



OMEGA PHI ALPHA

Legislative Consent Agenda

Convention 2021

Approved by Legislation Committee

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Overview

This is a consent agenda, which means the proposals herein will be considered and voted on as a collective group without discussion. The Legislation Committee considers these amendments low-impact, and mostly administrative in nature to reflect current terminology and practice.

However, because the constitution and bylaws require different proportions of affirmative votes cast to be ratified, the consent agenda will be considered in 2 phases. 1 agenda will be considered for constitutional amendments and 1 agenda will be considered for bylaws amendments.

All revisions to the national constitution and bylaws will take effect upon the final adjournment of Convention.

Proposed Constitutional Amendments

General Proposals

These proposals include amendments to:

- General terminology
- Clarify/reflect current operational structure or practice per standard operating procedure

Constitutional Consent Proposal #1

Author:

Kasey Stevens

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article I

This section currently reads as follows:

Article I - Name and Organization

1. The name of this organization is Omega Phi Alpha National Service Sorority.
2. The colors are dark blue, light blue, and golden yellow.
3. The sorority flower is the yellow rose.
4. The national publication is called the Chevron.

The proposed amendment:

Article I - Name and Organization

1. The name of this organization is Omega Phi Alpha National Service Sorority.
2. The colors are dark blue, light blue, and golden yellow.
3. The sorority flower is the yellow rose.
4. The national publication is called the Chevron.
5. The sorority symbols are the bee, the beehive, and the chevron.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

These symbols are not formally documented anywhere in our Constitution or Bylaws, which are foundational documents of our organization. We formally adopted the bee as our national symbol at Convention 2014 due to its historical significance at our founding. The bee symbolizes the cardinal principle of service. The bee represents the selfless work of our members on behalf of the world around them, highlighting the power of teamwork and an incomparable work ethic. The beehive symbolizes cooperation and teamwork. The honeycomb (hexagonal) pattern within beehives is constructed using multiple chevron shapes and is widely regarded as one of the strongest structures in the world. The chevron symbolizes the cardinal principle of leadership and unifies our diverse membership toward a common goal.

Constitutional Consent Proposal #2

Author:

Kasey Stevens

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Any reference to the word “Alumnae, alumna” in both the Constitution and Bylaws

This section currently reads as follows:

Alumnae and alumna

The proposed amendment:

Replace any reference to the plural word “alumnae” with “alumni”

Replace any reference to the singular word “alumna” with “alum”

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

“Alumnae” and “alumna” are the feminine plural and singular forms of this noun respectively.

According to many resources, “alum” is the singular, gender-neutral term for someone who has graduated from an educational institution, which “alumni” is the plural, gender-neutral or mixed-gender term for a group of graduates.

Replacing the current gendered noun with a non-gendered form (“alum” and “alumni”) will be more inclusive for members of Omega Phi Alpha who are gender non-conforming, trans, or otherwise self-identified, and who may not prefer to be referred to in the feminine sense.

Constitutional Consent Proposal #3

Author:

Rachael Pearson

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Any reference to the word “first/1st semester LOA” in both the Constitution and Bylaws

This section currently reads as follows:

First/1st semester LOA

The proposed amendment:

Replace any reference to “first/1st semester LOA” with “First/1st **active** semester LOA”

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

NSB has received various LOA petitions from members that would like to seek an LOA term however, they are not needed to be processed through NSB as it is not right after their new membership period. These can be CSB approval. By changing the name, the hope is to clarify that only 1st semester LOAs right after the new member period need to be submitted to NSB for approval. This will help alleviate paperwork on the NSB director and clarify things on the chapter level. I would like this title to be changed throughout the entirety of both documents which is why there is one left blank above.

Constitutional Consent Proposal #4

Author:

Kasey Stevens

Which portion of the document would be amended?

- Constitution, Article VII, Section 1
- Constitution, Article XVIII, Section 1
- Bylaws, Article V, Section 3

This section currently reads as follows:

Any reference to the word “Constitutional Revisions Committee” in both the Constitution and Bylaws

The proposed amendment:

Replace any reference to “Constitutional Revisions Committee” with “Legislation Committee”

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

For as long as I can remember serving nationally (10+ years), the organization has referred to this committee as the Legislation Committee. The email address for the chair of this committee is legislation@omegaphialpha.org.

Along with an additional proposal which impacts amendments to the Bylaws, this change makes sense, as legislation considered by this committee would include both amendments to the Constitution AND Bylaws, so it would not make sense for the committee to be referred to as Constitutional Revisions Committee.

Constitutional Consent Proposal #5

Author:

Alyssa Bernhardt

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article V, Section 1, Clause 3

This section currently reads as follows:

All national and appointed officers must be members in good standing of Omega Phi Alpha.

