Scholarship Plan
Colorado State University
Chapter:

While there is no "one size fits all" scholarship plan template, we have provided this suggested format as a starting point for chapters looking for guidance on what to include in their scholarship plan. This template is for a chapter's usage to be developed by a scholarship officer or scholarship committee in conjunction with others in the chapter. It includes key components we believe should be addressed in a strong scholarship plan. A scholarship plan should be used by all chapters, not just those that might be looking to improve their GPA.

Any good plan should be SMART, meaning that it is achievable and can be measured. The plan should be:

Specific: *Have you set specific goals that are widely shared and understood. A goal of "raising our GPA" is very different than a goal of "raising our GPA by .2."*
Measurable: *Is the goal measurable? That is to say, will we know when/if we have achieved our goal?*
Attainable: *Is the goal realistic? Is it possible to attain during the term? A SMART goal is achievable, and the possibility of actually reaching the goal is part of what makes it so effective.*
Relevant: *Is the goal relevant to our organization? Fraternities and Sororities all count learning and academic efforts among their values. Our scholarship goals should be relevant to these values and the purpose of our organizations.*
Timely: *Is there a timeline by which the goal will be achieved? All SMART goals also include a timeframe for measurement.*

More than anything, improving/changing a chapter's academic performance and culture doesn't happen overnight. It takes time and hard work, so be patient and thoughtful when developing a scholarship plan and measuring results.

Key components of a scholarship plan are provided below.

Part 1: Scholarship Goals

- What are the chapter's academic goals? Realistically, what is the chapter working to achieve over the course of this semester? By how much would the chapter like to increase their GPA?

- How might the chapter like to change the culture of academic success in the chapter?

- Do individual members need to set their own goals to inform the overall chapter GPA goal?

- Is the chapter's GPA performance already strong, in which case a goal might be about maintaining the academic commitment and rewarding excellence?

You should share your goals with the chapter as the likelihood they are reached is positively impacted by how often we share and review goals. Share the chapter's GPA goals with the group as a whole so everyone believes they have a stake in reaching them.

- How and when will you share your chapter's academic goals?

Goals might also be specific to particular audiences or events. For example, you may have a chapter-wide GPA goal as well as a new member GPA goal and a goal for the GPA expectations of a new member class in recruitment. Scholarship should infiltrate all components of the chapter from recruitment goals, to new member education, to senior engagement.

- Are there any additional scholarship goals to list here (e.g. new member class goals, etc.)?

Part 2: Who

Decide who is responsible for implementing the scholarship plan.

- Will this be a one-person effort with the elected/selected scholarship officer leading the charge, or should/could the chapter select or recruit a scholarship committee to assist with implementation? If the chapter is utilizing a committee or academic mentors/coaches, this section of the plan should describe their efforts and responsibilities.

Additionally, this is an opportunity to involve an advisor, including alumni advisors as well as the faculty/staff advisor.

- How can this individual be helpful in achieving your goals? How will could you utilize this person in the implementation of the scholarship plan?

Part 3: Scholarship Programming/Workshops

This section should outline any scholarship workshops or positive programming designed to help members become better scholars and more committed to their academic excellence. Be clear: assess what your members need in terms of scholarship programming and then provide resources to help fill that need. You can view scholarship resources on the fraternity and sorority life website to assess current scholarship programming/workshop offerings:
https://fsl.colostate.edu/resources/scholarship-academic-resources/

- What positive programming and skill building will your chapter implement to help all members improve their learning capacity and study skills?

- When/how will you implement scholarship programming/workshops?

Example programs/workshop include:

- New member/associate/potential member programs that teach study skills and provide academic mentoring to the newest members. New members should also be encouraged to set academic goals.
- Academic mentorship/coaching programs for all members through which academically successful members can volunteer to coach or support those that might be struggling (this can be built into academic accountability programs).
- Tutoring programs among members for common courses
- Workshops teaching study skills or techniques
- Workshops teaching time management skills
- Health and wellness programs that promote balance and wellbeing for members, which has a large impact on academic success
- Finals study sessions or stress relief sessions
- Faculty recognition programs during which faculty members are invited to a chapter event or celebration or in which chapters thank or recognize outstanding faculty members

CSU has an outstanding resource for chapters to utilize in [The Institute for Teaching and Learning (TILT)](). Visit the TILT website to learn more about their offerings, including:

- o *Tutoring*
- o *Study Groups*
- o *Academic Workshops (the full schedule can be viewed here: http://tilt.colostate.edu/learning/successWorkshops/)*
- o *Learning Resources*
- o *Academic Integrity Programs*

We also encourage faculty interaction as part of your scholarship programming.

- How do you encourage your chapter members to engage positively with their faculty?

- Are faculty members invited to participate in your chapter events and programs? How?

- How can you build your faculty/staff advisor built into your programming? Do you access your faculty/staff advisor at all?

