



# CORNERSTONES

THE MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OF ACACIA FRATERNITY

PROGRAM GUIDE: A STARTING POINT FOR  
UNDERSTANDING THE CORNERSTONES PROGRAM

Cornerstones  
The Membership Development Program of Acacia Fraternity

## Program Guide



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## About Acacia Fraternity

Acacia Fraternity, founded in 1904 at the University of Michigan, is a non-profit organization headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana, with chapters across North America. The headquarters staff serves as the pleasure of the International Council of Acacia Fraternity, which is elected by the International Conclave which meets every two years. Representatives from the local chapters of Acacia Fraternity constitute the International Conclave - each chapter represented by the undergraduate chapter president (Venerable Dean) and the alumni advisor (Chapter Advisor).

Acacia Fraternity has been the vehicle by which many young men have learned and improved their leadership skills, participated in human service activities, and prepared for a role of great importance in their communities.

The core values of Acacia Fraternity are Virtue, Knowledge, and Truth.

The mission of Acacia Fraternity is :

- A - Academic achievement and betterment of ourselves through participation in student activities
- C - Community service to better the lives of everyone who comes in contact with the Acacia Fraternity
- A - Acquire leadership skills to become more involved with and have a greater influence in society
- C - Character building experiences which bring about maturity, integrity, and a sense of responsibility
- I - Individual development which instills personal confidence in every social arena, and
- A - Ability to attract and retain people who represent and believe in these Acacian values

The vision of Acacia Fraternity is : “Preparing Tomorrow’s Leaders”

The motto of Acacia Fraternity is “Human Service”

## About This Book

This book is meant to contain all of the conceptual frameworks that are important to the Cornerstones membership development program and is still a work in progress. You will find information on how alumni can become involved in the program and how our chapters can apply for pilot membership in the program. Please contact Patrick McGovern Director of Membership Development, at [pmcgovern@acacia.org](mailto:pmcgovern@acacia.org) with any comments or questions.



## Cornerstones Mission

To provide a framework for continuous, outside-the-classroom learning and personal development for our active members in the areas of Intellectual Growth, Social Awareness, and Physical Well-Being. Through effective deployment of human resources, technology, and positive reinforcement, Cornerstones benefits the individual, the chapter, the campus on which the chapter resides, and Acacia Fraternity.

## Cornerstones Vision

Acacia Fraternity is dedicated to:

- empowering scholars to gain knowledge about a diversity of subjects,
- developing gentlemen who understand and demonstrate social responsibility, and
- encouraging athletes to always seek improvement in their physical fitness and personal wellness.

As such, the vision of the Cornerstones program is *a purposeful, transformational learning experience for each individual member.*

*purposeful* - having or showing determination or resolve; intentional, having a useful purpose

*transformational* - learning which empowers students to “learn to negotiate and act on their own purposes, values, feelings, and meanings rather than those they have uncritically assimilated from others” (Mezirow 2000, 8).

“Men with aspiration for a position in the foreground, whether it be athletic, political, literary or dramatic fields, are the men who will develop the organization into the most forceful group on campus.”

- Brother William G. Mann, Iowa State



## Cornerstones History

Adopted by the 54<sup>th</sup> Conclave in St. Louis, Missouri, the then titled “Membership Development Program” became Acacia Fraternity’s first strategic initiative to grow out of our Strategic Plan, *Rising to the Challenge*. With goals of improving member education, strengthening recruitment, and increased alumni involvement – this new initiative covers a full range of fraternal operations. As the Spring semester of 2007 began, the Headquarters Staff began to work with six (6) pilot chapters on implementing this program framework. The Cornerstones name itself was adopted by the International Council in July of 2007, giving our fraternity a very important piece of the puzzle – a marketable brand. With the brand in place, the Headquarters Staff worked to finalize this manual and other marketing materials to explain the program.

Today the program continues to grow and adapt to the needs of our membership. Each chapter that has began implementation has seen positive results – either in the way of more accountable members, an “ace in the hole” for recruitment, better role clarity for alumni members, or all three combined.

Is this program the solution to every issue in a chapter? No.

Will the program framework itself require intense effort on the part of actives and alumni? Yes.

Does the program itself represent a move in the right direction? Yes it does, as our pilot chapters continue to improve man by man.

We continue to be the authors of our destiny, we continue striving toward “Human Service”, and we continue demonstrating our relevance in a new century of existence.

### *Important Dates in Cornerstones History*

- ✓ August 2006 - Membership Development Program adopted by 54th Conclave in St. Louis, MO
- ✓ September 2006 - Fraternity hires Patrick McGovern as first-ever Director of Membership Development
- ✓ January 2007 - HQ Staff begins working with 6 pilot chapters at Univ. of Illinois, Purdue Univ., Univ. of Texas, Iowa State Univ., Kansas State Univ., and Oregon State Univ.
- ✓ July 2007 - MDP becomes known as “Cornerstones”
- ✓ July 2007 - Fraternity hires Michael Pastko as Director of Communications
- ✓ August 2007 - Fraternity publishes updated program manual with Cornerstones logo; program brochure published
- ✓ January 2008 - HQ Staff begins working with 3 more pilot chapters at Univ. of California-Berkeley, Univ. of Nebraska, and California Univ. of Pennsylvania
- ✓ January 2008 - Website at [www.gatesofsamos.org](http://www.gatesofsamos.org) goes live
- ✓ August 2008 - Cornerstones is featured presentation at the 55th Conclave in Louisville, KY
- ✓ Fall 2008 - HQ Staff works on expansion projects at Univ. of Colorado and Washington State Univ.; colonies begin to implement Cornerstones
- ✓ Spring 2009 - HQ Staff works to integrate Cornerstones program with existing local pledge programs and the “Spirit of Excellence” Chapter Standards Program

## Acacia Values

The *Cornerstones* program is not a new set of ideals as much as it is a recommitment to Acacia values utilizing the language and technology of today. Our focus is the same as it always has been, but we are exemplifying this focus in new ways. The guiding principles of Acacia Fraternity are Virtue, Knowledge, and Truth – and we can see these principles in action through Cornerstones activity. By maintaining a focus on these values, Acacia Fraternity will continue to stand the test of time.

A focus on Acacia’s guiding principles, or values, will be at the forefront of all Cornerstones activity. This will involve a proactive effort amongst actives and alumni at each pilot chapter, an effort that may challenge the comfort zone of each participant.

The importance of making our values known during recruitment cannot be understated. Our actions at the chapter level should be constantly measured with the simple question, “Are our actions fully congruent with our values of Virtue, Knowledge, and Truth?” If they are not, it is our responsibility as Acacians to make the necessary changes to get back on track.



## Cornerstones Program Philosophy

### **1. Acacia Fraternity will maintain relevance in the 21st century.**

As always, the fraternity community is adapting to the challenges of today's world. Two movements, known specifically as the "Fraternal Relevance Movement" and "A Call for Values Congruence" call for all fraternities to more clearly demonstrate their positive value - in the lives of our members and in the community of which we are a part. Our work on the Cornerstones program indicates our willingness to participate and lead in those adaptations.

### **2. Members of Acacia Fraternity will continue to strive to be Distinctive Leaders of Mankind.**

*Bloom's Taxonomy*, a theory of human development/education, identifies increasingly complex levels of learning in three domains: the *cognitive* (what we know), the *affective* (who we are), and the *psychomotor* (what we can do). An important premise of *Bloom's Taxonomy* is that each level, within each domain, must be mastered before progressing to the next, and these levels increase in difficulty. The same goes for the Cornerstones program, in that students are urged to always take stock of "where they are" and make a plan to get to "where they're going".

### **3. Acacia Fraternity should assist our members in establishing a moral compass.**

A moral compass can be thought of as "the place to which we look before we make choices". The values of Acacia - Virtue, Knowledge, and Truth - should be near and dear to each member, and should help inform us as we set the course of our life's journey.

### **4. Active membership is much more fleeting than alumni membership.**

You may only be an active member of Acacia for two or three years, but your alumni membership is much more substantial in terms of years. As such, the fraternity seeks to assist our members in building skills during the undergraduate experience that will be of value in the members personal and professional life after graduation.

### **5. Members of Acacia Fraternity will have a strong sense of identity.**

Helping our members achieve self-awareness and group identification will be of great value in their lives.

### **6. A chapter that utilizes a values-based, dynamic recruitment model, with activities in all "6 cylinders of recruitment\*" has a far greater chance of achieving operational success and financial self-sustainability, which will make the program easier to operate.**

While the Cornerstones program is not a recruitment program per se, dedication to program activities will strengthen the members of the chapter which should then make the chapters recruitment efforts more effective.

\*(Referrals, Summer Recruitment, Member Positioning, Membership Drives, Marketing for Names, and Formal Recruitment), from *Good Guys: the 8 Steps to Limitless Potential for Fraternity Recruitment* by Phired Up Productions [www.phiredup.com](http://www.phiredup.com)

## Cornerstones Personal Philosophy

Each member of the chapter should be presented with this set of statements to clarify what “being active in the Cornerstones program” includes. It may be helpful to have each new member and active member agree to this philosophy at the beginning of each academic term. This philosophy should be used alongside *An Acacian’s Pledge* to set proper expectations for each member.