The proposed amendment:

Strike the clause in its entirety, re-number subsequent sections accordingly.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

This proposed change moves items intended for other documentation out of the constitution. Requirements are specific in the position descriptions for each officer role and the majority of lifetime members are in good standing.

Constitutional Consent Proposal #6

Author:

Alyssa Bernhardt

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article V, Section 2

This section currently reads as follows:

Operational Leadership Team. The Operational Leadership Team consists of the following members: Chapter Operations Director, Cardinal Principles Director, Alumnae Membership Director, Expansions Director, Collegiate Membership Director, and other directors as appointed.

The proposed amendment:

Operational Leadership Team. The Operational Leadership Team consists of the following members: Chapter Operations Director, Cardinal Principles Director, Alumnae Membership Director, Expansions Director, Collegiate Membership Director, and other directors, managers, and coordinators as appointed.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

Clarifies how we are currently structured and how we actually use the term OLT.

Constitutional Consent Proposal #7

Author:

Sara McAllister

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article VII, Section 1

This section currently reads as follows:

Section 1. National standing committees consist of: Nominating, Budget, Constitutional Revisions, Leadership Development (LEAD) Team, Chapter Assistance, Standards, and Financial Review.

The proposed amendment:

Section 1. National standing committees consist of: Nominating, Budget, Constitutional Revisions, ~~Leadership Development (LEAD) Team,~~ Chapter Assistance, Standards, and Financial Review.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

The responsibility of the LEAD team is to coordinate and facilitate the national Leadership Development program. Right now we are in the process of developing a fully online, self-paced program, which the Leadership Program Coordinator will be responsible for monitoring and maintaining. Because of the new nature of the program, the LEAD team will no longer be required to coordinate or facilitate presentations for chapters or events. Additionally, should there be a need for the LEAD team in the future, the constitution does allow for the National President to appoint special committees with the BOD's approval (Article VII, Section 3).

Constitutional Consent Proposal #8*

**This proposal's inclusion on this consent agenda is contingent upon the outcome of Constitutional Proposal #4 on the Legislative Agenda for Discussion.*

Author:

Alyssa Bernhardt

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article III, Section 4, Clause 4

This section currently reads as follows:

- Clause 4. In the event there is a violation of sections 1–3, actives, alumnae, new members, or colonists found in violation will be subject to the following steps:
- A. Their names will be given to the National Standards Board.
 - B. For the first offense, actives, alumnae, new members, or colonists found in violation will be subject to a consequence set by the National Standards Board. Consequences may range from a fine to automatic disassociation, depending on the severity of the violation.
 - C. In the event there is a subsequent violation, actives or alumnae found in violation will be disassociated; new members or colonists found in violation will be dropped from the new member class or colonization process, respectively.

The proposed amendment:

- Clause 4. In the event there is a violation of sections 1–3, actives, alumnae, new members, or colonists found in violation will be subject to the following steps:
- A. ~~Their names will be given to the National Standards Board.~~
 - AB. For the first offense, actives, alumnae, new members, or colonists found in violation will be subject to a consequence set by the National Standards Board. Consequences may range from a fine to automatic disassociation, depending on the severity of the violation.
 - CB. In the event there is a subsequent violation, actives or alumnae found in violation will be disassociated; new members or colonists found in violation will be dropped from the new member class or colonization process, respectively.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

The reason for proposing to strike Clause 4 A is that it is redundant. In clause 4B, it is clearly stated that members in violation will be reported to the NSB and subject to consequences implemented by the NSB.

Service-related Proposals

This section includes amendments to reflect current practice per standard operating procedure.

Constitutional Consent Proposal #9

Author:

Alyssa Bernhardt

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article XVI

This section currently reads as follows:

The chapters have a service program for all of their members. The service program is planned and carried out so that a reasonable balance is achieved among Omega Phi Alpha's four areas of service, which are:

- A. Service to the university community.
- B. Service to the community at large.
- C. Service to the members of the sorority.
- D. Service to the nations of the world.

The proposed amendment:

The chapters have a service program for all of their members. The service program is planned and carried out so that a reasonable balance is achieved among Omega Phi Alpha's ~~four~~ six areas of service, which are:

- A. Service to the university community.
- B. Service to the community at large.
- C. Service to the members of the sorority.
- D. Service to the nations of the world.
- E. Service in the area of mental health
- F. Service in honor of the President's Project

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

The purpose of this proposal is to add the two areas of service that are missing from this section of the constitution. These areas are mentioned throughout the constitution and bylaws, including in active member requirements. Not clearly stating all the areas of service when service is mentioned in our guiding documents presents confusion.

Diversity & Inclusion Proposals

This section includes amendments proposed by the Diversity & Inclusion Committee addressing accessibility.

