

Title:

Leadership Strategies for the the At-Large Chapter

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Chapter Posters

Slot (superslotted):

CHAP POSTERS: Wednesday, September 24, 2014: 2:15 PM-2:45 PM

Slot (superslotted):

CHAP POSTERS: Thursday, September 25, 2014: 9:45 AM-10:30 AM

Slot (superslotted):

CHAP POSTERS: Thursday, September 25, 2014: 2:30 PM-3:15 PM

Keywords:

Chapter-at-large, leadership and strategies

Learning Activity:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE	TIME ALLOTTED	FACULTY/SP EAKER	TEACHING/LEARNING METHOD	EVALUATION/FEEDBACK
Example Critique selected definition of the term, "curriculum"	Example Definitions of "curriculum" Course of study Arrangements of instructional materials The subject matter that is taught Cultural "training"	Example 20 minutes	Example Name, Credentials	Example Lecture PowerPoint presentation Participant feedback	Example Group discussion: What does cultural training mean to you?

	Planned engagement of learners				
Identify two operational challenges to leading an at-large chapter	Connectedness, use of technology, member engagement	5 minutes	Wendy Hansbrough, PhD, RN	Lecture, ppt, participant feedback	Listing of Take-home strategies
Describe two strategies to successfully leading an at-large chapter	creative collaboration, SWOT analysis, member polling, use of technology	10 minutes	Wendy Hansbrough, PhD, RN	Lecture, ppt, participant feedback	Listing of Take-home strategies

Abstract Text:

An at-large chapter of STTI may be established when smaller schools of nursing or those within close proximity to one another find it advantageous to draw on the larger membership resources of a merged chapter. Such is the case in San Diego where the Zeta-Mu chapter at the University of San Diego (USD), originally chartered in 1982, joined with honor society members at Point Loma Nazarene University (PLNU) to establish the Zeta Mu Chapter-At-Large in 1993. While establishing an at-large chapter is not difficult, the leadership of a joined chapter holds particular challenges. A discussion of the evolution of strategies to address such challenges and build a successful at-large chapter administration follows.

The STTI presidential call to action by Dr. Klopper describes the goal of connectedness for all members to feel part of the chapter, to be able to collaborate and network with common purpose. Counselors are the foundation on which the chapter membership grows and member connectedness evolves. In a chapter-at-large, there must be campus based counselors for each school who assume responsibility for honor society promotion and membership determinations at their respective campuses. With regard for this vital role, the Zeta Mu Chapter-At-Large bylaws were recently revised to include the counselors as voting members of the board. This ensures they have decision making power. Counselors are accountable to act in concert for the consistency of the society and its mission. Yet, they reflect the culture of each school in society activities. Both USD and PLNU are faith-based universities, so commonality exists in that regard. However, the schools serve different student populations: PLNU has a traditional undergraduate BSN program while USD has only graduate students. This presents a networking opportunity between experienced nurses and new graduates. A speed-meeting event was held at the first of the year to connect members and was well received as an introduction to the chapter.

The meeting location and time has posed a challenge. It has been established at USD as the founding school and set on a day and time to accommodate graduate student attendance. However, this places the PLNU undergraduate student members at a disadvantage. To address this gap, more attention has been given to holding networking events away from both campuses. This strategy has been used

with some success to increase member interest in the society, although its effect to connect members has not been evident. A future consideration is to rotate the meeting location between schools. The engagement in society meetings of students and STTI members at both campuses remains an ongoing challenge.

Chapter sponsored community service events are an opportunity to bring members together in a spirit of giving. Zeta Mu Chapter-At-Large currently supports two service projects, one spearheaded by each school. PLNU counselors have promoted an annual chapter donation to a health related foundation and members join in the community fundraising walk. Participation has increased due to promotion efforts of the officers and counselors. A USD board member who is an advanced practice nurse volunteers her services to a community clinic in nearby Mexico. Members are encouraged to donate their time to this cause. The annual holiday gathering was used to raise funds for this clinic and was successful in that effort as well as in bringing members together. There is more work to do to build a larger volunteer working group to support this clinic and raising awareness of the need will be a focus of the chapter goals for the coming year. .

Annual advanced planning of chapter activities is important for all chapters, but poses a particular challenge for a chapter-at-large. While all chapters must consider local, regional, national and international conference schedules in annual planning, the at-large chapter must also contend with multiple academic calendars which affect officer as well as member availability. Officers of Zeta Mu Chapter-At-Large meet in June each year to plan the following September to June schedule of meetings and events. A SWOT analysis methodology is useful to setting chapter activity priorities and determining future goals. With goals prioritized and a master calendar of events created, the board moves to adopt the calendar. This process was instituted 2 years ago and has been helpful to build more structure to chapter operations. A key element is the willingness of officers to be creative in planning to meet the needs of the membership. A survey of members was conducted to gain insight into how the chapter could best serve the membership. Results of that survey have been used to strategize for future annual planning which includes fewer business meetings, more service and educational events and broader use of communication and multimedia technology to reach members with information.

The calendar of events provides the opportunity to advertise the society and the chapter activities but only if it is widely distributed. This requires a multi-faceted approach. Zeta Mu Chapter-At-Large posts the calendar on the chapter website and follows with an eblast from the site. Reminder ebasts are regularly sent for meetings and events throughout the year. Large posters of the calendar were displayed at each school as visual reminders for students. Additional communication strategies are being developed such as more use of the chapter Facebook page and an increase physical presence of board members at each school.

The overarching challenge of an at-large chapter is to establish the society identify amongst members that is distinct without being reliant either school affiliation. The use of web-based technologies and social networking can be helpful to establish the identify and promote member retention and recruitment. Over the last four years Zeta Mu Chapter-At-Large has developed a chapter website. This has been useful for a number of functions beyond basic communication such as scholarship and grant applications, registration and payment for chapter events and member polling. It was started by volunteers but to improve its consistency as a communication resource, the chapter hired a professional webmaster. There is also a chapter facebook page that has been underutilized. Future strategies will include more effective use of these and other social networking technologies.

An obstacle to member communication, which may be common to all chapters, is the use of student email addresses in the STTI official roster. Once students graduate, most no longer use nor receive email via that address. While they are directed to update their contact information at STTI, many do not. Therefore, Zeta Mu Chapter-at-Large has begun collecting personal email addresses during at the time of induction, to maintain an internal membership data base. While effective, this is only a temporary solution to a larger problem. Our strategy must be to engage our student members more fully so they recognize the value of membership and are motivated to update their STTI profiles to remain in contact.

Building a chapter identity includes a celebration of induction into the society. Zeta Mu Chapter-At-Large remains committed to a formal ceremony as a means to promote the value of membership. Each year, the induction ceremony site is rotated between USD and PLNU. Thus the school counselors assume leadership responsibility for planning the event every other year. Thus far, this has been a successful strategy and will likely continue for the foreseeable future.

The leadership of a chapter-at-large poses unique challenges which can be strategically addressed with ongoing evaluation of the achievement of chapter goals and creative collaboration between members and chapter leaders.