*As a member of Acacia Fraternity, engaged in the pursuit of Knowledge, I ...*

1. Am responsible for my own learning and development.
2. Value continuous learning.
3. Believe that values-based, dynamic recruitment is the most effective way to ensure that our chapter initiates men who will bring credit to the Acacia name.
4. Know that change is the only constant.
5. Will strive for *transformational learning*\* and rely on a structured reflection process to grow as an individual.
6. Recognize the importance of goal setting and will always keep my goals updated so that at any give time, I can answer the question, “What are you working on?”
7. Value keeping my schedule organized, and I rely on a calendar to help me achieve goals. I can at any time answer the question, “What Cornerstones activities are you working on this month?”

\**Transformational learning* empowers students to “learn to negotiate and act on their own purposes, values, feelings, and meanings rather than those they have uncritically assimilated from others” (Mezirow 2000, 8).

\*This implies that “I may not always realize the value of an activity at the moment I am participating, but I will capture my thoughts in a reflection, either on [www.gatesofsamos.org](http://www.gatesofsamos.org) or in my own personal journal.”

Mezirow, J. Ed. 2000. *Learning as transformation: Critical perspectives on a theory in progress*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

## Personal Leadership

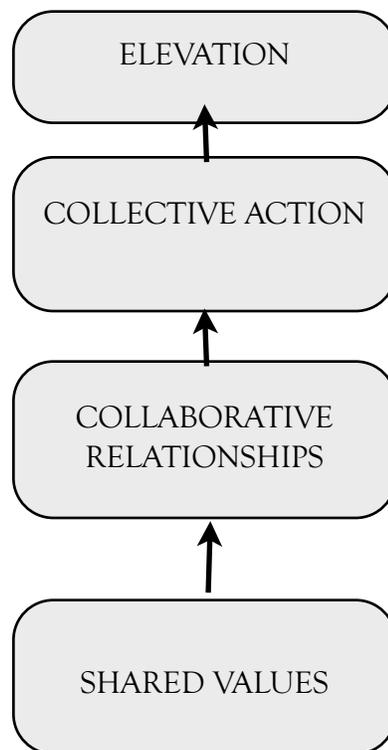
“There are risks and costs to a program of action, but they are far less than the long-range risks and costs of comfortable inaction.”

-President John. F. Kennedy

The Cornerstones program is, at its core, a method of encouraging our members to always be seeking improvement of themselves, their communities, their relationships.

The North- American Interfraternity Conference ( [www.nicindy.org](http://www.nicindy.org) ), of which Acacia Fraternity was a founding member in 1906, uses the following definition of leadership:

“Leadership is a process that occurs when shared values foster collaborative relationships that lead to collective action intended to elevate an organization, cause, or community.” - Adapted from the Higher Education Research Institute (UCLA)



The intention of the Cornerstones program is to provide guidance for the individual member, to assist him in clarifying his personal values, and to encourage him to take action in the community based on the shared values and relationships that he will gain in Acacia Fraternity.

## Six Intended Outcomes of Cornerstones

### **One: Intellectual Growth**

The achievement of intellectual excellence, while maintaining intellectual integrity is a key principle of Acacia Fraternity. Individual members will complete several benchmarks designed to enhance academic achievement, awareness of spirituality, an appreciation of the arts, and a clear understanding of fraternal heritage.

### **Two: Social Awareness**

Psychologist Daniel Goleman defines *social awareness* as “what we sense about others”, and *social facility* as “what we then do with that awareness.” The first step toward making an impact in our community is to be aware of the struggles and/or successes of others. Only then may we take action based on that awareness.

### **Three: Physical Well-being**

In addition to intellectual and social development, Cornerstones introduces a physical development component as well. When we look to our mentor, Pythagoras, we see that he established the first university in the world, as well as the first gymnasium, and we know that he emphasized the importance of both.

### **Four: Values-based Member Recruitment**

The process of identifying, recruiting, and affiliating men year after year is a critical responsibility of chapter leadership. The chapter must have clear values-based selection criteria and alcohol-free recruitment events. Cornerstones calls for a total membership education program that is designed to attract the campus’ best and brightest gentlemen, scholars, and athletes.

### **Five: Alumni Involvement**

An effective network of Level Advisors is critical to the success of the program. In addition to those who serve as members of the housing corporation board, Cornerstones provides opportunities for alumni of all ages to advise the undergraduate members in all aspects of fraternal life. Level Advisors can enrich the intellectual culture of the chapter, as well as assist the other advisory teams with the administration of the chapter affairs.

### **Six: Lifelong Fraternal Brotherhood**

Acacia Fraternity recognizes that the years spent as an undergraduate are only the beginning of what will be a lifetime of opportunities to enjoy Acacia with our brothers. The role of Level Advisor provides an additional avenue through which alumni may serve an advising role immediately following their undergraduate years. By offering the opportunity to volunteer in this manner, the intention is to keep more alumni members connected to one another and to the fraternity, and to build a more meaningful association over the years. The intent of the program is to develop a more clear and consistent pathway to involvement as an alumni member, and to help facilitate a more active alumni component to our membership.

## Self-Authorship

Our mission declares that the Cornerstones program provides a framework for personal development. One aspect of that development is becoming more comfortable with self-authorship. Self-authorship can be defined as “the capacity to internally generate beliefs, values, identity and social relations” (Baxter Magolda 2001). This is a critical point in the Cornerstones program, as we intend to provide the experiences for an active member that will help him not only live in today’s world, but also be comfortable and confident in the choices that he makes over the course of his life.

Self-authorship requires “transformational learning”, which empowers students to “learn to negotiate and act on their own purposes, values, feelings, and meanings rather than those they have uncritically assimilated from others” (Mezirow 2000, 8). To support transformational learning is to live out the statement “...to give light to those with whom we may be associated as we travel along life’s pathway.”



## Threefold Impact

The power of this programming resides in the way that Acacia Fraternity is dedicated to delivering upon our motto, 'Human Service'. The potential impact of the program is three-fold.

First, individuals at the chapter level will be setting goals and making agreements with one another to live according to higher standards and to demonstrate the values of Acacia. This creates a more tangible level of accountability amongst the brothers and drives each brother to give his best effort so that the chapter may enjoy the benefits of focused determination for improvement.

Secondly, when a chapter begins to implement the program, they will by design become a stronger chapter, which makes for a stronger Greek community on their campus. The fellow chapters and university staff on a particular campus will see that our chapter is striving for a better membership experience, and this will inspire our fellow fraternity men and sorority women to likewise work as hard as they can toward improving the overall impact of the Greek community.

Thirdly, another major aspect of the program is that it will demonstrate to the entire campus community that Acacia Fraternity is not satisfied with the status quo of the past for fraternity life. In doing so, our message will appeal to a wider group of students and, as mentioned before, this will strengthen our ability to recruit high quality members that might not otherwise have joined. The benefits of the Cornerstones program reach beyond those mentioned here, and will be more fully realized as a chapter more fully engages this initiative.



## Recruiting for Excellence

One of the primary benefits of the Cornerstones program is that it reinforces *values-based selection criteria* for membership. Using values-based selection criteria is part of a strategy for chapters to identify their core values and then recruit new members based on demonstrated behavior.

For instance, a chapter might identify *academic excellence* as one of their values. The chapter would then establish a *standard* that would demonstrate to what extent a prospective member lives up to the value of academic excellence, i.e. the recruit has a 3.0 GPA or above. (See the Membership Recruitment Gold Book for more information about values-based selection criteria.)

The difference in this sort of selection criteria is that it is a departure from the all-too-often-used statement, “He’s a good guy. Let’s give him a bid.” Our chapters should strive to identify their values and corresponding standards for selection in advance of the recruitment process so that they are prepared to welcome as many worthy brothers as possible.

Further resources are available from the Headquarters Staff to assist you in incorporating the Cornerstones program into your recruitment plans. The key to your success will be how knowledgeable each member of the chapter is about how the program can benefit a prospective member, and how prepared your members are to answer questions about why Acacia Fraternity is right for them.



## “What’s in it for me?”

The popular question in this category is, “What’s in it for me? Why should I work on continuous learning?” Each member truly must find the answer to those questions on his own. However, our work on the program thus far has shown us a few general rules that are worth mentioning.

Rule #1: The greatest reward of the program will be the insights gained by each individual who devotes himself to this process of continuous learning.

Rule #2: The brothers that will derive the most value from program activities will be those brothers that invest of themselves to the greatest extent.

Rule #3: Any monetary or tangible rewards that come from Cornerstones will reinforce the success of the student, but should be considered secondary to the personal growth that will be occurring

The Acacia Fraternity Foundation has approved a \$1000 scholarship to be awarded annually to the “top performer in the Cornerstones program at each Cornerstones chapter.” These scholarships are awarded each summer with the other AFF scholarship.

In the future, Acacia Fraternity hopes to offer more Cornerstones scholarships and special educational opportunities to those members that choose to challenge themselves to the highest levels of personal development.