Constitutional Consent Proposal #10

Author:

Esther Blue de Avalos

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article X, Meetings – National

This section currently reads as follows:

Amend to add a Section 8.

The proposed amendment:

Section 8. The board of directors and operational leadership team shall ensure that hotels, restaurants, venues, and service project venues are ADA accessible. Planned service, fellowship, leadership development, and other activities should be accessible as well. The team should work together to accommodate requests for accessibility from members with disabilities.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

As stated in its constitution, Omega Phi Alpha has a responsibility to maintain an inclusive and equitable environment that is free of discrimination including those people with a disabilities. Therefore, ableism has no place in the organization and our convention must be an event that promotes accessibility and inclusivity for all.

In order to increase inclusivity of the National Convention, members of the organization and convention planning team must work together to ensure that the event in its totality is accessible to all. This includes members, guests, and the communities we serve. All delegates, attendees, staff, executive directors, board of directors, operational leadership team members, and guests should feel welcomed and included in the aspects of the convention that are open to them for participation.

Planned activities like service projects, meals, award ceremonies, sight-seeing outings, and more should also be inclusive of the different abilities of members and guests. It is essential that everyone at the convention be able to participate in all activities if the event is truly inclusive. If a convention attendee with a disability makes a request for an accommodation the team should work together to make those necessary changes to ensure full participation in the activity. It is critical that inaccessibility does not become a barrier for those who want to attend or participate in the convention.

Member Status Proposals

This section includes amendments clarifying membership statuses.

Constitutional Consent Proposal #11

Author:

Alyssa Bernhardt

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article IV, Section 6

This section currently reads as follows:

- Section 6. An active member may be granted a one-semester leave of absence upon approval of the Chapter Standards Board. This status is meant to reflect a temporary condition that prohibits the active from fully participating in the sorority.
- Clause 1. An active member whose course of study removes them from the main campus will automatically be granted leave of absence status.
- Clause 2. The Chapter Standards Board may grant a member an emergency leave of absence for the remainder of the term at any point during the semester. This status does not relieve the member from financial obligations owed the chapter prior to the emergency leave of absence being granted.
- Clause 3. The local chapter will not place any requirements on any member who is on a leave of absence.

The proposed amendment:

- Section 6. An active member may be granted a one-semester leave of absence upon approval of the Chapter Standards Board. This status ~~is meant to reflect~~ a temporary ~~condition situation~~ that prohibits ~~the-an active member~~ from ~~fully participating in the sorority meeting active member requirements~~.
- Clause 1. An active member whose course of study removes them from the main campus will automatically be granted leave of absence status ~~from the Chapter Standards Board~~.
- Clause 2. The Chapter Standards Board may grant a member an emergency leave of absence for the remainder of the term at any point during the semester. This status does not relieve the member from financial obligations owed the chapter prior to the emergency leave of absence being granted.
- Clause 3. The local chapter will not place any requirements on any member who is on a leave of absence.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

The reason for this proposal is to clarify language that a leave of absence is a **temporary** situation (not condition) that prevents a member from being fully involved and unable to meet active requirements. The current language of 'meant to' is too open-ended and it is important to clarify that this status **does** reflect a temporary status.

Changing clause 1 to add CSB serves to clarify that the CSB can grant automatic LOA for the reasons listed and does not need approval from the NSB. Starting in Spring 2015 (8% of active members on LOA status), the percentage of our active membership on LOA each semester has increased more than 10% on average (16% on LOA status in Spring 2020). As we see an increase of the number of active members on LOA each semester, it's important to ensure that the approval of this status truly does reflect a **temporary** condition and that there's no way the active requirements can be met by a member on this status. We want members who join Omega Phi Alpha to get a robust experience with service and leadership and this is impossible while on LOA.

Constitutional Consent Proposal #12

Author:

Alyssa Bernhardt

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article IV, Section 9

This section currently reads as follows:

- Section 9. An active sister may declare alumna status automatically for the following reasons:
- A. When no longer enrolled at the university where the member was active.
 - B. When a student in the final term prior to graduation.
 - C. As a student who has been an active member for at least four academic years.
 - D. Upon meeting a special condition listed in the alumnae membership procedures.
- Clause 1. Sisters must notify their Chapter Standards Board in writing of their status declaration to remain in good standing.
- Clause 2. Sisters not meeting the previously listed conditions may petition the National Standards Board chair for alumnae status, which requires approval of three-fourths of the National Standards Board. All petitions must be filed by September 15 for the fall semester and February 15 for the spring semester.
- Clause 3. Any alumna who owes the sorority money or does not return sorority property will not be considered in good standing until those issues are resolved.

