

Acacia Fraternity

Alumni Engagement Task Force

Contents

- Alumni Organization and Chapter Advisory Model..... 3
 - Types of Alumni Organizations 3
 - Legal Separation between Undergraduate and Alumni Organizations 3
 - Board Membership..... 4
 - Board Member Composition..... 4
 - Board Meetings 6
 - General Best Practices 6
- Alumni Associations..... 8
 - Advising of the Undergraduate Chapter and Active Members..... 8
 - General Best Practices 8
 - Chapter Advisory Teams 8
 - Strategic Planning and Chapter Retreats 10
- Alumni Chapters 12
 - Starting an Alumni Chapter 12
 - Running an Alumni Chapter 12
- Appendix A: Sample Constitution 13
 - Constitution..... 13
 - Article I Name and Purpose..... 13
 - Article II Membership and Meetings 13
 - Article III Officers and Committees..... 13
 - Article IV Finance..... 14
 - Article V Amendments and Interpretation..... 14
- Appendix B: Proposed Changes to Laws of Acacia 15
 - Alumni Chapters 15
 - Process Mapping..... 16

Alumni Organization and Chapter Advisory Model

Alumni involvement at the local and international level is an important component of the continued success of Acacia Fraternity. To assist chapter alumni entities, the International Fraternity has developed this Alumni Operations and Chapter Advisory Model to provide a framework of best practices for local alumni organizations and chapter advisory teams.

Types of Alumni Organizations

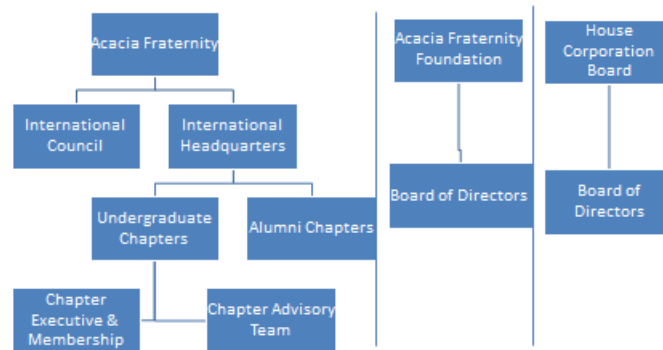
There are three primary organizational entities for alumni groups:

1. Housing Corporation Board - Ownership/management of a chapter housing facility. (Landlord)
2. Alumni Advisory Board - Entity that exists for the purpose of supporting the local undergraduate chapter, in an advisory capacity. (Associations & Teams)
3. Alumni Chapters - Entity that exists for the purpose of fostering brotherhood among alumni brothers within a geographic location.

Legal Separation between Undergraduate and Alumni Organizations

It is very important to maintain a solid barrier of separation between the House Corporation Board and the Active Chapter. The reason for this is simple: the House Corporation holds *title* to the chapter house – it owns the house and has no chapter advisory function. Undergraduate members run the chapter, so the relationship is akin to one of a landlord and a tenant. This arrangement is necessary because the undergraduate chapter may find itself exposed to legal liability, and the chapter house itself will have minimized exposure to risk because it is owned by a different entity. This legal protection only works if the undergraduate chapter and the House Corporation Board maintain an *arm's length* relationship with a solid barrier between the two. No liability should attach to the House Corporation, as it has no oversight or management responsibility for the undergraduate chapter other than collection of rent and facility maintenance.

Alumni Associations that advise undergraduate chapters do not need to maintain such a barrier because they do not own or operate chapter houses. These organizations may be held directly liable if they have management responsibilities and fail to exercise those duties properly, and they may also be held vicariously liable if it is found that the undergraduate chapter was acting as an *agent* of either organization. This still does not put the chapter house at risk.



Board Membership

Both Housing Corporation Boards and Alumni Associations must maintain well defined Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws to function effectively.

Functions of the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws include defining the process for selecting board members, defining board member terms, and stating the required number of meetings the organization entity will hold each year.