For more information about the Acacia Fraternity Foundation, visit [http://www.acacia.org/foundation\\_about.php](http://www.acacia.org/foundation_about.php)



## Challenging Traditions

The Cornerstones program offers an opportunity for a chapter to increase the meaningful, productive aspects of fraternity life while filling the space and time that may have once been filled with unhealthy traditions. At some point in our lives, we have all asked a question along the lines of, “Why do we do things this way?” Chances are, that in at least one of those occasions we have received a reply along the lines of, “Well, we’ve always done it this way.” Over the past 30+ years, the fraternity system has faced intense public scrutiny based on a perception of, and often corresponding proof of, the fact that we do not always live up to our espoused values. Hazing allegations and instances, binge drinking to the point of death, and other ugly traditions have marred public perception of fraternities time and again. Of course, we do know that often these instances are extreme examples that do not represent an accurate picture of fraternity life; however we must also acknowledge that we, as a community, have room to improve if these problems exist whatsoever.

The Cornerstones program is not only a framework within which an individual grows, but it can also provide a struggling chapter with a gameplan for how to change things for the better. The program calls for a 6 - 8 week pledgship model and much continuing education of our members. The program calls for an active study of and respect for the Ritual of Acacia. The program asks individual members to reflect on the membership experience. The intent is to create a series of “eureka” moments for the individual member so that he may understand in his heart what it means to truly live for our Acacia Values.



## Developmental Progress

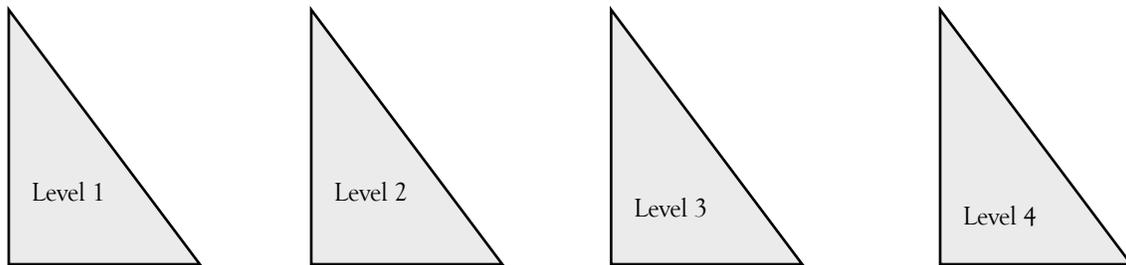
“A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.”

-Sir Winston Churchill

Each year, the active member of Acacia should be taking on more complex challenges - and the Cornerstones program simply encourages him to reflect on and analyze his experiences, and track them in one of a few ways.

Any developmental program will emphasize the attainment of new knowledge, skills, and attitudes, or “what we know”, “what we can do”, and “who we are”.

The three primary learning outcomes of Cornerstones relate to Intellectual Growth, Social Awareness & Responsibility, and Physical Well-being. At each new level the active member is invited to challenge himself to attain his goals, and set himself on a path of personal fulfillment.



Level 1 - Adjust to the chapter and campus community; clarify values; set goals in time management & organization; Gain knowledge of brotherhood, fraternity  
Time estimate: (6-8 weeks)

Level 2 - Develop life plans/goals; learn in depth about chapter officer positions; community involvement. Time estimate: (1 term - 1 year)

Level 3 - Develop leadership and mentoring skills; learn to teach others  
Time estimate: (1 term - 1 year)

Level 4 - Utilize skills to encourage & challenge younger members; prepare to continue development in professional world. Time estimate: (until graduation)

## Keeping On Track

The Cornerstones website, [www.gatesofsamos.org](http://www.gatesofsamos.org), is the primary means of communication between undergraduates and Level Advisors. Managed at the Executive Staff level, the website allows users to join the program as Student Members, Level Advisors, or Career Development Mentors.

Every activity listed in the program level outlines is backed by an interactive form on the website. The forms allow students to describe their experiences and explain the benefits gained from each activity. Level Advisors then review these entries to deliver feedback and confirmation of activity completion. Once an individual student completes all necessary activities within a level, the Level Advisor will meet with the chapter's Cornerstones Chairman to grant access to the next level.

### Creating your own Activity

While the Cornerstones program curriculum provides a complete development track, with carefully selected activities and reflection questions, it is recognized that we have not covered all of the possible activities that may suffice to provide the student with a transformative learning experience.

To that end, the Headquarters Staff encourages members to come up with alternate activities that would suitably replace any of the curriculum requirements. Only after having been approved by the Level Advisor is an alternative activity acceptable.

An email should be sent to the Level Advisor explaining the change in activity that the student is suggesting. The Level Advisor will then assess its relevance and approve or disapprove the activity. The student will simply notate the change in the text field of the website, i.e. "I completed an approved alternate activity for this requirement; and it was to...." They will then respond to the question, "How was this experience meaningful to you, and how will you incorporate what you learned?"



## Importance of the Calendar

One of the most important aspects of Cornerstones program success is time management, at the chapter level and the individual level. This is not a recommendation to necessarily have a separate calendar from the primary chapter calendar, but it is a recommendation that the following practices become a part of the chapter culture.

1. The Cornerstones Chairman posts a calendar of potential development activities that are offered by various groups at the university, also including any group activities that are scheduled at the chapter house. These activities should be updated weekly so that members can, at any time, find reasonable activities that would qualify for program progress.
2. Every member of the chapter brings their own personal calendar (or dayplanner or iCalendar) to every chapter meeting, in order to write down important dates so that they can manage their time well, and plan for any chapter activities that will take a significant amount of time.
3. Every member of the chapter checks the calendar of potential development activities once per week and plans to complete one development activity and one reflection online ([www.gatesofsamos.org](http://www.gatesofsamos.org)) per week.



## Alumni Volunteer Positions

“Many hands make light work.” - John Heywood

As our Fraternity has seen over the years, the more Acacians we can get working cooperatively, the more progress we can make toward our motto, “Human Service.” This initiative is an effort to strengthen our ability to deliver upon the promised “networking opportunities” in the Fraternity. Every undergraduate hears this concept discussed during recruitment. We hope to make this concept more of a tangible reality, and continue to improve the lives of our brothers.

Alumni contribute “time, talent, & treasure” - as Darold Larson would say - within the fraternity and play a greater role in Acacia through Cornerstones. Two new alumni volunteer positions are commencing to provide support and increase involvement in conjunction with the program. These volunteer positions are: “Level Advisor” and “Career Development Mentor/ CDM.”

Level Advisors	Career Development Mentors
Responsible for guidance of individual active member working on their Cornerstones activities	Considered a resource regarding career aspirations and professional development
Should plan to spend 30-60 minutes per week on Cornerstones communications	Can provide insights, feedback, professional contacts, internship/job opportunities, references, recommendations
Minimum of 4 Level Advisors needed for each chapter - with one Lead Level Advisor	Not involved in the “day-to-day” Cornerstones operations, but more of a specific resource when an active brother is in need of career guidance



## Membership Development Chapter Standards

The Cornerstones program is the new model for member education/development. In the past, Acacia Fraternity has published a set of chapter standards (in *The Spirit of Excellence Chapter Standards Program*) related to “pledge education”. The list below reflects an update of those standards. This list should be used to evaluate the chapters efforts in membership development.

The chapter completes a written “pledge education supplemental document” and submits it to Acacia Headquarters before the start of each term, including:

- schedule of events: Ritual dates, recruitment, brotherhood, development
  - goals/objectives of the pledge education program
  - local history
  - local fraternity and sorority information
  - fraternity and sorority terminology
  - Acacia Fraternity’s Anti-Hazing Policy
  - An Acacian’s Pledge
  - 47th problem of Euclid
  - local chapter crisis management procedures
  - contact info: Acacia HQ, Chapter Advisor and House Corporation Board President, all chapter council members, greek affairs office
- 
- The chapter's “pledge education supplemental document” to the Pythagoras membership manual is distributed to each pledge/new member
  - The pledge education program is to last between 8 - 10 weeks, at which point the chapter should be ready to initiate new brothers
  - The Pythagoras membership manual is distributed to each pledge/ new member, and the member is allowed to keep his copy of the manual after initiation
  - The pledge education program is coordinated with the activities found in Level One of the Cornerstones program to the extent that a pledge/new member would be approximately 75% complete with Level One expectations by the time he is initiated, and could easily complete the remainder of the requirements on his own time
  - The chapter adheres to all International Fraternity, local, state, federal, college/university laws on hazing
  - The pledge program incorporates a mentor that has advanced to Level Two, Three or Four of the Cornerstones program (this is in addition to the big-brother, little brother program)
  - The chapter maintains a calendar of events/activities in a public place in the chapter house, and online. This calendar should include entries submitted by the Cornerstones Chairman to designate any on-campus or in-the-community activities that brothers may participate in to complete Cornerstones program requirements on their own.
  - The chapter provides the url to calendar website to Acacia Headquarters ([acacianat@acacia.org](mailto:acacianat@acacia.org))
  - The chapter completes all “beginning of semester”, “end of semester”, and “monthly” reports and submits to Acacia Headquarters according to the appropriate timeline

## Interplay with Other Chapter Standards

The following chapter standards are not specifically grouped in the area of member development, however, these standards should be treated as if: *“The Cornerstones program will have a much greater chance at success if these standards are met by the chapter.”* In other words, as the Cornerstones Chairman, you should collaborate with your fellow chapter council members to ensure that these standards are met, in order to give the active chapter the best chance at achieving success.

