

# Scholarship Transition Manual



Provided by the Greek Life Office and  
Greek Community Educational Consultants

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# Why Transition?

Entering a new office, there are many things you will be uncertain about. You may have watched or helped somebody do their job for over a year, but there are many details and skills you will not pick up on. The ENTIRE purpose of an officer transition is to provide an incoming officer with useful and necessary information so they can do their job more effectively.

## Benefits of a proper officer transition:

1. It provides a transfer of significant organizational knowledge. Your organization will not have to re-invent the wheel each year!
2. It helps to minimize the confusion that occurs with the “Changing of the Guard.” While new officers try to figure out what is going on, precious time can be lost to the organization. This time lag affects the whole membership, who may not understand what all of the confusion is about.
3. The process of transition gives the outgoing leaders/officers a sense of closure. It can help them let go – which is often a difficult thing for committed leaders to do.
4. Leadership transition utilizes the valuable contributions of the experienced leaders. The experience leaders are often the most neglected members in your group.
5. Finally, the shared information results in the new leadership having more knowledge and consequently, greater confidence in their ability to be more effective in their roles.

The purpose of this manual is to encourage and facilitate officer transitions, especially among the Scholarship Chairs in the Greek Community. The manual will follow the traditional lifetime of an officer, starting with Incoming Officers, moving onto Current Officers, and finishing with Outgoing Officers.

Scholarship chair is a very unique position within any chapter. The chair can take on substantial duties, or it can be seen as an unimportant office within the chapter. No matter what your previous officers have done, your time in office is your own. You have the freedom to take the position to a new level.

# Incoming Officers

Congratulations on just being elected to office! Although you may feel very confident coming into your position (or perhaps uncertain about your abilities), there are probably many things you will not know. Any incoming officer should try and meet the three following goals: Educate Yourself, Meet with the Outgoing Officer, and Brainstorm: What Can I Bring to the Position?

1) **Educate Yourself!** Scholarship Chairs have a variety of documents and policies for which they can be responsible for. Your job as an incoming officer is to educate yourself on everything you will be required to know in your term. The following is a starter list of what to expect:

- Chapter Scholarship Chair Duties (Constitution/Bylaws)
- Chapter Scholarship Plan/Program
- Chapter Academic Policies (GPA minimums, probation GPA, officer GPA, study hours requirement, etc.)
- Chapter Grade Reports (<http://studentaffairs.case.edu/greek/scholarship/grades/>)
- University Academic Policy (Student Handbook available at <http://studentaffairs.case.edu/office/handbook/>)
- Greek Life Academic Policy (<http://studentaffairs.case.edu/greek/scholarship/>)
- Campus Support Service (ESS, Career Center, Undergraduate Studies, etc)
- Expectations of Greek Community Educational Consultants (GCECs), which include:
  - Participate in monthly scholarship chair meetings
  - Meet with the GCECs once or more per semester
  - Post fliers and advertise programs to your chapter, including Faculty Forum and the Thwing Study-Over
  - Contribute one article per semester to the *Academia*, the newsletter sent to the scholarship community
  - Form a scholarship committee and document its proceedings for subsequent committees
  - Plan one program per semester for your members (ex: Career Center, ESS, study skills, finding an internship, stress management)
  - Participate in new member education using the resources provided by the GCECs
  - Hold a faculty appreciation event and/or get faculty members involved in your programming with one event or more
  - Get grade releases for your members (On the Greek Life Website)
  - Set a realistic, attainable GPA goal with the chapter
  - Recognize and reward members doing well: develop a rewards system for good grades and improved grades
  - Recognize and meet biweekly with members who are close to or below your chapter's minimum GPA requirement

## Incoming Officers (2)

2) **Meet with Your Outgoing Officer.** Meeting with the outgoing officer can be the most useful and productive time during your officer transition. The outgoing officer should be able to answer many questions you have, and can help you set realistic goals and expectations for the position.

You should meet with the Outgoing Officer at least once, and preferably multiple times. You cannot transfer a semester or year's worth of information during one quick meeting. Remember, the transition is a process, and it will take time.