The proposed amendment:

- Section 9. An active sister may declare alumna status automatically for the following reasons:
- A. When no longer enrolled at the university where the member was active.
 - B. When a student is in their final term ~~prior to graduation~~.
 - C. As a student who has been an active member for at least four academic years.
 - ~~D. Upon meeting a special condition listed in the alumnae membership procedures.~~
- Clause 1. If a sister satisfies one of the reasons to automatically declare alumna status, the sisterSisters must notify their Chapter Standards Board in writing of their status declaration in order to remain in good standing as a lifetime member.
- ~~Clause 2. Sisters not meeting the previously listed conditions may petition the National Standards Board chair for alumnae status, which requires approval of three-fourths of the National Standards Board. All petitions must be filed by September 15 for the fall semester and February 15 for the spring semester.~~
- Clause ~~3~~2. Any alumna who owes the sorority money or does not return sorority property will not be considered in good standing until those issues are resolved.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

This proposal serves to clarify B as many members are unclear that “final term prior to graduation” means the term OF graduation (e.g. if you graduate in Spring 2021, then Spring 2021 is your final term prior to graduation).

This proposal also suggests to strike D because there are no alumnae membership procedures to reference to this point. A member is expected to join the organization with the intention of being engaged their entire life.

Striking Clause 2 eliminates the need for an “early alum” petition. Members can automatically elect to go alum after 4 years of active membership and in their final semester. Eliminating the need for alum status before those conditions are met sets the appropriate expectations of joining a membership organization that provides robust experiences as an active and alumni member (lifetime membership). Setting these expectations will help

our membership grow and create a stronger sense of sisterhood and community. This proposed change comes from research conducted of other organizations and is in line with the majority of social and service organizations. The NSB purpose is to be focused on upholding standards of the organization – policies, procedures, VP and CSB training – and less on membership statuses so eliminating the need for “early alum” will also allow the NSB to focus on standards and training.

Alum-related Proposals

This section includes amendments relating to alum chapters and alum membership status.

Constitutional Consent Proposal #13

Author:

Alyssa Bernhardt

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article XIII, Section 10

This section currently reads as follows:

Section 10: To attain alumnae chapter status, the alumnae group must petition the Alumnae Membership Director and complete a provisional period of at least two years. The petition must include the following information:

Sub-clause 1. Location of the group

Sub-clause 2. Names and respective chapters of all members

Sub-clause 3. Chapter goals and reasons for desiring chapter status.

Sub-clause 4. Names and addresses of all elected officers.

Sub-clause 5. A \$25 nonrefundable petition fee.

The proposed amendment:

Section 10: To attain alumnae chapter status, the alumnae group must petition the Alumnae Membership Director and complete a provisional period of at least two years. The petition must include the following information:

Sub-clause 1. Location of the group

Sub-clause 2. Names and respective chapters of all members

Sub-clause 3. Chapter goals and reasons for desiring chapter status.

Sub-clause 4. Names and addresses of all elected officers.

Sub-clause 5. A \$25 nonrefundable petition fee per member.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

The reason for updating sub-clause 5 to require a fee of \$25 per petitioning member aligns with our process for creating a new active chapter in the expansions process. A single \$25 fee is well below any other fees we collect and there doesn't seem to be much information for why we selected this dollar amount. Similar to the active chapter expansions process, if we collected a fee from each petitioning member it would help display commitment to the chapter and process that takes 2 years.

Constitutional Consent Proposal #14

Author:

Alyssa Bernhardt

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article VI, Section 1, Clause 2

This section currently reads as follows:

All candidates for the Board of Director offices and Alumnae Membership Director must be alumnae.

The proposed amendment:

All candidates for the Board of Director offices ~~and Alumnae Membership Director~~ must be alumnae. All candidates for Alumnae Membership Director must be an alum at the time they would take office.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

Expands reach of candidates for AMD position by removing the requirement that candidates must be an alumna at the time of running for office. Many active members who are transitioning to alumni would be great candidates for this position. Because this position is elected earlier in the year (different from BOD elections which happen in the summer), some of the candidates considering this position with great ideas and goals may still be active.

Proposed Bylaws Amendments

General Bylaws Proposals

These proposals include amendments to:

- General terminology
- Clarify process
- Reflect current operational structure or practice per standard operating procedure

Bylaws Consent Proposal #1

Author:

Kasey Stevens

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article IV, Section 1

This section currently reads as follows:

Section 1. Duties of all officers: All elected and appointed officers of Omega Phi Alpha have a responsibility to perform all duties, as described in their position descriptions in the Member Resource Center, to the best of their abilities, and to obey and uphold the constitution and principles of Omega Phi Alpha.

The proposed amendment:

Section 1. Duties of all officers: All elected and appointed officers of Omega Phi Alpha have a responsibility to perform all duties, as described in their position descriptions ~~in the Member Resource Center,~~ to the best of their abilities, and to obey and uphold the constitution and principles of Omega Phi Alpha.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

There is not really a Member Resource Center, per se, as previously utilized via Dropbox. Yes, many documents may be found on OPAPortal, but many additional operational documents are housed on Google Drive. It makes no sense to refer to the location of these documents as they will be widely available or can be easily provided upon request.