Area of Operations	Standard
Academics	Recruitment methods are established and utilized to attract academically able students
Alumni Advisory Program	The Level Advisors meet all standards stated in the Level Advisors Gold Book
	An alumni Advisory Board that meets regularly to assist in development of chapter programming
Campus & Community Involvement	At least 75% of the members are actively involved in campus organizations and/or activities (other than intramural sports), including the campus leadership positions above
Chapter Operations	The chapter maintains at least an 80% new member initiation rate
	The chapter establishes goals at the start of each academic term
	Follow-up accountability and evaluation of all goals and written programs
	The following committees are in place and functioning (at minimum): Committee on Initiation (effective use of Ritual) Committee on Membership Recruitment Committee on Membership Development Committee on Human Service Committee on Alumni Affairs
	Development and orderly, regular maintenance and updating of chapter officer manuals
College/University Relations	The leadership of the chapter meets with the campus Greek Advisor at least once per term
Community Relations	Maintenance of positive relations and communications with neighbors and the community
House/Property Management	The chapter maintains high standards of cleanliness and upkeep of the facility, including public, private, and individual areas
Human Service	The chapter coordinates an individual Volunteer Service Program with each member involved at some point during the academic year

Area of Operations	Standard
Internal Harmony	The chapter hosts creative activities scheduled regularly to build morale, spirit and self confidence and to help discourage development of actions and cliques within the chapter
International Fraternity Identity	<p>The chapter completes all administrative reports in a timely manner to the International Headquarters, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reporting of new members</li> <li>○ Reporting of completion of Cornerstones activities</li> <li>○ Reporting of initiations</li> <li>○ Reporting of chapter elections</li> <li>○ Annual review of the chapter roster</li> <li>○ Monthly financial report</li> </ul>
Membership Recruitment	Training in recruitment included in pledge education and chapter education
	The chapter website has an updated section devoted to potential new members
	The chapter has written procedures for membership selection
Risk Management	The chapter conducts at least one risk management education program per term
Ritual Exemplification	All degrees of Initiation Ritual are conducted at each initiation with strict adherence to written Acacia Ritual
	All degrees of the Ritual are properly and thoroughly prepared and rehearsed. Where appropriate, the Ritual is completely memorized
	All pre-initiation activities are in harmony with pledge education and initiation degrees.
	Following each Ritual ceremony/degree, the chapter conducts a post-initiation review and discussion
Social Programming	The chapter has a healthy balance in social programming with respect to scholastics and service



## Role Descriptions & Areas of Responsibility

### Student

*Role Description:* I will progress through each level of Cornerstones in order to better myself intellectually, socially, and physically. My role as a Student is to keep an open mind to new ideas, set goals for personal development, work diligently to achieve my goals, and to seek and accept guidance from my Student Mentor, Level Advisor, and my chapter's Cornerstones Chairman or Cornerstones Committee members.

Areas of Responsibility	Actions in this Area
1. Initial meeting with your Student Mentor	Establish relationship and learn expectations for level advancement
	Review level objective and outline of activities
	Make preliminary choices for level activities
	Set goals (according to goal setting guidelines in manual) and create an action plan with deadlines
	Email copies of goals and action plans to your Student Mentor, your Level Advisor, and the Cornerstones Chairman (or Senior Dean); submit goals online
2. Informal, weekly meetings with your Student Mentor	Further develop rapport and build relationship
	Discuss level progress with specific attention to selected activities
3. Communication with your Level Advisor	Submit online activity completion forms for approval
	Print approved activity completion forms for personal record-keeping
	Use discussion forums on facebook or regular email to discuss membership development issues and career, fraternity, or personal matters
4. Communication with Cornerstones Chairman	Seek insight and discuss plans and ideas for chapter programming
	Discuss issues or concerns about your Student Mentor or Level Advisor

## Student Mentor

*Role Description:* As a part of my own personal development, I recognize the need to share my acquired knowledge with less experienced individuals. I will guide another Student by helping him set goals and developing a plan to reach them. I will encourage him to reach his fullest potential by holding him accountable for his own advancement. I will monitor his progress through the activities specified in each level outline and ensure he completes his online submissions to his level advisor. I will meet monthly with my chapter's Cornerstones Chairman or Cornerstones Committee members to report on the progress of my Student.

Areas of Responsibility	Actions in this Area
1. Initial meeting with student	Establish relationship and explain expectations for level advancement
	Review level objective and outline of activities
	Help student make preliminary choices for level activities
	Assist in your student's goal-setting and forming an action plan; make sure you, your Student, and the Cornerstones Chairman receive printed and digital copies
2. Informal, weekly meetings with your Student	Further develop your relationship with your Student, making him feel comfortable meeting with you anytime for any reason
	Discuss level progress with specific attention to selected level activities.
3. Monthly summary	Review your Student's progress through the program with the Cornerstones Chairman or Committee on a monthly basis.

## Cornerstones Chairman

*Role Description:* I have accepted the great responsibility of serving as my chapter's Cornerstones Chairman. If my chapter chooses to elect a Cornerstones Committee, I will coordinate activities of the committee and lead my fellow committee members in weekly meetings. I will assist Students and Student Mentors in establishing their relationships, meet monthly with Student Mentors to assess Students' progress, and give guidance to Student Mentors at all times. I will assist chapter members in establishing chapter-wide and level-specific programming. I will communicate frequently with Level Advisors and determine with them a Student's advancement or delay in advancing to the next level of the program. I will communicate with and report to the International Headquarters of Acacia Fraternity as necessary.

Areas of Responsibility	Actions in this Area
1. Monitor program progress via <a href="http://www.gatesofsamos.org">www.gatesofsamos.org</a>	Use online administrator access to monitor progress of all Students
	Maintain list of brothers who are not fulfilling program expectations in timely manner
	Set individual meetings with brothers not fulfilling program expectations in timely manner to determine a course of action
2. Communicate with Level Advisors	Determine Students' advancement or delay in reaching the next level of the program
	Complete documentation for level advancement, if applicable
3. Lead the Cornerstones Committee	Lead weekly meetings
	Coordinate committee members to get Cornerstones activities scheduled
	Fulfill duties of Cornerstones Committee members as outlined
4. Communicate with Acacia HQ	Complete and submit a monthly report of Cornerstones activity, outlining chapter activities and individual activities
	Supply feedback from the local chapter to Acacia HQ



## Cornerstones Committee members

*Role Description:* Working with the entire Cornerstones Committee, I will assist Students and Student Mentors in establishing their relationships, meet regularly with Student Mentors to assess Students' progress, and give guidance. I will assist chapter members in establishing chapter-wide and level-specific programming. I will meet frequently with the Cornerstones Chairman and communicate regularly with Level Advisors.

Areas of Responsibility	Actions in this Area
1. Support Student Mentors	Assist Students and Student Mentors in establishing their initial relationships
	Meet monthly with Student Mentors to discuss their Students' progress
	Provide guidance to Student Mentors at all times
2. Participate in committee meetings	Actively participate in weekly committee meetings
	Take action on any steps necessary to facilitating productive Cornerstones program activities
3. Communicate with Level Advisors	Check in weekly with assigned Level Advisors to evaluate the progress of the Students they advise
	Determine if there is any way to include Level Advisors in Cornerstones activity



## Lead Level Advisor

*Role Description:* I will serve as an exemplary Level Advisor, and I will provide and accept feedback from my fellow Level Advisors. I will coordinate any joint effort by the Level Advisors. I will act as the lead point of communication between the Cornerstones operations of the chapter and the International Headquarters of Acacia Fraternity, providing them with information pertaining to chapter participation and making recommendations for the future.

Areas of Responsibility	Actions in that Area
1. Lead the group of Level Advisors	Coordinate any group efforts
	Inform the group of Level Advisors about upcoming Cornerstones activity
	Provide and accept feedback from fellow Level Advisors
	Fulfill the responsibilities of a Level Advisor as outlined
2. Communicate with Acacia HQ	Review and approve the monthly report of Cornerstones activity, completed by the Cornerstones Chairman
	Make recommendations for any additions or deletions to the program curriculum
	Report local issues, challenges, and successes
3. Be a mentor to Cornerstones Chairman	Assist Cornerstones Chairman in goal-setting, action planning, and setting a calendar or schedule of Cornerstones activities
4. Inform fellow chapter alumni of Cornerstones activities	Twice per year submit a report to all chapter alumni regarding program activities



## Level Advisor

*Role Description:* As an alumnus of Acacia Fraternity, I realize both the potential of our active members and the importance of helping them cultivate it. My role as a Level Advisor is to guide Students through each level of their development through Cornerstones. I will ensure they have a productive relationship with their Student Mentors, monitor their progression within and advancement through each level, and provide feedback on each member's experiences. I will communicate regularly with the chapter's Cornerstones Chairman and Cornerstones Committee members, and I will discuss advancement or delays in Students' advancement through the program. I will provide and accept feedback from the Lead Level Advisor.

