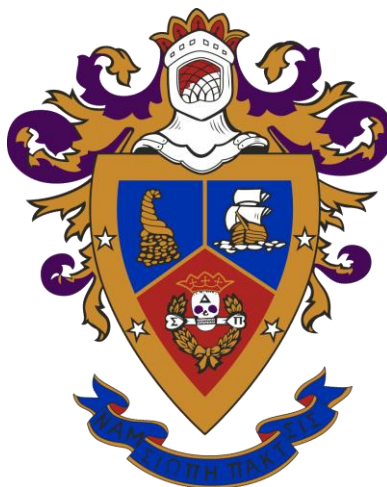


Vice President-Professional Activities Officer Packet



Duties of the Vice President-Professional Activities (VPPA)

(from Policy and Procedures Manual section D, policy 15)

- To oversee the development and implementation of the chapter's professional program.
- To ensure that the chapter is educated on risk management and conduct issues.
- To promote LEAD and other National Fraternity educational programs and encourage attendance by chapter members.
- To coordinate chapter professional activities with the Provincial Professional Development Committee.
- To chair the chapter's Professional Development Committee, should the chapter choose to have such a committee.

Additional Resources

- [Professional Ideas](#)
- [Chapter Locator](#)
- [CMP Guide](#)
- [Awards and Recognition Guide](#)

Introduction

In developing students into people of commerce who are truly ready for the business world of today and tomorrow, one finds that there are many elements to professionalism. It is also found that **professionalism extends well beyond management**, goal setting and day-to-day operations. In terms of professionalism, it is important to remember that everything you do says something to someone. Likewise, you are what you do as well as what you say.

The characteristics of professionalism and professional activities distinguish Delta Sigma Pi from volunteer groups, clubs, scholastic honor societies and social fraternities. This attention to the development of professionalism in members of Delta Sigma Pi allows members to distinguish themselves from the other business people and other job candidates. Professional events not only provide Deltasigs with the chance to meet professionals, but it also gives potential employers the opportunity to interact with those about to enter the work force. Believe it or not, business people appreciate meeting students almost as much as they value networking with them.

Vice President-Professional Activities

Professional events are one of the best ways DSP helps you grow. Each chapter is expected to plan and host professional activities regularly like guest speakers, company tours, or skill-building workshops. These events must be organized or co-sponsored by the chapter (just attending a campus event doesn't count). The chapter should hold about one professional event each month that is valuable to at least half the members. You may plan additional events to ensure the chapter stays on track.

It is very helpful for the VPPA to have a committee of three to five members to oversee and assist with the chapter's professional program. This helps members of the chapter to become involved in an important part of programming and helps elicit support for the professional programs to be undertaken. The use of a committee provides additional ideas and creativity for the professional program and helps generate feedback regarding the program. It also assists in proper administration through the delegation of authority. The committee should consist of membership from a cross section of the chapter to provide the needed interaction and support.

The VPPA must lay the foundation for the chapter's professional program and be responsible for the following:

- Selecting the projects
- Developing a strategic plan
- Setting a budget (if necessary)
- Encouraging participation by all chapter members
- Promoting the program

The VPPA will also serve as the communication link between the chapter, the speaker/company and, if applicable, the public. By serving as the chapter's "external" contact, the speaker/company or public will have the name of someone to get in touch with for information on your events.

Benefits of a Quality Professional Program

- Elements of professionalism are enhanced through a quality program of professional activities.
- Professional activities provide interaction and contact with people in the business world. This interaction leads to opportunities for internships and jobs, as well as friends.
- Professional activities can create an atmosphere of both fun and learning while building and strengthening chapter unity at the same time.
- Learning to be a better businessperson.
- Preparation for taking leadership roles in the business world.
- An affiliation with the business world that increases knowledge and stimulates learning.

Goals

Establishing goals provides direction and a measurement standard for the professional program. It is important to be ambitious as well as realistic in defining the chapter's goals for professional development. Remember the following ideas when setting goals.

- Chapter input is essential.
- Keep the composition of the chapter in mind (graduation dates, majors, career goals, etc.).
- Set measurable goals. General, long-term ambitions should be supported by goals of a short-term, operational nature.
- Strive for the best.

Each goal must be specific so that it can be applied directly to the chapter and evaluated. The chapter will know it has achieved its professional goals only if measurable criteria are a part of the goal.