Questions to keep in mind when meeting with the Outgoing Officer:

- What is the purpose of the office of Scholarship Chair?
- As Scholarship Chair, what were your main responsibilities?
- What and who are available resources for the position?
- What do you know now, that you would have liked to know when you took over?
- What did you find most difficult about your position?
- What is the calendar of events or timeline for the position?
- What problems arose during your tenure?
- How did you overcome these obstacles?
- What do you feel will be upcoming challenges for my tenure?
- What did you find most enjoyable about Scholarship Chair?
- If you could change/improve three things you did during your tenure, what changes/improvements would you make?
- What unfinished business needs to be addressed?
- Any other recommendations?

## Incoming Officers (3)

3) **Brainstorm: What Can I Bring to the Position?** Brainstorming can be done several ways: If your chapter holds a goal-setting session for incoming officers; it can be done during a meeting with the Outgoing Officer; the GCECs are always willing to meet with you about your position. However you do it, the purpose of Brainstorming is to get you thinking about two things:

**How can we improve upon our current programs/plans?  
Are there any new ideas for programs/plans available?**

An additional question to ask yourself is: Why did I run for Scholarship Chair? If the answer is: “Because nobody else did”, then that could mean trouble. However, *everybody* is capable of bringing something new to the position, if they are willing to put in the time.

It is very difficult to generalize about what each chapter needs, so you may need to do an inventory of where your chapter currently stands. This inventory may include questions such as:

- What are the chapter’s grades? Compared to other Fraternities/Sororities?
  - Are they consistently high/low?
  - Does the chapter get Grade Releases for their members?
- What are the new members’ grades? Are they lower than the chapter’s?
- Does the chapter have minimum GPA requirements for Initiation? for Officers? for “Good Standing” or Probation? etc.
  - Are the requirements high enough?
  - Are they enforced? Do you re-elect officers below the GPA requirement?
- Do you have a *written* Academic/Scholarship Program or Plan?
  - Is the Program addressing your needs? Do you follow it? *All* of it?
  - Does the plan address new members specifically?
  - Does the plan include incentive or recognition programs?
- Does your chapter have a Faculty Advisor?
  - Do you meet with them? Regularly?
  - What do you cover in these meetings?
- Do you have a study tables program?
  - Is it well attended? Do people actually study?
- Does your chapter include Academics/Scholarship in recruitment?
  - Do you have academic standards for the members you recruit? (This can be so easily overlooked, but can be the best way to institute academic change!)

# Current Officers

For officers who are past the entry-period of their term, what can they be doing to ensure they are prepared for the next transition? The following steps give one way to stay organized:

1) **Keep Educating Yourself!** Everything you learned during your transition period. Did it help? Was there more information you could have known? Keep an idea of what information you actually needed to perform your officer duties. It is crucial to give the next officer the most useful and important information you can. What could be added to the list of information you need to know? What could be taken off?

Also, always be on the look out for further information. Does your chapter headquarters have a standard scholarship plan they endorse? Have you looked at the resources on the Greek Life website for scholarship (Instant Scholarship Plan, New Member Scholarship Program, and Faculty Advisor Manual are all available at <http://studentaffairs.case.edu/greek/scholarship/>)

2) **Document Your Progress.** First, do you have progress to document? If not, ask yourself why not. Complete the inventory of your chapter's scholarship status, in Incoming Officers (3) to see what your chapter needs.

Second, what are you doing that needs to be documented? Remember, "the ENTIRE purpose of an officer transition is to provide an incoming officer with useful and necessary information so they can do their job more effectively." Use this as your guideline for documentation, and when in doubt, document it.