The typical method of selecting board members is by a vote of eligible alumni as recognized by the local alumni organization in accordance with their respective governing documents. Additionally, the most effective boards have members who serve between one and three year terms and allow for re-election. The operational pitfall to avoid is when a board member serves without defined end until a replacement is identified. If an individual does not have the desire or the dedication to continue his service as a board member, he should not be expected to fill that role until a replacement is identified. Another operational pitfall to avoid occurs when overall board membership stagnant (i.e.: little to no turnover in board members) and operations become “status quo” and fail to keep up with the trends and needs of the day.

Board Member Composition

While the number of board members serving local alumni organizations varies from chapter to chapter, the most common board composition consists of seven to twelve members. It is important for local alumni groups to have a board composition that efficiently meets the needs of the membership. An important factor to keep in mind is that each board member is a volunteer who has made the personal choice to serve and give back to the Fraternity.

Although the number of board members may vary, it is important that the following officer positions are represented and functioning on each board: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary (or equivalent titles). Alumni Associations in particular should include the Chapter Advisor(s) and between one to three undergraduate brothers serving as liaisons or active board members. By having at least one undergraduate brother serve as a member of the Alumni Association, it provides a leadership conduit and a shared perspective to be continually maintained between both undergraduates and alumni. Continuing to foster relationships between the undergraduate chapter and Alumni Associations will prove very beneficial for both parties.

President

- Oversees all operations and leads the board.

- Ensure that the needs of the members of the board are being met.
- Ultimately responsible for meeting the board's mission.
- Make certain that officers are meeting their objectives.
- Preside over meetings.
- Appoint committees as needed.
- Appoint officers upon mid-term vacancies.
- Serve as liaison with the International Fraternity, providing updates, news, and pictures as appropriate.

Vice-President

- Assists the President as needed and oversee all committees.
- Assume role of President in the case of absence.
- Ensure that all committees meet their objectives.
- Coordinate all programs and events.

Treasurer

- Oversees all financial matters.
- Develop and maintain operating budget.
- Assess and collect all membership dues.
- Ensure prompt payment of all financial obligations.
- Help coordinate any capital campaign projects.

Secretary

- Coordinates all membership matters.
- Maintain accurate membership listing and ensure changes in membership information are communicated to the International Fraternity.
- Take minutes at all meetings.
- Coordinate production of all newsletters and external communications.

For Alumni Associations and House Corporation Boards with twelve or more members, it is recommended to empower an executive committee to address day-to-day operations as needed. Defining an executive committee is ultimately the decision of the local alumni organization and should be clearly identified in its Articles of Incorporation. An example of an executive committee would be: President, Treasurer, Secretary, Chapter Advisor (Alumni Associations only) and other positions deemed appropriate, e.g. fundraising, alumni relations, etc.

To be an effective board, it is necessary to recruit prospective board members that:

- Are strongly committed to Acacia and have the desire to see Acacia succeed.
- Represent a variety of skillsets, education, and career backgrounds.
- Represent a variety of generations, when possible.
- Represent a combination of long-serving and new board members to preserve institutional memory while welcoming fresh perspectives.
- Have available time to dedicate to the order of the day.

Board Meetings

Effective alumni organizations have one annual meeting for their entire membership and also convene on either a biannual or quarterly basis. Board meetings held quarterly allow for more robust discussions and decisions, which lead to more effective and efficient operations.

When convened, each meeting (whether it be the annual meeting or a regularly scheduled board meeting) needs to have a clearly defined focus/agenda that is meaningful, relevant, and timely. This helps to ensure that the meetings are a valuable use of the board members' time due to other family, work, and life commitments.

An important and often overlooked aspect of these meetings is that time for fellowship and brotherhood should be included with each meeting (a BBQ, social event, etc.). Additionally, inviting undergraduate brothers to attend board meetings can be an effective way to build strong, functional relationships between the undergraduate chapter and the alumni group.

