



Alpha Chi Sigma Fraternity
Professional in the Chemical Sciences

MANUAL OF PROCEDURE CHAPTER ADVISOR



Manual of Procedure | Chapter Advisor

Updated March 2026

The position of Chapter Advisor (CA) is established by the fraternity's Constitution. Article IV, Section F states that "each Collegiate Chapter shall have a Chapter Advisor appointed by the District Counselor upon the chapter's recommendation."

Eligibility and Appointment

The Chapter Advisor is recommended by the local chapter after his or her willingness to serve is determined. Upon mutual agreement, the District Counselor shall be notified of the chapter's recommendation for Chapter Advisor. The District Counselor shall appoint the Chapter Advisor and shall notify the Advisor, the chapter and the National Office of his or her action. The Chapter Advisor shall serve for a period of time mutually agreed upon with the chapter.

The Chapter Advisor should be a person aligned with the objectives of the Fraternity as a whole and the local chapter in particular. If they are not already a member of the Fraternity, they should be elected to membership by the chapter and accept pledgeship. The Chapter Advisor should be a member of the department having the most direct connection to the chapter and should be a member of the Fraternity (e.g. 'Department of Chemistry' or 'Chemical Engineering Department'). They may also be a member of another department within the university. If no member of the faculty or staff eligible for Fraternity membership is available or willing to serve, the interim appointment of a non-eligible faculty or staff member by the District Counselor shall be subject to confirmation by the Grand Collegiate Alchemist. In the event no faculty or staff member can be found to act as Chapter Advisor, the chapter may elect an active professional member of the fraternity who is a resident in the immediate community.

Some institutions have additional requirements that apply to advisors of recognized student organizations. If institutional policy conflicts with fraternity policy, accommodations can be made to ensure that the chapter's needs are met and that the chapter remains compliant with local rules.



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Duties

The Chapter Advisor is an advisor and is not an officer of the chapter. They are in a unique position of daily contact with the members of the chapter. Just as the District Counselor counsels, the Chapter Advisor advises. To be most effective, this involves setting a good example as well as talking to the chapter's members. A Chapter Advisor has the opportunity to guide, counsel and encourage the growth and development of the chapter. A good Chapter Advisor is able to judge when the potential growth from a situation is worth stepping aside to allow the chapter to make mistakes that may bring unwanted consequences. They are also willing to intervene when they believe that the risk of a negative outcome outweighs the possible benefit. The Chapter Advisor is a member of the Fraternity team and is not alone. They can expect (and will receive) the advice and help of the District Counselor, the Grand Collegiate Alchemist, the Grand Recorder, and the other members of the Supreme Council.

There are many responsibilities for the Chapter Advisor. Those that demand the most time and energy will vary from chapter to chapter, depending on the local situation, and from time to time, depending on the competency and interests of the local chapter officers. The Chapter Advisor can become involved in the following ways:

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1. Be generally available to the chapter for pledge functions, parties, etc., and to individuals who may want a sympathetic faculty ear for a variety of reasons.
2. Attend chapter meetings as often as possible. The simple presence of the Chapter Advisor at a meeting tends to add more order to the meeting. While the Chapter Advisor shouldn't dominate the meeting, they are encouraged to offer suggestions and comments throughout the meeting.
3. Meet with the chapter officers on an informal but regular basis to keep aware of activities and problems and to give advice in chapter finances, pledging activities, relations with campus regulatory agencies, professional activities and relations with the National Office.
4. Give approval on collegiate membership as prescribed in the Bylaws of the Fraternity. This approval is on the basis of professional qualifications only. The Constitution defines the qualifications for membership in the fraternity in Article I, Section B, Subsection 2:
 - a. A candidate for Collegiate membership shall be a student of chemistry who intends to pursue a career in pure or applied chemistry.
 - b. A candidate for Professional membership shall either have at least a bachelor's degree in chemistry or be a properly qualified chemist.
 - c. Reference to chemistry and chemists in connection with membership qualifications shall be interpreted as including chemists, chemical engineers, and members of allied professions in which chemistry predominates.
 - d. A candidate for membership shall be professionally acceptable to the Grand Chapter.
 - e. Membership shall not be restricted on any other basis.
5. Be available for participating in the initiation ritual (particularly Part 1) and assist the Master of Ceremonies with ensuring a successful event.
6. Act as a liaison between the chapter, the administrative department(s) that oversee student activities, and the academic department(s) related to the Fraternity's activities. Work with the officers to advocate for the organization within the institution to help them succeed.



