation for these devoted alumni, Mortar Board annually awards outstanding members with the awards listed below. If you know a qualified member, think you deserve an award, or know someone who should run for the National Council, submit a nomination by March 15.

Alumni Achievement Award

Alumni who have been out of school for a minimum of five years and have made great professional achievements are ideal recipients for this award. Nominees may not currently hold a national leadership position or serve as an advisor to a collegiate chapter. **Nominate an alumnus now.**

Distinguished Lifetime Membership Award

Alumni who have devoted themselves to a significant lifetime of Mortar Board should be honored with this esteemed national award. Eligible alumni are not currently in a national leadership position. **Nominate an alumnus now.**

National Council

At this year's national conference (held July 24 – 26 in Chicago), members will elect several National Council positions: president-elect, vice president, secretary-treasurer, alumni representative and student representative. More information is available online. **Nominate an alumnus now.**

Advisor spotlight: Dr. Donna M. Brown and Dr. David L. Whitman, University of Wyoming

Dr. David Whitman, a professor of electrical and computer engineering, and Dr. Donna Brown, a professor of textiles and merchandising, have proven to be a dynamic advising team at the University of Wyoming.

Whitman, also a longtime regional section coordinator, has been advising the group for 15 years and Brown has served as advisor for 12. In fact, Brown received the Excellence in Advising Award in its inaugural award year (1997-1998). The Cap & Gown chapter is no stranger to outstanding advisors – Whitman and Brown have had the privilege of working with an exceptional team of advisors over the years, including Excellence in Advising Award recipients Charlotte Davis (awarded for 2001-2002) and current National President Sally Steadman (2002-2003).

New advisors may sometimes feel lost when they begin their association with a new student organization. Whitman's advice to a new advisor is to "learn as much as you can about the new organization. Seek out all resources and don't hesitate to ask questions." Brown adds that involvement in the organization is key, "Attend as many of the events and functions with the students as possible to have a better chance to get to know them on a more personal level."

If possible, chapters should try to have a team of advisors that rotates annually so there is always an experienced advisor working alongside a new advisor. This continuity of advisors goes a long way in having a strong Mortar Board chapter. Advisors who can speak from experience are instrumental in providing guidance – especially when chapters waver toward the wrong path.

When it comes to Mortar Board, advisors may encounter differences that they won't with other organizations. Whitman, who also advises an engineering student group and Phi Kappa Phi, encourages advisors to sincerely become active with Mortar Board by attending chapter meetings and participating in chapter projects and events. Whitman explains, "You'll find it to be a very fulfilling experience because these are the busiest students on campus and yet they're still willing to give their time to Mortar Board. Someone said 'If you want something done, give it to the busiest person you know.' That attitude certainly is true for Mortar Board."

Brown points out that serving as a Mortar Board advisor "is a great opportunity for someone that is truly committed to working with student leaders and guiding them as they strive to excel in their chosen field and their community."