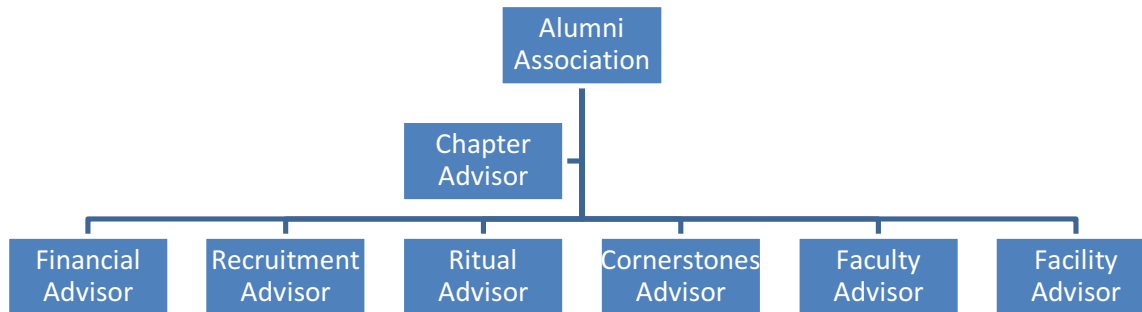
General Best Practices

- Alumni boards that utilize a committee/sub-committee structure generally experience an effective balance of responsibilities for board members. Potential committees include: Facilities Committee, Finance Committee, Alumni Engagement Committee, Nominations Committee, Chapter Advisory Team (Alumni Associations only), etc. Each board is encouraged to develop committees that best meet its unique needs. Additionally, committees may include alumni volunteers outside of sitting board members.
- Development of a "continuity of operations manual" to outline the operations and responsibilities of the organization, should the need arise due to emergency. This manual can also be utilized as an orientation guidebook for new board members. It is highly encouraged that hard copies and a digital format be maintained.
- Develop and annually update a Strategic or Long-Range Plan that addresses the following areas: facilities, alumni activities/engagement, communications, general board operations, undergraduate chapter goals (Alumni Associations only), etc. It is also valuable to conduct a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis on a yearly or biennial basis to provide for long-term vision for the organization.
- Utilize email to send regular updates to Board members during interim periods between board meetings (operational updates, financials, etc.). Remember that phone calls are often the most effective way to communicate on specific matters.
- Develop a legally enforceable housing contract that clearly defines the responsibilities of the undergraduate that resides in the chapter housing facility.
- Develop short-term and long-term plans to address chapter house maintenance, capital improvements and

asset acquisitions. Develop a capital reserve/maintenance fund in which a certain percentage of rental income is contributed annually. This allows for entities to meet the repair/renovation needs of the chapter facility.

- Name an alumni leadership team in major fundraising endeavors. Often, successful fundraising efforts have leadership provided by alumni that are not board members. Consider monthly and annual giving options, such as \$19.04/month.
- Regularly publish a newsletter (electronic or hard copy) to send alumni. It is recommended that newsletters be sent to alumni at least twice per year. Many alumni organizations send out communications at least quarterly through newsletters and/or interim email updates.
- Utilize social media to engage alumni in the activities of the organization and the undergraduate chapter. To be most effective utilizing social media platforms, a designated Board member (or other appointed individual) should be responsible for regularly updating content.
- Host and plan events for alumni that help to reaffirm the ties of friendship within Acacia. Having just one event per year is not enough; a variety of events and activities should be developed and can be held in conjunction with the undergraduate chapter. Event ideas include: Homecoming, Founders' Day celebrations, class/era reunions, undergraduate

Alumni Associations



Advising of the Undergraduate Chapter and Active Members

It is no surprise that an involved Chapter Advisor – and even more so, an involved Chapter Advisory Team – is a critical component to an undergraduate chapter’s overall success. The most successful relationships between alumni and undergraduate chapters occur when alumni do not dictate policy and practices to undergraduate brothers, but rather approach the relationship through the development of shared expectations for the overall betterment of Acacia.

General Best Practices

- Alumni Associations should make a strong effort to support the chapter’s success and membership development by encouraging involvement in programs such as Conclave, Acacia Leadership Academy, Venerable Dean Summit, campus leadership positions, and Human Service activities.
- Alumni Associations that embrace the Cornerstones program (continual learning beyond pledge/new member education) tend to have undergraduate chapters that have embraced the Cornerstones program.
- Alumni groups that provide scholarship funds tend to have more interactions with the undergraduate chapter and active brothers.

Chapter Advisory Teams

This advising approach is typically considered an operational committee, whereby the chairman of the committee is the Chapter Advisor, with each area-specific advisor comprising the membership of the committee. This Committee, by virtue of its structure and provided that the Chapter Advisor is a functional member of the

Alumni Association, should be an integral component of the overall operations of the undergraduate chapter and alumni entity.

