

Summary of the Associate Member Core Education Program

The **Alpha Nine** Core Associate Member Education Program breaks the associate member education period down into eight parts, starting with the Associate Member Ceremony and concluding with the *The Ritual* Initiation Ceremony. **Alpha Nine** outlines six education sessions and a retreat that provide new members with a solid foundation in the Fraternity's history, its values, the responsibilities of membership, leadership and service opportunities, and national and local chapter operations.

While the program is designed to encompass all of these areas, it is a means to stimulate further interest and learning.

The Core Membership Education program is written as a facilitator's guide. Included in the program are session outlines and the resources necessary to conduct each session. Additionally, the core program contains optional activities and ceremonies that can further enrich the associate member period.

A summary of each ceremony and educational session is provided below:

Associate Member Ceremony & Orientation Meeting

The program begins with the mandatory Associate Member Ceremony (Appendix A). Parents, prominent administrators, faculty, chapter and regional alumni, and the Fraternity & Sorority community leaders, and members should be invited. All attendees and their parents should be provided with a schedule for associate member meetings and activities to be held throughout the term, including the initiation date. At a later date, but before the first core education program, the membership educator should hold a big brother orientation meeting for all new associate members.

Orientation Meeting with Big Brothers

This program will begin with the introduction of Big Brothers and their responsibilities. Big Brothers will remain active participants for the balance of this meeting. Interactive, get-acquainted activities are important at this time. The remainder of the meeting will focus on Theta Xi's long-standing policy prohibiting hazing, review of a chapter information file to be distributed to all new associate members. Last, assigned readings from *The Quest* in preparation for the first core education program will be announced.

Core Education Program One

A program of history will include viewing of the DVD "*Theta Xi – Making History*" followed by discussion of Inter-fraternity history; the history of Theta Xi; and chapter history.

Core Education Program Two

Associate Members should be given a brief introduction to the Fraternity's Leadership Initiative. This program will review, explain, and discuss individual financial obligations and an examination of the chapter/colony by-laws. Time will also be spent announcing the Community Service Project that the Associate Members will develop and organize for the participation of all chapter members. A bonding and educational activity titled "Theta Xi Jeopardy", a takeoff on the popular old TV game show, is suggested to end this program.

Core Education Program Three

This program will review, explain, and discuss: The Fraternity Statements of Position, finishing with Theta Xi's Risk Management Policy. The viewing and discussion of "*Tell Me Something I Don't Know*", an alcohol awareness video, is included to reinforce concern for responsible alcohol use. This should be followed by a review of the duties of elected and appointed Chapter Officers; the Chapter Committee Structure; Leadership Development activities; and the Fraternity's **BluePrints** chapter self-evaluation and goal-setting program. The program will close with an announcement of the plans and arrangements for the upcoming overnight camping trip or retreat.

Building the Bonds Camping Trip or Retreat

This activity should be an overnight trip (away from the chapter house), for at least twenty-four (24) hours. The retreat can be at a campground, cabins, a hotel, or at someone's home (parent, alumni, etc.). The retreat should be attended by all associate members and their big brothers. Other brothers can also be invited and the program shall be facilitated by the membership educator and one or several chapter alumni. The day should focus on building friendships through communication and discussion of Theta Xi values in addition to making plans for the community service project. Combined with a recreational activity, this retreat will provide a full day of values discussion, bonding, fraternity education and service.

Core Education Program Four

This program will focus on learning about Chapter Programs and Activities, the Fraternity's District and Regional Plan, your campus Greek Community and the alumni aspect of the Fraternity. The relationship between Theta Xi Fraternity and Theta Xi Foundation will be explained. The program will close by finalizing planning for the upcoming community service project.

Community Service Project

Projects that bring all brothers and associate members together for the purpose of helping the community are among the most valuable bonding and learning experiences for Fraternity members. The community service project organized by the Associate Members with help from the Membership Educator and/or Committee, will serve as an integral part of a well organized and fulfilling Alpha Nine Core Education Program. Planning begins at Core Education Program Two and is finalized at Core Education Program Four.

Core Education Program Five

A review of Fraternity Ritual is the focus of this program. Big and Little Brothers should participate in this program. All should read the handout "*Secret Thoughts of a Ritual*" by Edward King and then view the DVD "*Sharing My Ritual*". The membership educator should lead a discussion based on both the handout and DVD that should be followed by a short question and answer session to dispel any and all concerns for perceptions some members may have for initiation ceremonies. The program closes by presenting a prospective initiate letter to each Associate Member who has passed the chapter's initiation vote and making sure they are aware of the date, time, location and proper attire for their initiation.

Ritual Initiation

Ritual Initiation should be conducted in accordance with Fraternity policy. An individual initiation ceremony shall be conducted for each new brother. The ceremony shall be memorized by all brothers with speaking parts and rehearsed or practiced as an initiation team. The chapter advisor, alumni association officers, area alumni and Regional Director should be notified and invited to the event.

Optional Ritual Pre-Initiation Activities/Ceremonies

Four optional pre-initiation ceremonies have been approved for use by the Grand Lodge. They are:

- *The Founding of Theta Xi*
- *The Council of Seven Leaders*
- *Symbols & Oath*
- *The Ceremony of Development.*

Instructions and scripts to consider and conduct these activities are available on request from Fraternity Headquarters.