Bylaws Consent Proposal #2

Author:

Kasey Stevens

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article XV

This section currently reads as follows:

Amendments to the bylaws may be proposed at the national convention and voted upon at a national business meeting allowing time for discussion and consideration by the Board of Directors. Ratification of bylaw amendments requires an affirmative two-thirds of the ballots cast. All revisions to the national bylaws take effect upon the final adjournment of the national convention.

The proposed amendment:

Amendments to the bylaws may be proposed and submitted to the Legislation Committee before and at the national convention prior to the opening of new business and voted upon at a national business meeting, allowing time for discussion and proper consideration by the Board of Directors Legislation Committee. If the proposal is approved by the Legislation Committee, it will be considered at the National Convention at the end of new business. Ratification of bylaw amendments requires an affirmative two-thirds of the ballots cast. All revisions to the national bylaws take effect upon the final adjournment of the national convention.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

It could be interpreted by the way the current article reads, that amendments may be proposed at any time during the national convention, without review and proper consideration. It could also be interpreted that voting to ratify amendments could take place at any national business meeting, and it is unclear what a national business meeting is.

This proposal aims to ensure that legislative proposals to amend the national bylaws are given due consideration and that the Legislation Committee has enough time to review prior to inclusion on the new business agenda. This proposal also aims to clarify that votes on amendments to the national bylaws must be performed at the national convention and by the convention delegation.

Bylaws Consent Proposal #3

Author:

Sara McAllister

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article V, Section 9

This section currently reads as follows:

Section 9. The Leadership Development (LEAD) team is chaired by the Cardinal Principles Director and consists of alumnae and actives appointed by the chair and Vice President of Programs. These members will serve as coordinators and facilitators of the national Leadership Program. The team will organize, develop, coordinate, and distribute all materials relating to the national Leadership Program.

The proposed amendment:

Strike the section in its entirety, renumber subsequent sections accordingly.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

Should Constitutional General Proposal #5 be passed, there will be no need to include the responsibilities of the LEAD team here.

Service-related Bylaws Proposals

These proposals include amendments to:

- Clarify chapter requirements under our service program
- Reflect current operating procedure within our service program

Bylaws Consent Proposal #4

Author:

Sara McAllister

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article VI, Section 2

This section currently reads as follows:

The national Permanent Project is mental health. Each chapter should complete two projects per year to further the cause of mental health.

The proposed amendment:

The national Permanent Project is mental health. Each chapter ~~should~~must complete ~~two projects per year~~at least one project per semester to further the cause of mental health.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

The service program requires that the chapters hold one service project in each area, including the Permanent Project, each fall and spring semester. One project each semester instead of two projects per year more closely aligns with the actual service requirements for active chapters. The change in wording is for clarification only, no requirements are changing.

Bylaws Consent Proposal #5

Author:

Sara McAllister

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article VI, Section 3

This section currently reads as follows:

Every national President will declare a national President's Project each year. Each chapter should hold two projects per year for the cause named as the President's Project. The project will be named yearly.

The proposed amendment:

Every national President will declare a national President's Project each year. Each chapter ~~should~~must ~~complete~~hold ~~two projects per year~~at least one project per semester for the cause named as the President's Project. ~~The project will be named yearly.~~

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

The service program requires that the chapters hold one service project in each area, including the President's Project, each fall and spring semester. One project each semester instead of two projects per year more closely aligns with the actual service requirements for active chapters. The change in wording is for clarification only, no requirements are changing. "The project will be named yearly" is redundant.

Bylaws Consent Proposal #6

Author:

Sara McAllister

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article VII, Section 1

This section currently reads as follows:

- Section 1. Each chapter promotes service by doing at least six chapter service projects during each term.
- Clause 1. One project should represent service to the university community.
- Clause 2. One project should represent service to the community at large.
- Clause 3. One project should represent service to the members of the sorority.
- Clause 4. One project should represent service to the nations of the world.
- Clause 5. One project should represent service to the national Permanent Project, mental health.
- Clause 6. One project should represent service to the President's Project. The project will be named yearly by the national President.
- Clause 7. Chapter projects are defined as those that have at least 60 percent participation of the active chapter.