Chapter Advisor

- Leads all chapter advisory efforts.
- Coordinates efforts between the undergraduate chapter and Alumni Association.
- Attends the majority of chapter meetings.
- Attend all Acacia Rituals as possible.
- Attends undergraduate executive officer meetings.
- Assists chapters in all areas of operations.
- Provides mentorship to undergraduate brothers.
- Represents the chapter at International Acacia events, including serving as a voting delegate at Conclave (an alternate alumnus may serve in this role if the Chapter Advisor is unavailable).
- Please see the Chapter Advisor Gold Book for additional resources.

Financial Advisor

- Meet quarterly with undergraduate chapter treasurer.
- Provide financial guidance and support to chapter.

Recruitment Advisor

- Provide support and training for the recruitment chairman and committee members.
- Manage a recruitment referral program, proactively reaching out to alumni to gather names of potential new members.
- Attend recruitment events as possible.

Ritual Advisor

- Provide support and guidance in exemplary performance of the Acacia Ritual.
- Attend all Acacia Rituals as possible.
- Helps ensure integrity of new member education programs.

Cornerstones Advisor

- Provide support for leadership, personal development, and Cornerstones programming – both within the chapter and on campus and in the community
- Be familiar with the latest Cornerstones programming (acacia.org/cornerstones)
- Serve as a conduit between undergraduates and alumni regarding professional opportunities

Faculty/Academic Advisor

- The Faculty Advisor serves as a conduit between the chapter and the host institution, providing insights into academic and campus concerns, while also serving to advise members in a general capacity
- Academic Advisors can also be a separate individual from the university if they are qualified to help with the chapters academic success moving forward.

Facility Advisor

- This individual make sure that the chapter is taking care of the physical structure and is responsible with helping maintain the upkeep of the physical structure, as it relates to the undergraduates' needs.

Strategic Planning and Chapter Retreats

While the Chapter Advisor typically has the majority of the interactions with the undergraduate chapter, having an annual retreat or strategic planning session with entire undergraduate chapter and the full Chapter Advisory Team or Alumni Association board will help to ensure that all entities are aligned regarding chapter expectations and goals. Areas to address in such a session include:

Financial Obligations

- Chapter and member financial obligations to the International Fraternity, campus IFC, House Corporation Board, etc.
- Alumni entity budget and financial obligations to chapter housing facility, alumni communications, and other key priorities.
- Chapter fiscal year budget by operational category, and development of a chapter savings account.

Officer Organization and Transition

- Officer responsibilities and expectations
- Anticipated chapter officer elections and transition retreat planning
- Participation in International Acacia programming

Membership Recruitment

- Recruitment goals and education
- Focus on year-round recruitment in addition to rush periods
- Implementation of scholarship-based recruitment programs

Academics

- Academic benchmarks (individual and chapter goals)
- Tutoring/academic support initiatives and campus services
- Scholarship programs

Membership Education

- Review of pledge education and membership programs
- Planning for Cornerstones activities throughout the year
- Planning for attendance at Conclave, Acacia Leadership Academy, Venerable Dean Summit, and campus leadership events

Campus Involvement

- Goals for involvement in campus leadership positions
- Participation in non-Greek student activities
- Intramural sports participation

Human Service

- Human Service activities (hands-on, helping others directly)
- Chapter philanthropic activities (raising money to help others)
- Incorporating alumni into chapter Human Service initiatives

Benefits of Membership

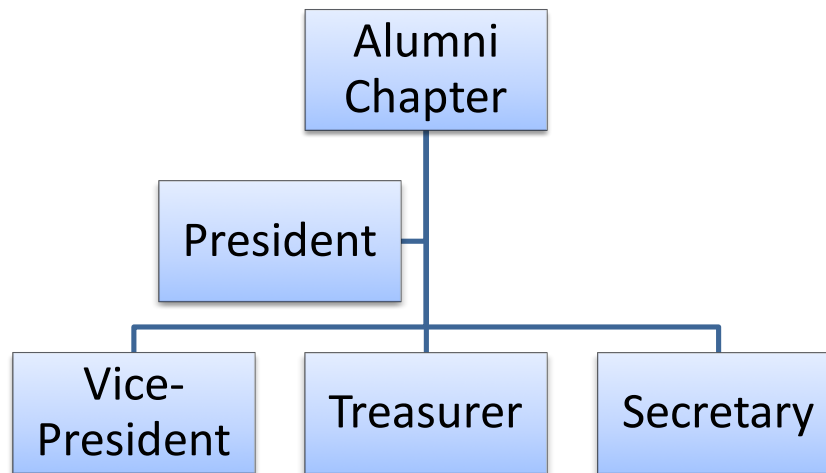
- Lifelong brotherhood
- Commitment to building the future of Acacia