Areas of Responsibility	Actions in this Area
1. Guide Students through the Cornerstones program	Review online activity completion form for approval or needed changes and provide feedback in either scenario
	Ensure a synergistic relationship between Student and Student Mentor
	Personally advise Students on any matter they choose to discuss with you in the online forum, or by any other form of communication.
2. Ensure that your Students have goals set with an action plan in place at all times	After building rapport, begin every meeting or discussion with Student by asking them to provide an update on their current goals and action plans
	Ask that a digital copy of their goals and action plans be emailed to you
3. Communicate with Cornerstones Chairman/ Committee	Discuss level advancement or delays for each Student as necessary
4. Work with fellow Level Advisors to successfully execute program	Provide and accept feedback from the Lead Level Advisor
	Get involved and be a presenter at the chapter house for an educational topic that you know very well



## Community Mentor

*Role Description:* I have been graciously invited by a member of Acacia Fraternity to serve as his Community Mentor as he concludes this stage of his development. I will assist him in setting personal and professional goals and analyze ways to best reach and surpass those goals. I will provide him with guidance that will benefit him beyond his college years. I will be available as a resource for him to discuss personal and professional issues. I will communicate with the chapter's Cornerstones Chairman or his Level Advisor as necessary.

Areas of Responsibility	Actions in this Area
1. Guide a Lever Four brother through his final stage of Cornerstones	Help Student set personal and professional goals and develop plan to achieve them
	Serve as a resource to address personal and professional issues and provide greater perspective
	Meet face-to-face twice per semester or as frequently as possible by other means of communication
2. Communicate with Cornerstones Chairman or Lead Level Advisor	Submit a brief monthly report to summarize the Students progress



## Goal-Setting

One of the primary purposes of the Cornerstones program is to help guide our members toward the achievement of their own personal and professional goals. As such, the very first recommended activity for any member of Acacia Fraternity is to sit down and do some thinking, planning, and preparing to achieve their goals.

On this subject, the experts recommend that you utilize the following three sets of guidelines to write out and achieve your goals:

1. The “Three P’s of Goal Setting” deal specifically with the language you use to write your goals.
2. SMART goals (goals must be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely).
3. The “Goal Achieving Strategy” provides you a strategy for achieving your goals, step-by-step.

### The Three P’s of Goal Setting

When setting a personal goal, the manner in which you write the goal has a huge impact on how quickly and effectively you accomplish that goal. Brian Tracy, one of the world’s top authorities on personal productivity and success offers the following guidelines for writing every goal in your life.

In writing your goal, be sure that they all follow these guidelines. You will notice that for each example below, there is a specific time deadline stated:

- 1) Present Tense – “I earn a salary of \$50,000 by my 25<sup>th</sup> birthday.”
  - a. Each goal should be written as if it has already been achieved. This will trigger your mind to work more efficiently to achieve the goal.
- 2) Positive Language – “I am a non-smoker by January 1, 2010.”
  - a. Again, use positive language “as if” the goal were already completed. This will help your mind do a shift into a mode in which you mentally get used to believing that this goal will be accomplished
- 3) Personal – “I run 5 miles a day, four days per week, by June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009.”
  - a. Always use the word “I”, plus an action verb
  - b. Keep action verb short, simple, sharp



## SMART Goals -

After you have written out your goals using the Three P's of Goal Setting, test your goals against these standards, and ask yourself, "Is this goal specific enough? Is this goal measurable? Is this goal attainable? Is this goal relevant? Have I defined a time element, or set a deadline?"

### Specific

- Good example - "I have earned a 3.5 gpa by December 15th (end of semester)."
- Bad example - "I want to get better grades than I have in the past."

### Measurable

- Good example - "I run 25 miles per week by October 15th."
- Bad example - "I will start working out when I have time, and try to run a few times per week."

### Attainable

- Good example - "I am elected to the Student Senate by October 15th."
- Bad example - "I am elected as President of the United States at some point during my undergraduate career."

### Relevant

- Good example - "I am awarded the Order of Pythagoras by the end of my Senior Year."
- Bad example - "I am known as the top video gamer on the third floor of the fraternity."

### Timely

- Good example - "I have earned a 3.5 gpa by December 15th (end of semester)."
- Bad example - "I will get better grades."

### Goal Achieving Strategy –

- Step One: **Decide exactly what you want.**
  - Gain clarity about what is expected of you, and in what order of priority
  
- Step Two: **Write it down.**
  - A goal or objective that is not in writing is merely a wish or fantasy. It has no energy behind it. Remember the three P's: present, personal, positive. A goal should be in the present tense, use personal language, and positive language. For example, "I am the President of the Interfraternity Council by the beginning of my junior year." Or, "I am the facilitator of an excellent chapter retreat during the first week back to school in the spring."
  
- Step Three: **Set a deadline on your goal.**
  - Set sub-deadlines if necessary. You must assign a time element to make it more real to you.
  
- Step Four: **Make a list of everything you can think of that you are going to have to do to achieve your goal.**
  - As you think of new activities, add them to your list. Keep building your list until it is complete. A list gives you a visual picture of the larger task or objective. It gives you a track to run on.
  
- Step Five: **Organize the list into a plan.**
  - Organize the list based on '*priority*' and '*sequence*'. Decide what you can do now and what you can do later. Decide what needs to be done first and what needs to be done afterwards.
  
- Step Six: **Take action on your plan immediately.**
  - Do something...anything; and you will build the momentum needed to complete the entire goal. An average plan vigorously executed is far better than a brilliant plan on which nothing is done.
  
- Step Seven: **Resolve to do something every single day that moves you toward your major goal.**
  - Build it into your daily schedule. Whatever it is, you must never miss a day.

## Talking “Membership Development” with Interfraternal Partners

Acacia Fraternity is not the first fraternity to create a personal development program to address developmental goals beyond the traditional pledge education process. The first fraternity to see the need for this programming was Sigma Phi Epsilon, creating the Balanced Man Program <http://www.sigep.org/memdev/bmp.asp>. Many of our interfraternal partners have followed that path after seeing the benefits that Sigma Phi Epsilon was gaining from their program, including: higher gpa’s for members, lower incidence of hazing violations, greatly increased community service, greater willingness to be involved as an alumni mentor.

The list below is meant to help you navigate the landscape of this kind of programming, and to help enable you to reach out to other chapter leaders on your campus to compare notes and ideas, share best practices, and work together to create a strong fraternity and sorority community. Try contacting the officers of any of these fraternities and sororities that are on your campus, and develop a collaborative relationship with them. Perhaps you could pair up with another fraternity or sorority that already has activities on their calendar. Perhaps they could host a study skills seminar for all of their new members and your chapters new members; and then your chapter can return the favor by hosting a formal dinner with dining etiquette training. Get creative - and remember that the issues facing your chapter will be very similar to the issues facing others on your campus and around the country.

Organization	Program	Links
Sigma Phi Epsilon	Balanced Man Program	<a href="http://www.sigep.org/memdev/bmp.asp">http://www.sigep.org/memdev/bmp.asp</a>
Sigma Alpha Epsilon	True Gentlemen Initiative	<a href="http://www.truegentlemaninitiative.net/">http://www.truegentlemaninitiative.net/</a>
Phi Delta Theta	Phikeia Education Program	<a href="http://www.phideltatheta.org/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=107&amp;Itemid=324">http://www.phideltatheta.org/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=107&amp;Itemid=324</a>
Beta Theta Pi	Men of Principle	<a href="http://www.betathetapi.org/about-beta/history/men-of-principle">http://www.betathetapi.org/about-beta/history/men-of-principle</a>
Lambda Chi Alpha	Call to Brotherhood	<a href="http://www.lambdachi.org/truebrotherforms.aspx?ekfrm=1254">http://www.lambdachi.org/truebrotherforms.aspx?ekfrm=1254</a>
Pi Kappa Alpha	Pike University	<a href="http://www.pikeuniversity.org/">http://www.pikeuniversity.org/</a>
Pi Kappa Phi	Life 401	<a href="http://www.pikapp.org/programs/life401/">http://www.pikapp.org/programs/life401/</a>
Sigma Nu	LEAD	<a href="http://www.sigmanu.org/programs/lead/index.php">http://www.sigmanu.org/programs/lead/index.php</a>
Theta Xi	Alpha Nine	<a href="http://www.thetaxi.org/Chapters/resources/AlphaNine.php">http://www.thetaxi.org/Chapters/resources/AlphaNine.php</a>

## **A Word on Spirituality Activities**

In the early stages of implementation, there have been questions regarding the activities in the Spirituality category. There has been a concern that Acacia Fraternity might be promoting a certain type of spiritual experience or mandating that our members experience spirituality a certain way. That is not the case. As an Acacian, you have taken an oath “before your God”, and with a hand on the Holy Bible. As an Acacian, you are instructed by a particular verse of the Holy Bible in the Closing Ceremony. As an Acacia pledge, you wore a pledge pin that has spiritual significance.