Part 4: Scholarship Expectations

While academic expectations might not be necessary for all members, it is important to be clear about what the expectations are for members so that they can meet them. It is also important to consider why you are utilizing these expectations. For example, study hours often do not work as an effective tool in increasing GPA performance because everyone needs to study differently.

- Does your chapter have expectations for all members related to scholastic performance? If so, what are they? If not, identify some. For example, do you require mid-semester grade checks, professor office hours, or study hours?

- Are these expectations effectively motivating academic performance? Why or why not?

Consider having each member sign/create an academic contract at the beginning of the semester to study a certain amount each week and allows them to set an individual GPA goal. This allows the scholarship officer or committee to follow up to track progress and be aware of each individual members' goal.

You might also have differential expectations based on the previous semester GPA performance for individuals. What matters most is being clear and timely in explaining these expectations and helping individuals understand why they are in place.

Part 5: Accountability

What so many chapters struggle with when it comes to scholastic success is accountability. If a chapter has an academic standard to remain in good standing as a member, it is imperative that the chapter hold members accountable to that standard. This not only helps the chapter improve their GPA, but it also helps the individual set some boundaries and specific goals related to their future academic success.

When it comes to accountability, we don't recommend a one size fits all strategy. What we know works best for academic achievement is the development of individualized and tailored plans for members not meeting academic expectations. Every person that is below GPA expectations is in that position for a different reason, and learning about that person's needs will help a scholarship officer develop individualized plans to ensure a member can improve their performance.

> Example: if a member is struggling and believes they may have a learning disability, they can visit the Student Disability Center to be tested (which may potentially result in academic accommodations based on the results). This may be the best way for that member to improve their GPA and learn how best to academically succeed long-term.
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> Example: For another member that is socializing and using alcohol too much to be academically successful, some sort of punitive outcome restricting chapter social privileges, and/or connecting that person with resources on campus to assess alcohol usage and get support and help, is likely the best outcome.

It's difficult to know how to help an individual member unless we ask them why they're struggling. An individualized academic contract or plan for those members falling below expectations not only demonstrates care for them as an individual, but also has the greatest possibility of success. Ultimately, sometimes more specifically defined academic outcomes might need to be enforced, such as inactivity, suspension, or termination. A sample individual scholarship assessment is viewable on the scholarship resources page.

- Are chapter members accountable related to meeting academic expectations? How?

- How can our accountability processes improve connected to providing individualized support?

Part 6: Rewards & Incentives

Lastly, recognizing achievement and progress/improvement is a key element to a scholarship plan.

- How are members that are high academic achievers rewarded for their hard work?

- How are members that work hard and are slowly improving their GPA recognized?

This may also take the form of competitions where teams of members or big/little pairs compete against other teams to achieve the highest GPA. There is, of course, a reward for the winner(s), and this helps to promote peer accountability and support along the way. Recognition can take the shape of weekly announcements and prizes in chapter meeting, or it might be a semesterly scholarship dinner. Find what works for your chapter and motivates your members.

Examples of scholarship rewards/recognition might include:

- o Create weekly drawings for prizes based on "A" or "B" performance. Any member that earns an "A" or a "B" that week on an assignment or test can enter their name in a drawing each week in chapter meeting for some kind of prize or privilege.
- o Present certificates for highest and most improved GPA at a scholarship ceremony or chapter meeting.
- o Create a "brag board" if you have space where members can display assignments or tests on which they earned an "A."
- o Give out weekly awards for those working hard and seen studying the mos.t
- o Promote those earning scholastic recognition in chapter newsletters, social media, or a chapter website.
- o Provide privileges to those working toward improvement or earning high scholastic marks (like parking spots, chapter seating, absence forgiveness, etc.).
- o Create a "Scholar of the Month" recognition to reward those members committed to learning and working hard, regardless of their GPA performance.

- What rewards/recognition will you pursue this semester to incentivize academic performance and hard work?

Other Ideas for Scholarship Officer Use:

- *Post a calendar in chapter meetings or online that provides reminders of final course add/drop dates, early registration, etc.*
- *Positively promote our fraternity/sorority honorary, the Order of Omega, and encourage members that meet the GPA requirement to apply annually when applications open so they are recognized for their academic success and positively represent your chapter.*
- *In chapter meetings display graphs of the chapter's historic academic performance (found here: http://fsl.colostate.edu/about/chapter-reports/) and discuss trends and opportunities for improvement.*
- *Post/share motivational messages during particularly academically stressful times of the semester.*
- *Review the chapter calendar each semester before it is widely shared with chapter members to ensure it is balanced and to ensure members will be able to focus on academics. For example, are social events planned during midterms? Is there a balance of educational and social programs throughout the semester? One can tell an organization's values in practice by looking at where that chapter spends their time. Would an outsider say your chapter values scholarship?*