The principle goal of the Alumni Association with regard to undergraduate chapter advisory and interaction is to provide a well-rounded, robust, and engaging fraternal experience for undergraduate brothers. This can be achieved when the Alumni Association and the undergraduate chapter collaborate to develop goals and expectations that are utilized to measure outcomes. Having well-structured and operationally-sound practices that embrace short-term and long-term planning, combined with an engaged alumni base, will help to provide the support necessary for a chapter to reach its fullest potential. Remember these three key aspects:

- People join people (not organizations). Be sure to have a vision and reason for meeting, and hold events and activities that members value.

- Accountability. As with any volunteer group, each board member needs to be responsible and willing to be held accountable.
- Brotherhood! Don't let the details overwhelm the brotherhood and fellowship. While there may be certain situations that require significant discussion, work, and time commitment, and disagreements may occur – remember we are all Acacians.

Alumni Chapters



The main goal of an alumni chapter, association or club should be to provide alumni with an option for staying involved with the Fraternity after the completion of their undergraduate years. The ideal chapter will strive to strike the right balance between social activities, supporting the local undergraduate chapter(s), and hosting family and philanthropic events.

Starting an Alumni Chapter

Alumni chapters are duly chartered organizations and designated by the name of the city, county or region in which they are located. Membership is open to all brothers regardless of their undergraduate chapter affiliation.

Each chapter must have a minimum of 10 or more alumni brothers who are able to actively participate in the programming of the Alumni Chapter. They are created as a result of the vote of the biennial Conclave by a simple majority of votes.

Interest groups should contact <INSERT NAME AT HQ> to begin the process of recognition.

Running an Alumni Chapter

Once approved to function as an Alumni Chapter you must ensure that a minimum number of items are completed in order to function as a proper organization, including (but not limited to):

- Opening a non-profit business bank account. If you require a letter outlining your status, please contact communications@acacia.org.
- Define the geographic boundary of the alumni chapter and pull together the zip code(s) or zip code range that it falls into.

- Create a dues structure for the group (this should be put in your bylaws) and collect dues from members.
- Elect Officers/Organizers.

Appendix A: Sample Constitution

Constitution

Article I Name and Purpose

Section 1 The name of this Alumni Chapter shall be <insert Alumni Chapter Name> Alumni Association of Acacia International Fraternity

Section 2 The object of this association shall be: to actively engage alumni of Acacia International Fraternity by promoting brotherhood and the mission of Acacia through support of all brothers, Acacia, the Acacia Fraternity Foundation, and the community at large.

Article II Membership and Meetings

Section 1 Every initiated member of Acacia Fraternity, upon leaving college, shall be eligible to become a member of this association upon application and payment of the annual dues unless and until he is formally expelled or suspended from Acacia Fraternity.

Section 2 There shall be called at least one meeting in each quarter of the year at a time set by the President or a majority of the Executive committee. Notice of the time and place of meetings shall be sent to all members at least thirty days in advance. Those members in attendance at such a duly called meeting, unless unusually inclement weather prevails, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Article III Officers and Committees

Section 1 The officers shall be the President, Vice-president, Secretary, and Treasurer. No member may hold more than one office at one time. Vacancies in the offices shall be held by the president. Officer terms will begin at the annual meeting in the fourth quarter of each year and serve through December 31st of the following year.

Section 2 The duties and powers of the officers shall be:

(a) The president shall be the executive officer of the association and shall preside at all meetings. It shall be his duty to advise the other officers of their duties and to keep informed of their performance, to appoint and supervise the functions of all committees, and in general to direct all functions of the association.

(b) The Vice-president shall perform such duties as assigned by the President and shall assume the powers and duties of the President in the latter's absence or inability to serve.