The proposed amendment:

- Section 1. Each chapter ~~promotes service by doing~~ will execute at least six ~~chapter service~~ projects ~~during each term~~ each semester in which 60% of the active chapter participates.
- Clause 1. One project should represent service to the university community.
- Clause 2. One project should represent service to the community at large.
- Clause 3. One project should represent service to the members of the sorority.
- Clause 4. One project should represent service to the nations of the world.
- Clause 5. One project should represent service to the national Permanent Project, mental health.
- Clause 6. One project should represent service to the President's Project. ~~The project will be named yearly by the national President.~~
- ~~Clause 7. Chapter projects are defined as those that have at least 60 percent participation of the active chapter.~~

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

- Changing Section 1 – The service program requires that the chapters hold one service project in each area, including the President's Project, each fall and spring semester. One project each semester instead of two projects per year more closely aligns with the actual service requirements for active chapters. Additionally, "chapter service projects" is very close to "chapter-planned projects" (used in Bylaws, Article VII, Section 2, Clause 1), which are any project that the chapter plans for sisters to participate in and becomes confusing.
- Changing Clause 6 – The President's Project is defined elsewhere already, including this is redundant (Constitution, Article VI, Section 3).
- Eliminating Clause 7 – Eliminating the term "chapter service projects" in Section 1 no longer requires a definition.
- The changes in wording are for clarification only, no requirements are changing.

Bylaws Consent Proposal #7

Author:

Sara McAllister

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article VII, Section 2

This section currently reads as follows:

- Section 2. All active sisters should complete a minimum of 10 service hours during each term.
- Clause 1. All 10 of these hours must be completed through participation in chapter-planned projects. Hours completed through individual participation in service projects outside of the chapter will not be counted toward meeting the minimum requirement.

The proposed amendment:

- Section 2. All active sisters should complete a minimum of 10 service hours ~~during each term~~ per semester.
- Clause 1. All 10 of these hours must be completed through participation in chapter-planned projects.
- Clause 2. Hours completed through ~~individual~~ participation in service projects outside of the chapter will not be counted toward ~~meeting the minimum requirement~~ a member's service hour total.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

The service program requires that sisters complete at least 10 hours of service each fall and spring semester. 10 hours each semester instead of each term more closely aligns with the actual service requirements for active members.

“Counted toward meeting the minimum requirement” implies that hours completed outside of chapter planned projects may be counted on top of the minimum requirement of 10 hours, as long as the sister completes 10 hours through chapter-planned projects. Separating Clause 2 from Clause 1 further dissociates the two.

Bylaws Consent Proposal #8

Author:

Alyssa Bernhardt

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article VII, Section 3

This section currently reads as follows:

Section 3. All active chapters must complete a service project report form to be submitted to the national office twice each year. This form should contain the total number of chapter project hours as well as the project hours for each sister.

The proposed amendment:

Section 3. All active chapters must report all chapter service projects and individual service hours to the national office in accordance with standard operating procedure. ~~complete a service project report form to be submitted to the national office twice each year. This form should contain the total number of chapter project hours as well as the project hours for each sister.~~

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

The reasoning for this proposal is to update the reporting requirements to include the new OPAportal system. All service projects and individual hours should be tracked in real time on the portal. Doing so eliminates the need for additional forms and reporting to the national service team. This process for reporting should be laid out in standard operating procedure.

Bylaws Consent Proposal #9

Author:

Sara McAllister

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article VII

This section currently reads as follows:

Add Section 4.

The proposed amendment:

Section 4. The chapter service director shall be responsible for organizing the projects, approving the hours submitted by the sisters, and ensuring their accuracy.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

The reasoning for this proposal is to update the reporting requirements to include the new OPAportal system. All service projects and individual hours should be tracked in real time on the portal. Doing so eliminates the need for additional forms and reporting to the national service team. This process for reporting should be laid out in standard operating procedure.

Membership Status Bylaws Proposals

These proposals include amendments to:

- Clarify new member processes
- Reflect current operating procedure

Bylaws Consent Proposal #10

Author:

Alyssa Bernhardt

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article VIII, Section 1, Clause 5

This section currently reads as follows:

Clause 5. Each chapter must make a mid-year recruitment check and report the progress of each new member. New members should have one-half of their local requirements completed at this time and reminders of deficiencies should be made. After review of each new member has occurred, each new member will be voted on individually and must have an affirmative two-thirds vote of the active chapter members present in order to continue.

The proposed amendment:

Clause 5. Each chapter must make a mid-year recruitment check and report the progress of each new member. New members should have one-half of their local requirements completed at this time and reminders of deficiencies should be made. ~~After review of each new member has occurred, each new member will be voted on individually and must have an affirmative two-thirds vote of the active chapter members present in order to continue.~~

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

The purpose of this proposal is to eliminate the need to vote on potential new members. Voting at this midpoint is unnecessary and serves as a formality to ensure that members are meeting their requirements. The burden of proof for requirements should fall on each new member and the new member class leader (such as the Membership Director). There should be regular check ins throughout the new member process and no surprises at the midpoint. In general, voting on members is not in line with our core value of inclusivity.

