

Expectations for Excellence 2007 Annual Report/2008 Plan Review Feedback

General Information

The Subcommittee on Standards was generally pleased with the timeliness and caliber of the Expectations for Excellence 2007 Annual Reports/2008 Plans submitted on December 3, 2007. The committee was also pleased with the presentations that took place between January 18-February 5, 2008. It was obvious that most groups took the self-assessment and planning task seriously and as a result, the Subcommittee was able to get a very good sense of what the fraternity and sorority community implemented in 2007 and what the community has in store for the campus in 2008.

While reviewing the documents, it became apparent that there were some common comments about the annual reports and plans from Subcommittee members. These comments and corresponding suggestions are listed below for your review and use. Following this section, there might be some more specific feedback for your particular organization under the listing of "specific feedback, recommendations, and requirements." If there is no feedback, then the feeling of the Subcommittee is that the general feedback in your case is sufficient. Each organization will also receive an additional form that includes a compiled ranking and feedback form related to the chapter presentation.

Resubmission

Any group may resubmit their plans at any time for reconsideration by Subcommittee members. Groups are encouraged to use this formative assessment process throughout the year to improve plans and to keep lines of communication open. Groups are always encouraged to remain in constant contact with their Chapter Advocate, who should be the primary source of feedback about your plans.

Some groups will be required to resubmit plans if the Subcommittee did not consider the current plan to be likely to lead to accreditation at the end of the year. Such groups have until **4:00 p.m. on Monday, March 31, 2008**, to resubmit their plans to the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs (Wilson Commons 201) for further review. Groups who must resubmit their plans will be notified of this fact under the "specific feedback, recommendations, and requirements" section below.

Common Comments and Suggestions on 2007 Annual Report

Annual Report reflects need for increased connection with The College.

Comment:

Being College-centered means that groups are aware of and support The College's mission and programs. It also means that they take advantage of College programs. One of the bigger changes intended through the Expectations for Excellence program is to increase collaboration with these programs in new and creative ways. Many groups lacked this focus and seemed to focus on external constituencies too much. Not every program or event has to be connected intimately with The College, but the plans of the group should reflect a focus on the fact that it is part of the college community.

Suggestion:

For those groups who cannot think of many connections, one idea may be to canvas the membership with regard to where interests and involvements are, and to encourage these members to use their interests and involvements to create a better connection to The College. For groups living in the residential areas, your surrounding community and its Residential Life staff present excellent opportunities for collaborations. Working with the Rochester Center for Community Leadership, Learning Assistance Services, University Health Services, to name a few, and other offices on campus can assist with the continued positive development of the chapter and an increased connection to The College and its resources. The Office of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs staff is available to assist your chapter with making these connections.

Annual Report reflects need for specificity.

Comment:

Many groups submitted plans for policy changes, programs, and events without establishing clear evidence within their annual report that these efforts were implemented and/or how they were executed.

Suggestion:

The chapters would benefit from clearly identifying the date, time, and location programs were hosted. Chapters are also encouraged to include the number of participants in the programs the chapter hosted in order to quantify results. Including examples of newly developed policies in your Expectations for Excellence folder would also be helpful for the committee to review during the Accreditation process.

Annual Report reflects need for greater diversity

Comment:

Many organizations self-identified as lacking in sufficient collaborative efforts focused in the area of diversity and noted a desire for increased incorporation of diversity in their programming efforts.

Suggestion:

Chapters would benefit from broadening their event co-sponsorship to groups they have not worked with before. This may also assist the chapter in increasing the memberships' interest in learning about others that could help to focus your programming. Chapters may also want to consider expanding their work with multicultural groups to increase their knowledge of more cultures and enhance their work in the area of diversity education. It is recommended that chapters work with offices like the Office of Minority Student Affairs for assistance in this area. Chapters would also benefit from reviewing their own membership and increasing its diversity.

Common Comments and Suggestions on 2008 Plan

Plan Reads Too Much Like an Annual Report

Comment:

Many plans contained information about what had happened in 2006. The Subcommittee was much more interested in what you were planning for the upcoming year. In many cases, groups are planning the same or similar events.

Suggestion:

It is fine to repeat events from year to year, especially if your intent is to improve upon a program or to make a successful event even more successful. Re-read your plan to ensure that it is future-oriented, and consider the possibility of resubmission even if it is not required.

Lack of Specificity

Comment:

Many groups submitted general plans for policy changes, programs, and events without establishing clear timelines and responsibilities. Such plans are more difficult to implement, as individuals have no clear sense of who is responsible for implementing tasks and exactly when the tasks are supposed to be accomplished. As plans change, groups can adjust timelines and responsibilities. Vague plans often lead groups to procrastinate until the last minute, when such plans get implemented hurriedly, frequently during the least effective period of the year, and especially when other groups are attempting to do the same thing.

Suggestion:

Identify what actions need to be accomplished. Assign individuals or groups to each action, and establish a target date by which that action needs to be accomplished. Require that responsible individuals regularly update membership on progress.

Lack of College Connection

Comment:

Being College-centered means that groups are aware of and support The College's mission and programs. It also means that they take advantage of College programs. One of the bigger changes intended through the Expectations for Excellence program is to increase collaboration with these programs in new and creative ways. Many groups lacked this focus and seemed to focus on external constituencies too much. Not every program or event has to be connected intimately with The College, but the plans of the group should reflect a focus on the fact that it is part of the college community.

Suggestion:

In many cases, members of the Subcommittee knew of a fraternity or sorority which has a better connection with The College than that which was listed in the organization's plans. If your organization feels like this may be the case, then a simple review of the objective statements in the Expectations document and a resubmission of altered plans may be appropriate. For those groups who cannot think of many connections, one idea may be to canvas the membership with regard to where interests and involvements are, and to encourage these members to use their interests and involvements to create a better connection to The College. For groups living in the residential areas, your surrounding community and its Residential Life staff present excellent opportunities for collaborations. Develop some specific plans to improve these connections, keeping in mind the feedback about specificity above, and resubmit your plan.

Plan Reflects Improvement without Change

Comment:

Your group was asked to provide a self-rating before and after implementation of your plan. In many cases, groups indicated that they would demonstrate an improvement in rating, but there was no specific plan to improve. In fact, some groups indicated that they would improve simply by continuing to do what they had always done. Intuitively, this is extremely unlikely.

Suggestion:

Groups have two basic options: change the rating to reflect no improvement, or develop a plan to change. Either is acceptable as far as the Subcommittee is concerned. It would be impossible for every group to improve upon every category every year. Groups should carefully pick the areas where they themselves are most interested in improvement, and plan accordingly. Planning to prioritize one area for change over another and accurately rating themselves in all categories based upon these plans are indications of a group that has become self-aware.

Specific Feedback, Recommendations, and Requirements

Each chapter will receive feedback specific to their organization and any related requirements in this section.