Including this category of activities is our way of emphasizing the importance of a spiritual mindset to a man in today’s world. At no point will you be pressured to experience spirituality in any way that is inconsistent with your personal beliefs. The activities are designed to stimulate discussion and personal exploration, not to indoctrinate anyone to a particular faith system or denomination. Just as you are instructed in the Pythagoras membership manual, the best attitude is one of open inquiry. You may not be completely comfortable during all of these activities, but you are encouraged to explore them knowing that your own understanding will grow through a process of testing and further establishing ones comfort zone. However, if ultimately these activities would cause extreme discomfort for you, you are advised to discuss the matter with your Level Advisor, and create a reasonable alternate activity.

## Cornerstones Curriculum

“The world makes way for the man who knows where he is going.”  
-Ralph Waldo Emerson

The following pages illustrate the current Cornerstones program curriculum at each of the four levels. You will see that the same categories overlap into each level, and that the activities at higher levels increase in complexity.

The column on the right hand side states who is responsible for scheduling and completing these activities. In that column, you will either see that the responsibility is “personal”, a “module”, or a particular chapter officer is to do a presentation.

- *Personal* - meaning that the individual member completes this activity on his own;
- *Module* - meaning that the chapter should utilize a specific module, created by Acacia HQ, to facilitate this learning activity
- *Particular Officer* - meaning that the chapter officer that is listed should create a presentation or learning activity to complete this requirement

Level 1		
Category	Activity	Responsibility
Goals	Develop three written goals according to the guidelines in the Individual Guide, and email a copy to your Level Advisor	Personal
Mentor	Recruit a Mentor from within chapter	Senior Dean
Acacia Chapter Operations	Read your chapters bylaws	Senior Dean to provide copies; personal responsibility to read
	Meet with Chapter Advisor & House Corporation Board President; listen as they explain their roles and responsibilities	Senior Dean to coordinate
	Meet the Venerable Dean; listen as he explains his position, and other Chapter Council positions	Senior Dean to coordinate
	Understand chapter crisis management procedures and the university's policy on social functions (risk management)	Senior Dean to coordinate
Academic Achievement (complete two by initiation)	Attend a time management seminar	Module - Junior member (Level Two or Three) to present
	Attend a study skills seminar	Module - Scholarship Chair to present
	Visit your academic advisor	Personal
Spirituality (complete one by initiation)	Learn the faith-based practices of your fellow new members	Module - Senior Dean to facilitate
	Attend a facilitator or panel discussion on religion or spirituality	Senior Dean to coordinate
Appreciation of the Arts	Learn the musical and art interests of your fellow new members	Module - Senior Dean to facilitate
Fraternal Heritage	Understand the history of your local chapter	Senior Dean to coordinate
	Understand the history of Acacia Fraternity	Module - Senior Dean to facilitate
	Review and understand the symbols of Acacia Fraternity	Module - Ritual Chairman to facilitate
	Learn the Acacia songs (We're All Good Brothers, Bless Now Acacia, other songs that your chapter may select)	Senior Dean to coordinate
	Visit the Acacia website at <a href="http://www.acacia.org">www.acacia.org</a> and register as a pledge with the help of your pledge educator	Senior Dean to coordinate

Level 1		
Category	Activity	Responsibility
Fraternal Heritage (continued)	Understand the International structure of Acacia Fraternity	Module - Junior member to present
	Recruitment Skills Workshop	Module - Recruitment Chairman to facilitate
Personal & Professional Development	Respond to the question: What are your professional aspirations upon graduation?	Personal
	Draft your resume; have it reviewed by a local alumnus or campus career center	Personal
	Work with a local alumnus to create a personal budget	Personal, work with Level Advisor
Campus & Community Involvement (complete two by initiation)	Learn about your local chapter's philanthropy and/or service project	Human Service Chairman to facilitate
	Participate in a local service project not organized by the chapter	"Pledge Human Service Project"
	Identify and join one student organization that is relevant to your life	Personal
	Register to vote if 18 years old and not already registered	Personal
	Understand the difference between "philanthropy" and "community service"	Senior Dean to present
Social Attitude (complete two by initiation)	Host a social behavior forum with a sorority or women's group	Junior Dean to coordinate & facilitate
	Host a campus or community dignitary at an Acacia event	Senior Dean to coordinate & facilitate
	Identify potential new members to join Acacia and provide contact info to Recruitment Chairman	Personal
	Read chapters 1 through 5 of The Power of Approachability by Scott Ginsberg	Personal
	Learn proper dining etiquette	Module - Junior Dean to coordinate & facilitate
Personal Wellness (complete one by initiation)	Take a tour of the campus health and recreation facilities	Personal
	Participate in at least one intramural sport if physically able	Personal
	Become First Aid and CPR certified	Personal

Level 1		
Category	Activity	Responsibility
Experiential Learning (complete one by initiation)	Participate in an overnight retreat with your fellow new members; invite Senior-level Mentors and Level Advisors to facilitate	Senior Dean to coordinate & facilitate
	Participate in an experiential learning activity developed by Level Four brothers	Senior Dean to coordinate

Level 2		
Category	Activity	Responsibility
Goals	Develop three written goals according to the guidelines in the Individual Guide, and email a copy to your Level Advisor	Personal
Recruit a Level Two Mentor	This should be a brother in Level 3 or 4 who is ideally in the same academic college as you.	Personal
Mentor a Level One Student	Your student should ideally be in the same academic college as you	Personal
Academic Achievement	Learn about an academic study abroad experience	Personal
	Learn about internship or co-op experiences within your college	Personal
	Attend a study skills seminar	Personal; or Scholarship Chair coordinate
	Visit your academic advisor	Personal
Spirituality	Attend a religious service of a faith or denomination other than one you currently practice	Personal
Appreciation of the Arts	Attend a musical performance on campus or in the community that differs from your usual preference	Personal
	Visit an art exhibit on campus or in the community	Personal
	Attend a campus cultural club's meeting or event	Personal
	Invite a campus cultural club to speak to the chapter	Personal
	View an independent or foreign film with a sorority followed by a discussion	Junior Dean to coordinate & facilitate
Fraternal Heritage	Borrow the Ritual and study the 2nd Degree of Initiation and Pledge Induction	Module Reflection
	Host the campus Greek advisor or a Mason at your chapter to discuss the importance of Ritual in everyday life	Junior Dean to coordinate & facilitate
	View the NIC (North-American Interfraternity Conference) video, Live Your Ritual, with a sorority followed by a discussion	Senior Dean to coordinate & facilitate
	Research Masonic history, traditions, and symbols, and lead a discussion with fellow members in Level Two	Personal
	Host the Alumni and Corporation Board Presidents to discuss their continued involvement with the Fraternity	Senior Dean to coordinate & facilitate
	Attend an Interfraternity Council or similar Greek governing association meeting	Venerable Dean to coordinate

Level 2		
Category	Activity	Responsibility
Personal & Professional Development	Update your resume, “professional aspirations” response, and personal budget from Level One	Personal
	Attend a self-improvement seminar for a skill or attitude you are trying to improve on	Personal
	Make a 5-7 minute presentation to the chapter	Venerable Dean to coordinate
	Visit the career center on campus to get career placement information	Attend an alumni or corporation board meeting
	Attend a “Dress for Success” seminar	Module - Senior Dean to coordinate & facilitate
	Personal finance seminar (incorporate material from Stephanie Rulli from ALA 09)	Module - Treasurer to coordinate & facilitate
Campus & Community Involvement (complete two)	Participate in a community service project	Personal
	Participate in a philanthropy project	Personal
	Actively participate in at least one student organization	Personal
	Plan a community service event with members of another student organization	Personal
Social Attitude (complete three)	Become TIPS certified (Training for Intervention Procedures - see your university, college, or <a href="http://www.gettips.com">www.gettips.com</a> for more information)	Personal
	Plan and host a non-alcoholic theme party	Junior Dean to coordinate & facilitate
	Host a dining etiquette speaker	Senior Dean to coordinate & facilitate
	Research dating and relationship etiquette & lead a discussion amongst the brothers	Personal
	Hold a discussion on societal issues	Personal
	Read chapters 6 - 10 of the Power of Approachability by Scott Ginsberg	Personal
	Take a Myers/Briggs Personality Inventory test (available online) & have it analyzed by a professional	Personal
	Identify and recruit two or more potential men to join Acacia, provide contact info to Recruitment Chairman	Personal