Bylaws Consent Proposal #11

Author:

Alyssa Bernhardt

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article VIII, Section 1, Clause 11

This section currently reads as follows:

Clause 11. The new member class should be voted in individually by three-fourths affirmative vote of all active members before activation. If there are any negative votes, there will be a discussion of the individual in question and a revote taken. Lack of service project completion, an infraction of the local or national new member rules, failure to pass national new member test, failure to complete local requirements, nonpayment of dues or monetary obligations will result in a negative vote.

The proposed amendment:

Strike the clause in its entirety and renumber subsequent sections accordingly.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

As a sorority that values diversity and inclusive and continues to implement practices that reflect those values, I am proposing that we remove any voting associated with new members. It is clear that if new members are not completing their requirements that they cannot become an active member and steps should be taken well before the final vote to ensure that they have the support they need to achieve the requirements. It is not a good practice to engage in discussion about new members that receive negative votes. To be truly inclusive, Omega Phi Alpha would accept any person into our membership that meets all the requirements.

Bylaws Consent Proposal #12

Author:

Alyssa Bernhardt

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article VIII, Section 2, Clause 5

This section currently reads as follows:

Clause 5. The local membership director is responsible for recruiting, training, and activating new members. The membership director forwards the permanent home addresses to the appropriate national officer and submits a copy of the local new member rules to the national office at the end of each academic year for review. The membership director must submit copies of the original national test answer sheets, the new member summary form, and the new member roster to the national office two weeks prior to the activation ceremony. The membership director must report the activities of the new member class to the active chapter at each meeting. The membership director cannot activate the eligible new members until written confirmation is received from the national Collegiate Membership Director.

The proposed amendment:

Clause 5. The local membership director is responsible for recruiting, training, and activating new members. The membership director ~~forwards the permanent home addresses to the appropriate national officer~~adds all new members to the membership portal and submits a copy of the local new member rules to the national office at the end of each academic year for review. The membership director must submit ~~national test score~~copies of the original national test answer sheets, the new member summary form, and update the new member roster ~~to the national office~~on the membership portal two weeks prior to the activation ceremony. The membership director must report the activities of the new member class to the active chapter at each meeting. The membership director cannot activate the eligible new members until written confirmation is received from the national Collegiate Membership Director.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

The rationale for the proposal is to update the required paperwork to reflect the use of the new portal.

Diversity & Inclusion Bylaws Proposals

These proposals include amendments submitted by the Diversity & Inclusion Committee concerning accessibility.

Bylaws Consent Proposal #13

Author:

Esther Blue de Avalos

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article VIII

This section currently reads as follows:

Amend by adding Section 3.

The proposed amendment:

Section 3. Every chapter must choose accessible buildings and sites for hosting activities, plan accessible activities, and make accommodations for members with disabilities when requested.

Clause 1. Chapter presidents, membership directors, service directors, and other local officers should schedule chapter meetings, service projects, recruitment events, and other events in ADA accessible buildings on campus or in the community at large. Any mandatory meetings should be held in ADA accessible buildings. All mandatory chapter activities should be accessible activities so that all members can participate and be included.

Clause 2. If a member with a disability requests accommodations including but not limited to service animals, sign language interpreters, closed captioning, ceremony scripts, or change of venue due to non-accessible buildings, the chapter shall work with their college/ university or the venue/ business to find a way to accommodate these requests. These same accommodations should be made when planning and hosting chapter activities.

Clause 3. Chapter success coordinators and other members of the operational leadership team will provide guidance, support, or assistance to chapter officers in fulfilling requests for accessibility and accommodation.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

Accessibility is an important tenet of creating an inclusive and equitable environment in our organization. As stated in its constitution, Omega Phi Alpha has a responsibility to maintain an environment that is free of discrimination including those people with a disabilities. Therefore ableism has no place in the organization and this means our chapters must promote accessibility and inclusivity. Omega Phi Alpha does not discriminate on the basis of ability when granting membership.

At a chapter level, local officers should work to create an inclusive and equitable environment that is welcoming to all people with disabilities. That welcoming environment begins during recruitment, continues at activation, chapter meetings, service projects, formals, retreats, events, and endures for a lifetime when an alum comes to visit. This means we must work together to make accommodations when requested so that all members, their guests, or the communities we serve regardless of their ability feel included, welcomed, and celebrated. We also have to be cognizant of the spaces we choose for our programs.

In addition to building accessibility, it is important to be cognizant of the different abilities of our members. The activities that are planned and hosted must be accessible to members with different abilities if the organization hopes to be an inclusive one. For example, if you plan to host a nature hike, chapter officers should try to find a trail that is ADA accessible. If a member with a disability requests an accommodation, these accommodations must be honored to truly include all members in our chapter activities. Chapter officers should approach members requesting an accommodation through a culturally competent lens with respect, empathy, and understanding and should avoid defensiveness. There are many different types of disabilities and

it is important to be flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of our members when they request accommodations.