Are you providing scholastic programming? If so, say who, when, where, and *evaluate* how it went. Do you meet with an advisor? If so, how often, and *evaluate* your meetings and think about how to improve them. Evaluation is the most overlooked aspect of Greek programming, but it can also be the most useful to help you improve. **Included at the end of this manual is a model Event Evaluation Form that you may adapt for your purposes.**

3) **Search for Your Successor.** At some point during your tenure, you will realize that you will not always be the Scholarship Chair, and that somebody will eventually succeed you. During your time in office, make sure you identify potential future Scholarship Chairs to build upon the progress during your term. Qualities to look for in future scholarship chairs:

- GPA above 3.2
- Have shown initiative by holding a chapter office
- Have an interest in helping their chapter members
- Previous tutoring experience

# Outgoing Officers

As you arrive at the end of your term, you have two main duties to ensure the next officer is prepared to take on the responsibility, Evaluate Your Term, and Compiling Useful Information.

1) **Evaluate Your Term.** This was mentioned during the Current Officer section as well. Evaluating your term, goals you set, programming, changes to your Bylaws or Scholarship Plan, study tables, New Member Program, Faculty Advisor Meeting, etc. Give yourself a sense of how you did as an officer, and look for possible areas of improvement. Included at the end of this Manual is a model Evaluation Sheet.

2) **Compile Useful Information.** Many chapters keep an updated Officer Binder to pass on information to the next officer. Some guidelines when using an Officer Binder:

## What to Include

- Introduction: Tables of Contents, List of Contacts, Overview of the Binder.
- Job Description: Constitution/Bylaws Description, Expectations, Other Duties
- Timeline of Officer Duties: Is there a document that gives a brief overview of officer duties throughout the year? This is to orient a new officer on what they should expect to be doing during the year.
- Reference Documents: Did you create a flyer for an event? Did you send out Invitations/Thank Yous to a Faculty Reception? Save a copy. Did you give a prize for best study table attendance? Record what was given, when, and the cost of the prize. *Save things that are expected to be repeated by future officers.*
- Goals/Evaluations: Evaluate your events, and provide feedback on what went wrong or right, and how to improve it in the future.

## What Not to Include

- Documents from meetings of no particular importance. Don't just cram the binder with every paper you have. Keep it concise.
- Duplicate Items.
- Items they may already have a copy of, or have access to. (No need to include the entire chapter Constitution, just include the Scholarship section.)
- Items they can find online. It may be very helpful to reference that the Greek Life website has several Forms/Plans/Programs online. However, you may not need to include a copy of every single form we have online.

As the Outgoing Officer, it is your job to ensure the Officer Binder is in good shape when it is handed down. Think back to when you entered office. What would you have liked to know when you entered?

Finally, it is also your duty to meet with the Incoming Officer and share your experiences with them. Pass on the information you have compiled in your time.

# Event/Program Evaluation

**Event/Program:** Weekly Study Tables

**Program Location:** Library

**Name:** Gary Greek (Scholarship Chair)

**Program Date:** Every Tues/Thurs

**Number of Members in Attendance:** 14-16/week

**Cost:** \$25 gift card/semester as  
prize for best attendance

**Program Purpose:** To encourage brothers, big brothers and new members to get in the habit of studying together. Also, it is required for new members to attend 6 study tables per semester with their big brother.

**Event Evaluation** (How did it go?/Things to improve upon): Study table attendance was mediocre at first (6-8/week), and most people were inconsistent. We added the 6 mandatory study tables to the new member program to encourage attendance. The person who attends the most study tables for the semester gets a \$25 gift card to the bookstore. This was something new. Attendance doubled, and we had much more consistency after that.

In the future, perhaps offer a third day for study tables. Also, because attendance is getting larger, we started to break up the one large study group into several smaller groups within the library. This helped people get more studying done. Increasing attendance is something we can always improve upon.

**Important Contacts (w/contact info):** New Member Educator to add the mandatory study tables into New Member Program. Treasurer to budget for our gift cards. Secretary to add weekly Study Table times to the chapter calendar.

**Overall Event Rating** (1-10, 1 = terrible, 10 = excellent): 7

# Event/Program Evaluation

**Event/Program:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Program Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Program Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of Members in Attendance:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cost:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Program Purpose:**

**Event Evaluation** (How did it go?/Things to improve upon):

**Important Contacts** (w/contact info):

**Overall Event Rating** (1-10, 1 = terrible, 10 = excellent):