(c) The Secretary shall keep proper written minutes of all meetings and shall distribute copies of all minutes to the members of the executive committee and the chairmen of all committees within ten days after meetings. He shall be responsible for the mailing of all notices. He shall be responsible for the preservation of all records of the association and for the maintenance of an up-to-date mailing list of all members.

(d) The Treasurer shall receive and disburse all funds of the association and sign checks in the name of and on behalf of the association. He shall keep complete records of the financial condition of the association and make a financial report at each meeting.

Section 3 The Executive Committee shall consist of the four officers, the Immediate Past President and two members appointed by the President. This committee shall have the authority to run the affairs of the association between meetings of the membership.

Section 4 The standing committees of the association shall be: Recruitment, Retention, Programs, and Events.

Section 5 The President shall appoint such additional committees as are needed from time to time.

Article IV Finance

Section 1 Annual membership dues shall be \$ <AMMOUNT> due <DATE> of each year.

Article V Amendments and Interpretation

Section 1 Changes in this Constitution may be made by majority vote at any regularly scheduled meeting providing at least thirty days prior written notice has been mailed to each member.

Section 2 Matters not covered in this Constitution and its interpretation shall be governed by Roberts Rules of Order.

Appendix B: Proposed Changes to Laws of Acacia

Alumni Chapters

Section 1 Each alumni chapter shall elect officers biennially and the Secretary-elect of the chapter shall certify a list of the newly elected officers to the headquarters offices immediately following the election. Each alumni association shall also submit registration fees as determined by the Conclave.

Section 2 Each alumni association shall provide itself with a written set of bylaws by which it shall be governed in its activities, both business and social. Said bylaws shall be consistent with the International Constitution, Bylaws, rituals, and traditions of the Fraternity and with the policies of the Conclave.

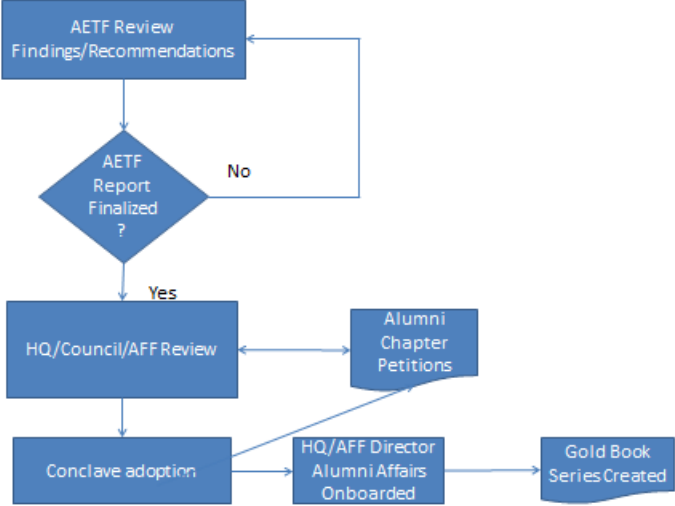
Section 3 Each alumni association shall keep an accurate record of its stated sessions, membership roster, and any and all other matters pertaining to its welfare and membership thereof.

Section 4 Alumni associations shall have such officers, committees, meetings, and the like as shall be provided in their bylaws.

Section 5 It is also the duty of each alumnus member to become at the earliest possible time a member of the alumni association of his chapter and/or a member of the alumni association geographically located within a reasonable distance of the member's residence.

Section 6 The Alumni Involvement Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Director to provide alumni programming, including outreach, development, and training of all alumni. The committee shall also assist in the development, certification, and operations of alumni associations.

Appendix C: Process Mapping



Once the AETF findings are finalized, they will be sent to Headquarters Staff, International Council, and to the Acacia Fraternity Foundation for review and consideration for final inputs. It is expected that changes to the Laws of Acacia will be required in order to formalize the requirements and operations of these bodies.

After ratification by vote at Conclave, the Executive Director should move to assign the portfolio to a staff member (potentially a shared responsibility between HQ/AFF) to begin the alumni affairs duties. It should be expected that a Gold Book series will follow.

At the next Conclave, petitions for Alumni Chapter Charters can begin to be received and voted on, with support from all.