Level 2		
Category	Activity	Responsibility
Personal Wellness (complete three)	Participate in at least one intramural sport if physically able	Personal
	Host a speaker from the athletic department to speak to the chapter about personal wellness, sportsmanship, teamwork, and leadership	Senior Dean to coordinate & facilitate
	Organize a chapter athletic or gaming event	Personal
	Visit a certified personal trainer or on-campus health professional to create a personalized wellness program	Personal
	Obtain a complete physical exam	Personal
	Track your eating habits for one month and discuss the results with a dietitian or personal trainer	Module
	Host a nutritionist to speak about healthy eating	Senior Dean to coordinate & facilitate
	Research substance abuse, sexually transmitted infections and diseases, and testicular cancer; present your findings to the chapter	Personal; Senior Dean to coordinate (Module)
Experiential Learning (complete one)	Participate in a high ropes course program	Senior Dean to coordinate & facilitate
	Attend a leadership workshop sponsored by the University/ College	Personal
	Attend an NIC-sponsored leadership program (UIFI, IMPACT, FuturesQuest; visit <a href="http://www.nicindy.org">www.nicindy.org</a> for more information)	Personal
	Serve on a chapter committee or hold chapter office	Personal

Level 3		
Category	Activity	Responsibility
Goals	Develop three written goals according to the guidelines in the Individual Guide, and email a copy to your Level Advisor	Personal
Level Three Mentor	This should be a brother in Level 4 who is ideally in the same academic college as you.	Personal
Mentor Level One or Two	Your student should ideally be in the same academic college as you	Personal
Academic Achievement	Work with a Level One member to develop his time management skills and system	Senior Dean coordinate
	Work with a Level One member to develop his study skills	Senior Dean coordinate
	Visit your academic advisor and make sure you are on track for graduation	Personal
Spirituality	Attend a lecture/presentation on campus or in the community about a faith-based topic	Personal
	Discuss with your student (Level One or Two member) the importance of faith and spirituality in the Ritual of Acacia	Personal; (Module)
Appreciation of the Arts (complete two)	Take a dance, music, or drama class	Personal
	Hold a themed social dance with a sorority or other women's organization and have an instructor give lessons prior to the event	Junior Dean coordinate
	Go to dinner with a professor of music, visual, or performing arts	Personal
	Attend a play, musical performance, or dance performance	Personal
	Create a chapter date function that incorporates the performing arts	Junior Dean coordinate
Fraternal Heritage (complete two)	Borrow the Ritual and study the 1st and 3rd Degrees of Initiation	Personal
	Lead a ritual exemplification activity with Level Two members, or serve on a ritual exemplification committee	Ritual Chairman to coordinate
	Research rites of passage rituals and write a one-page analysis of the article and present it to the chapter or alumni and corporation board	Personal
	Publish an article in the alumni newsletter or the Triad about Ritual (non-secretive) and how it relates to chapter life	Personal; Alumni Chairman coordinate
	Serve as an executive officer of the chapter	Personal

Level 3		
Category	Activity	Responsibility
Personal & Professional Development (complete three)	Update your resume and “professional aspirations” statement	Personal
	Explore internships in your field of study and earn an interview	Personal
	Invite area alumni to speak to the chapter about successful practices in their respective fields	Alumni Chairman coordinate
	Participate in a mock interview	Personal
	Participate in a “Dress for Success” seminar if you have not already	Personal
	Revise your personal budget and obtain a personal credit review to review with a professional	Personal
Campus & Community Involvement (complete two)	Attend a City Council meeting	Personal
	Invite a political candidate to the chapter	Senior Dean coordinate
	Volunteer with a local retirement center	Personal
	Serve as a leader in another campus organization	Personal
	Coordinate a community service or philanthropy project	Personal; Human Service Chair coordinate
Social Attitude (complete three)	Be the presenter for a dining etiquette dinner for Level One and Two members (& possibly some sorority members)	Personal; and Junior Dean coordinate
	Host a presentation by a local mental health professional on signs and ways to cope with depression	Senior Dean coordinate
	Plan and host a non-alcoholic social function	Junior Dean coordinate
	Attend a professional interview seminar focusing on interpersonal/social etiquette	Personal; or Senior Dean coordinate
	Identify and recruit two or more potential men to join Acacia	Personal
Personal Wellness (complete three)	Host the local YMCA or other athletic club to discuss involvement opportunities	Human Service Chair coordinate
	Participate in at least one intramural sport if physically able	Personal
	Obtain a complete physical exam	Personal
	Invite a panel of collegiate athletes to the chapter and hold a discussion about competition and sportsmanship	Junior Dean coordinate
	Research two of your university or college’s Hall of Fame recipients and invite them to your chapter for dinner	Personal; or Senior Dean coordinate

Level 3		
Category	Activity	Responsibility
Personal Wellness (complete three) (continued)	Host a campus health center professional to discuss personal hygiene	Senior Dean coordinate
	Research the “Adonis Complex” and lead a discussion about men’s body image disorders	Personal; and Senior Dean coordinate
Experiential Learning (complete one)	Coordinate a high ropes course program for Level One or Level Two members	Senior Dean coordinate
	Attend a leadership conference or personal growth workshop approved by your Level Advisor	Personal
	Attend a regional or international Acacia Fraternity event such as Conclave or the Acacia Leadership Academy	Personal; Venerable Dean coordinate
Recruit a Level Four Mentor	Find a leader within your academic institution or community to serve as a Community Mentor upon your entry into Level Four	Personal

Level 4		
Category	Activity	Responsibility
Goals	Develop three written goals according to the guidelines in the Individual Guide, and email a copy to your Level Advisor	Personal
Meet with you Level Four Mentor	Make a schedule to meet with your Community Mentor as often as his or her schedule allows, ideally meeting face-to-face regularly; submit schedule to Level Advisor	Personal
Mentor a Level Two or Level Three Student	Your student should ideally be in the same academic college as you	Personal; Senior Dean coordinate
Academic Achievement (complete two of the following)	Visit your academic advisor, make sure that you are on track for graduation	Personal
	Conduct a mock interview with the campus career center, an Acacia alumnus, or graduate admission interview with an academic advisor	Personal; or Senior Dean coordinate
	Explore graduate school requirements and take one practice graduate entrance exam (GMAT, GRE, LSAT, etc.) for feedback on your areas of strength and needed improvement	Personal
Spirituality (complete one of the following)	Write a reflection on any spiritual growth you experienced during your Acacia experience	Personal
	Compose a short essay on how spirituality is related to the Ritual of Acacia Fraternity	Personal
Appreciation of the Arts (complete one of the following)	Write about how your appreciation of the arts has developed throughout your Cornerstones experience	Personal
	Recall an art-related experience from your years in Acacia and reflect upon its affect on you today	Personal
Fraternal Heritage (complete one of the following)	Create archives of Acacia materials you may have acquired during your time as an active member such as chapter meeting minutes, photographs, and brotherhood stories	Personal
	Serve as an executive officer of the chapter	Personal
	Write a short essay about how you have bettered your fraternity's record and how the fraternity has benefited you	Personal
Personal & Professional Development (complete two of the following)	Host an alumnus or financial planner to speak to all Level Four brothers about budgeting and long-term financial planning	Senior Dean coordinate

Level 4		
Category	Activity	Responsibility
Personal & Professional Development (complete two of the following) (continued)	Host a local doctor, human resources representative, or insurance agent to speak about health benefits in the professional world	Senior Dean coordinate
	Host a local realtor or knowledgeable alumnus or parent to speak about real estate, renting vs buying, building credit, etc.	Senior Dean coordinate
	Host a local jeweler to speak about the fine art of selecting a diamond engagement ring and knowing the right time to propose	Senior Dean coordinate
Campus & Community Involvement (complete one)	Join a service organization or professional association within your major or intended career field (e.g. Rotary International, Future Leaders of America, American Society of Mechanical Engineers, etc.)	Personal
	Serve on a planning or organizational committee for a community service project outside of the fraternity	Personal
	Host a panel discussion including chapter alumni and Community Mentors on the topic of the importance of community involvement/ civic engagement	Senior Dean coordinate
Social Attitude (complete one)	Host a knowledgeable alumnus, parent, or community leader to discuss alcohol consumption in the business environment	Senior Dean coordinate
	Participate in a wine appreciation, social etiquette, or similar class	Personal
	Lead a discussion about “The Power of Approachability”	Personal
Personal Wellness (complete two)	Participate in at least one intramural sport if physically able	Personal
	Visit a certified personal trainer or on-campus health professional to measure your vital health statistics	Personal
	Host a professional to speak on life and work balance and how to maintain a healthy level of both	Senior Dean coordinate
Experiential Learning (complete two)	Volunteer and actively participate with a local service organization outside of the college or university	Personal
	With your fellow Level Four brothers, develop and execute a new experiential learning activity for Level One members; have the activity reviewed and approved by the Acacia Fraternity International Headquarters Staff	All Level Four brothers collectively
	At graduation, participate in the Alumni Induction Ritual	Ritual Chairman coordinate

## Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why should a chapter become a Cornerstones chapter?