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7. Guide the chapter so that it remains in good standing with both the department and the institution.
8. Be active in the local professional chapter/group (if there is one) and be aware of local professionals who are willing to spend time with the collegiate members by working in programs of mutual interest.
9. Maintain a good rapport with the District Counselor. Reach out to them when you need assistance or guidance and ensure that you reliably respond to their messages.
10. Make every effort to meet with the District Counselor to discuss the state of the chapter.
11. Should members of the Supreme Council or Grand Chapter officers visit the chapter, arrange to meet with them, assist them in meeting other faculty who are members, and facilitate meetings they may need to have with department or university leadership.
12. Have a planning session for chapter officers before the first chapter meeting each semester. In this meeting, discuss which activities and functions are necessary and desirable and help them to make rough financial plans to guide the Budget Committee.
13. Know where to go to find guidance should you need it. The most commonly needed documents— Constitution and Bylaws, the Health and Safety Policy, and the Manuals of Procedure— are all available on the fraternity website.
14. Stay informed by reading emails to and from the chapter. You should be on the chapter's primary email list and you will be copied on most of the e-mails sent to the chapter by the National Office. If desired, you can work with the District Counselor to ensure that you are copied on their emails to the chapter as well.
15. Ensure the chapter officers complete the annual IRS form 990 required of all 501(c)3 organizations. This is usually due by May 15 of each year.
16. Each chapter has paperwork that is required to be submitted to the National Office. Most of that paperwork is due annually by May 15. Work with the chapter officers to ensure that this paperwork is filled out correctly and accurately and submitted in a timely fashion.



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Meet with Your Successor

The chapter advisor serves for an indefinite term once appointed. The best way to prepare to step down is to do so gradually. If you know that you're retiring from your institution in five years, let the district counselor know and work with them and with the students to start looking for your successor. Have another faculty member serve as a co-advisor with you for a few years and then with a year or two left before retirement, pass the torch to that individual and serve as their co-advisor for a little while. Make sure you step down at a time where you will still be available to answer questions for a little while. If you're going to be around as an emeritus professor, that's pretty simple, but if you're going to spend the first year of retirement traveling the world, let your successor take over a little early.

Of course, not everyone is able to step down in this way. There are things you can do in the normal course of your duties to help the chapter prepare for any transition between chapter advisors. Help the students maintain a good relationship with your fellow faculty and encourage them to initiate a staff or faculty member every year or two. Finding a brand new advisor is much easier when we already have other members to choose from. Keep your fraternity documentation in the cloud, separated from your work documents, and shared with a brother colleague or an officer account that gets passed down each year. There shouldn't be any need for confidential information in your fraternity materials but this is especially important if your position is subject to public records requests.

Describing Your Role

Many people are not familiar with professional fraternities and may not properly understand the work you do as a Chapter Advisor. I've included two short sample descriptions of the role to help you communicate the contributions to your university community that you make in this role. I've also included a longer sample as an example of how to explain it in more detail for a promotion or tenure portfolio.

Resume/CV summary:

The Chapter Advisor provides ongoing guidance, mentorship, and oversight to a collegiate professional fraternity, supporting chapter operations, student development, and organizational compliance. The role includes facilitating communication with university offices, ensuring adherence to institutional and national policies, and promoting a healthy, professionally focused chapter environment.



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One Paragraph Summary:

As Chapter Advisor, I serve as the primary faculty mentor to the fraternity's collegiate chapter, helping students navigate organizational leadership, professional development, and departmental or institutional expectations. I attend meetings and consult regularly with officers to ensure the chapter operates safely, responsibly, and in good standing with the university. The role also requires coordination with campus administrative units and the national organization to support risk management, financial compliance, and annual reporting. Overall, I act as the faculty liaison who helps the chapter thrive while remaining aligned with university standards.

Explanation of Service to your Institution:

Serving as Chapter Advisor constitutes a substantial faculty service commitment that directly supports the university's educational mission. In this role, I mentor students in a professional chemistry fraternity by fostering leadership, ethical conduct, and professional identity formation. I provide regular guidance to officers, attend chapter functions and meetings, and help students develop the organizational skills, communication abilities, and professional behaviors expected of future chemists and allied scientists. The position also requires ensuring compliance with university policies, coordinating with campus units overseeing student organizations, and promoting safe, responsible chapter operations—activities that directly advance student welfare and institutional standards.

This work also benefits the university by strengthening connections between students, academic departments, and external professional networks. By advising the chapter, I help create co-curricular experiences that enhance retention, support career preparation, and reinforce the intellectual and professional culture of the department. My liaison role with the national fraternity and local professionals brings additional visibility and engagement opportunities to the university community. Collectively, this service advances both student success and the broader academic mission of the institution.