Chapter officers should be intentional about the spaces that they are creating when deciding where to host an event and what that event will look and feel like. If a potential new member, member, or guest can enter a building but is not able to fully engage in the activities due to inaccessibility then this event is not inclusive. If someone can not enter a building or site due to inaccessibility, then a change of venue is in order. There are many types of disabilities including physical, mental health, cognitive, intellectual, hearing, and vision. It is also important that many members will experience disability at some point in their life due to aging, injury, or even a family member or friend. Keeping this in mind, it is important to consider the building we chose, the activities we plan, and the language we use. Our chapter officers should keep in mind that members with disabilities might request accommodations. It is vital that in these instances to be patient and understanding. This process will not always be the same and sometimes it will require research, creativity, or leveraging resources to find a solution that will make the event or activity inclusive.

Bylaws Consent Proposal #14

Author:

Esther Blue de Avalos

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article IX - District Summits

This section currently reads as follows:

Amend by adding Section 5.

The proposed amendment:

Section 5. All district summit organizers shall work to ensure that buildings are ADA accessible.

Clause 1. Members organizing district summits shall ensure that all university or college campus buildings or business booked for district summits are ADA accessible. Planned activities should also be accessible to be inclusive of the different abilities of the members attending.

Clause 2. Members organizing district summits shall work together to accommodate members with disabilities requests to ensure accessibility. These requests can include but are not limited to allowing members to bring their service dogs, providing a sign language interpreter, or ensuring that there is accessible seating and bathrooms available.

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

As stated in its constitution, Omega Phi Alpha has a responsibility to maintain an inclusive and equitable environment that is free of discrimination including those people with a disabilities. Therefore ableism has no place in the organization and the district summit must be an event that promotes accessibility and inclusivity for all. In order to ensure that all members with disabilities are fully included and can participate in the entire program, it is vital that our organization ensures that all district summits are held in ADA accessible buildings. In addition to the buildings, it is critical that the planned activities are accessible to all members with different abilities. It is important to be cognizant of different disabilities when planning activities such as service projects, team building activities, crafts, etc. Members organizing district summits should incorporate accessibility into all parts of the planning of the event. District summits are a required event that both active and alum members attend. If a member with a disability makes a request for an accommodation, the organizers of the summit should work with their campuses or local businesses to ensure those accommodations are met. There are many types of disabilities and not every request for accessibility or accommodation will be the same. Accommodating requests will require research, creativity, and leveraging resources. It is essential that district summit organizers intentionally plan to host the event in a space that is accessible and serve as a respectful, flexible, and understanding team when members make requests for accommodations.

These are examples of how the summit can become a space that is not safe and welcoming for all members attending the district summit. If a member with a disability can enter the building due to inaccessibility, then a new venue should be chosen. If a member with a disability can access the building, but can not fully engage in the activities due to inaccessibility, the event is not inclusive. Therefore, it is critical that the spirit of accessibility and inclusivity be at the forefront of the planning process.

New Chapter Bylaws Proposals

This proposals includes amendments to clarify processes for new chapters.

Bylaws Consent Proposal #15

Author:

Alyssa Bernhardt

Which portion of the document would be amended?

Article XII, Section 1, Clause 4

This section currently reads as follows:

- Section 1. A colony is a group of students in the process of earning an Omega Phi Alpha charter.
- Clause 4. The Expansions Director must formally accept the petition for colonization before the group is considered an Omega Phi Alpha colony.

The proposed amendment:

- Section 1. A colony is a group of students in the process of earning an Omega Phi Alpha charter.
- Clause 4. Each petitioning member must pay a colonization fee to the national organization. This initial fee covers dues for their first semester of the colonization process. All colonists must pay a fee equal to national active member dues in each additional semester of the colonization process.~~The Expansions Director must formally accept the petition for colonization before the group is considered an Omega Phi Alpha colony.~~

What is the rationale behind this amendment?

The national organization provides a lot of support to prospective new chapters including use of OPAportal, insurance coverage, and other tools and resources.

When a colony begins colonization in say, January, they pay a colonization fee which is currently equal to national active member dues (\$75). As it stands now, this is a one time fee which is intended to cover the entirety of their colonization process. Most colonies will collect local dues at the time they are declared a colony and will continue to do so each semester even if not yet inducted.

In the past, most colonies have become chapters within a few months and usually prior to the next national dues deadline after their colonization fee is paid. However, if the colonization process were to take a full year and overlap with a national active member dues deadline, this proposal is to ensure that colonists pay national dues.

This would set appropriate expectations for active membership and be in line with local dues collection (they are collecting local dues each semester throughout the colonization process).