- 1) *Ownership* - The chapter will be contributing to an international initiative that is at the leading edge of major organizational strengthening of the fraternity. The voices of the members in our pilot chapters will set the tone for the future of our fraternity.
- 2) *Brand Identity* - The chapter will be able to identify with a brand that is being actively built across the country to encompass the best membership practices of our members. The chapter will be better prepared than others to answer questions such as, “What is it that defines your brotherhood?” or “What does it mean to be a part of Acacia Fraternity?”
- 3) *Reinforce Recruitment* – All of these ideas can be used to strengthen a chapter’s recruitment efforts. Given even partial implementation of this program, each pilot chapter has an opportunity to deliver more fully on the promise of our Acacia “seek the truth and give the light” as each member will naturally become more proficient in describing the ways in which Acacia Fraternity has an impact in their life. Participation breeds understanding of the larger fraternal edifice and will enable our members to more clearly verbalize the benefits of brotherhood in Acacia, which will strengthen our recruitment efforts.
- 4) *Re-invigorate Alumni Roles* – The new volunteer positions of Level Advisor and Career Development Mentor will provide opportunities for alumni to get involved in roles beyond Chapter Advisor and Corporation Board member. Our intention is that these new roles would stimulate new fervor for active-to-alumni networking and mentoring, adding value to the Acacia experience.
- 5) *University Partnership* – As we have built the *Cornerstones* program initiative, we have been in close communication with our counterparts in campus Greek Affairs offices. In each case, the advisor on the university side is always re-assured to see that the HQ Staff is taking an active role in the chapter’s development and standards.
- 6) *Predict Membership Issues* – The website at [www.gatesofsamos.org](http://www.gatesofsamos.org) is built to facilitate the communication between the actives and alumni in our pilot chapters. The communication on the site will enhance the ability of chapter alumni to predict some future membership issues. Perhaps the sophomore that will not complete his *Cornerstones* activity becomes the junior that does not want to pay his board bill. While we do not draw direct correlations as yet, we believe there will be some benefit to this aspect in the future.
- 7) *Access to HQ Staff* – Each pilot chapter will receive a more specialized level of communication and sharing of best practices with Headquarters Staff.
- 8) *Access to Funding* – As the New Century Campaign commences, the leadership of the Acacia Fraternity Foundation has set a bold new course to strengthen our scholarship funding along with our educational programming. As program milestones are met by individuals and chapters, it will be the members of the pilot chapters that are actively demonstrating their efforts to improve and those same chapters that will be most likely to produce the most competitive scholarship applicants

Q: How do we become a Cornerstones chapter?

1. The chapter receives a formal presentation from a member of the International Headquarters staff or from a Cornerstones volunteer.
2. The chapter must vote to implement the program (at least 80% approval needed; 100% recommended).
3. The chapter follows guidelines in the Cornerstones Requirements section, and submits application to Acacia Headquarters
4. The International Council reviews the chapter's application.
5. Level Advisors are identified, trained, and serve as mentors throughout the entire process.
6. A chapter retreat is conducted where plans are made for successful implementation.

Q: Will we lose our traditions in the process of changing?

A: Yes and no. There is ample room in the Cornerstones program for traditions.

However, tradition for the sake of tradition is not healthy. Dee Hock, the creator of the Visa Card once said, *"The problem is never how to get new, innovative thoughts into your mind, but how to get the old ones out."*

- The "no" - If activities have become a tradition because they have value in and of themselves, there is nothing wrong with keeping them.
- The "yes" - The nonproductive or counter-productive traditions that are kept because "we have always done it that way" will be seriously challenged in light of the values of our organization. Agreeing to implement Cornerstones will mean that the chapter is open to having a dialogue and carefully considering their current traditions.

Q: How are we able to build bonds and support group development?

A: While Cornerstones places emphasis on individual development, Acacia Fraternity urges chapter to schedule as many activities as possible that will allow members to complete program activities in a larger group. Then each man goes and does his own reflection, on his own.

Examples of group activities include:

- Personal and professional educational programming
- Social etiquette programming
- Celebrations of achievement
- Brotherhood events
- Experiential learning activities
- Intramural sports participation
- Chapter service projects

Q: How does a chapter implement Cornerstones given that current members all differ in levels of personal development?

A: All initiated members of the chapter will automatically be placed in Level Two of the program. Brothers with more experience may choose to advance immediately to Level Three or Level Four, but may only do so after in-depth discussion with their Cornerstones Chairman and Level Advisor, and will be approved on a case by case basis. One thing to consider is that the program is designed such that older members can mentor and guide younger members on important topics - and older members can even complete their program activities by presenting an educational session for younger members.

Q: Can someone join as a junior or senior and still reach Level Four?

A: Yes. If the man is a junior or older, and he can demonstrate that he has met all of the requirements of the level, the minimum time may be waived for Level Two and Level Three. However, strict adherence to fraternal heritage and basic chapter operations as outlined in Level One must be kept.

Q: Why can older men move through the Levels more quickly?

Acacia Fraternity and the Cornerstones program are committed to personal development of every member, and “meeting every member right where they’re at on their pathway”. After two years on a college campus, a man will have already been acclimated to everyday campus life. In this case, it is possible that the imposed minimum time of a level may be a detriment to a man’s undergraduate experience rather than an enhancement.

Q: What happens when a member is not meeting chapter expectations?

A: The member’s Student Mentor and Level Advisor should be aware of a lapse in progress and will voice their concerns about what they have observed. A written list of expectations for advancement will be agreed upon by Cornerstones Chairman and the Level Advisor and presented to the member. Should the member not fulfill those duties, he may not progress to the next program level. The member may file a written appeal to the Lead Level Advisor and Cornerstones Chairman.

Q: Who can get involved with Cornerstones? How can undergraduates get them involved?

A: Many people can be involved with the chapter, for example:

- Faculty: Sponsor a faculty reception/dinner, sponsor a teaching award, invite faculty members to participate in the chapter's service project and/or experiential learning event
- Alumni: Recruit them to be a Level Advisor or Career Development Mentor. Distribute calendars of chapter activities and ritual ceremonies to all alumni and volunteers.
- Sororities and Fraternities: Invite them to participate in chapter programs or dinners, do joint service projects, have functions together, schedule a dinner with their executive officers.
- Community Mentors: Hold a mentor appreciation reception/dinner once a term, send them a chapter calendar, invite them to present educational programs.
- Service Organizations: Form partnerships for chapter service projects, use as a resource to get individual members involved.
- The Press: Appoint a community relations chairman on the Cornerstones committee, inform the media of upcoming events, and publicize events through the campus newspaper and/or radio station.
- University Alumni: Recruit them as community mentors.

## Cornerstones Requirements

Any chapter desiring to become a Cornerstones chapter must submit an application for review and approval from the International Council of Acacia Fraternity.



These chapters must verify the following requirements:

Category	Practice	Yes/No
Physical Assets of Chapter * it is not necessary to own or live in a chapter house to provide these requirements	*Provide an environment that is conducive for academic achievement and safe social interaction	
	Adhere to Acacia International risk management policies, as pertaining to alcohol and drugs	
	*Utilize and enforce quiet hours in the chapter house during the academic week	
	* Maintain a fully functioning House Corporation Board	
Human Resource Assets of the Chapter	Have a regularly elected Chapter Advisor each academic year	
	Chapter Advisor (or approved representative) attends every chapter meeting	
	Chapter Advisor (or approved representative) attends every Acacia Ritual ceremony	
	Maintain a fully functioning Level Advisory Team, which: 1) provides ongoing guidance to students 2) helps to arrange high quality programming for students 3) maintains an active presence on <a href="http://www.gatesofsamos.org">www.gatesofsamos.org</a>	
	Create a culture devoted to personal and chapter growth	
Demonstrate strong commitment to Cornerstones program	100% endorsement of program by all Level Advisors, Chapter Advisor, and House Corporation Board	
	80% or higher commitment to Cornerstones by active chapter	
	Lead Level Advisor submits a progress report to chapter alumni twice per year	
	Level Advisors or House Corporation Board raise funds for the chapters Cornerstones operations (recognition, scholarships, educational programming)	

Category	Practice	Yes/No
Organization & Communication	Chapter Calendar exists in print & online	
	Chapter Calendar updated weekly	
	Every member brings a personal calendar (day planner), pen and paper to chapter meeting	
	An agenda for the chapter meeting is created at Executive Committee meeting each week, and distributed to all at chapter meeting	
	An officer transition retreat is scheduled annually	
	Every officer has an updated "officer binder", as specified in the Officer Transition Gold Book	
	An organizational chart of executive officers is in digital form, including the Cornerstones Chairman	
Recruitment	The chapter utilizes Values-based selection criteria and has documentation to demonstrate	
	The chapter utilizes the "6 cylinders" of recruitment, specified in "Good Guys" book by Phired Up Productions	
	Every member of the chapter can verbalize the benefits of the Cornerstones program to a potential member	
Application to Acacia HQ	Complete a "Spirit of Excellence" Chapter Standards Program assessment of the chapter	
	Complete a SWOT Analysis of the chapters current conditions	
	Complete a strategic planning document	
	Complete a two-page essay about the chapters vision for the Cornerstones program over the next academic year	

Additional Comments:

Form Completed by:  
Date:



## References

Baxter Magolda, M.B., 2001, *Making their own way: Narratives for transforming higher education to promote self-development*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing

Mezirow, J. Ed. 2000. *Learning as transformation: Critical perspectives on a theory in progress*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.