Choosing a Professional Program

Do not be satisfied with only typical speakers. Many chapters have sought big name speakers such as corporate presidents or governors and have gotten them. Sometimes a "big name" figure can be encouraged to speak if a large audience can be obtained. This presents an excellent opportunity for Delta Sigma Pi to sponsor a campus-wide or all-business college professional event. It will aid the educational program of the school and help Delta Sigma Pi by building its image and influencing prospective members.

Providing a program with a variety of formats also contributes to the success of the program. Field trips, for example, offer experiences that cannot be provided in the classroom or by professional speakers since the chapter members actually enter the 'real world' of business. Field trips, both local and out-of-town, provide the opportunity to interact with executives and gain some of their knowledge. No Delta Sigma Pi visit to a firm is complete without a discussion with corporate personnel. Out-of-town field trips allow chapters to contact and meet alumni and other chapters living in the location being visited.

In many instances, social activities can enhance the professional program of the chapter and can generate enthusiasm for the professional program. For example, combine a professional speaker with a cocktail hour and dinner (be sure to follow risk management procedures). A social hour after the professional meeting serves the same purpose. When on a professional tour, a social activity for the chapter, such as dinner with the company executives or visiting an interesting entertainment spot, can be fun. It is also beneficial to chapter members since it places them professionally in a social setting similar to those found in the business world.

Recommended Formats for Professional Events

- Panel discussions
- Debates
- Industry films/videos
- Workshops
- Tours/Professional Field Trips
- Career fairs
- Business weeks

Keep in mind that the program must fit the needs of the chapter members.

Planning an Event

Initial Letter

- Contact potential speakers initially by letter.
- Introduce the potential speaker to Delta Sigma Pi; you are marketing the Fraternity to this person.
- Make the person feel they will gain something from the experience and that chapter members are interested in what they have to say. Possible benefits you may want to highlight for the potential speaker include the chance to express his or her views on business, a chance to talk about his or her particular corporation or industry and the opportunity to talk with young people who are interested in business.
- Propose a date or dates and try to get the person to commit to them.
- Do not be too detailed or demanding in the initial letter.
- If appropriate, emphasize the theme of the professional program and explain how that speaker can enhance the theme.
- The letter should be typewritten with no errors. Proofread! Be sure to check the name of the speaker, their title and the name of the company for accuracy.
- The chapter may also want to enclose a statement or profile of Delta Sigma Pi and the professional program, including a partial list of past speakers. This adds credibility to the program and helps ensure a positive answer from the speaker.

Dear Ms. Moore:

I represent the Delta Sigma Pi professional business fraternity at State University. Delta Sigma Pi is composed of business students. Our goals are to learn about business and to interact with the commercial world. To fulfill these goals, we undertake a professional program of speakers and field trips. The enclosed information sheet talks more about our group, its professional program and our past field trips.

[Asking for speaker]

At a recent chapter meeting, you were suggested as a possible speaker for our chapter at State University. Your involvement in community affairs and the direction in which you have led your company in this area are noteworthy and fit in well with our theme of "Business and Society." If possible, we would enjoy having you as a speaker during the fall semester.

Our speakers usually give a presentation of 20-45 minutes on a pre-arranged topic followed by a question-and-answer period. We believe that we will learn from your presentation and that you would enjoy the interaction with our group. If you are available, we would also like you to be our guest for dinner with the chapter officers prior to your presentation.

Since you are a leader in the field of corporate responsibility, I hope that you will be willing to "kick off" our professional program on September 12. If this date is not possible, but you are still interested in making a presentation for our chapter, we will be happy to arrange a more convenient date.

Omega Omega Chapter hopes that you will become part of our professional program. Please let me know your decision as soon as convenient for you. I have also enclosed an additional sheet for your reference which tells about our professional program in more detail, and which lists several past professional speakers.

[Asking for tour]

The members of our chapter are very interested in visiting your company since you have produced so many successful advertising campaigns. We believe that a visit to A-Plus would add to our professional program and increase our knowledge of advertising.

Usually, our professional visits include a tour of the facilities and a discussion with members of the management team. We have selected the first week of October for our local field trip this year.

Would it be possible for us to visit A-Plus? I would like to contact you by phone to further discuss and receive your reply. A visit to A-Plus would help us observe business and add to our professional experiences. It is our hope that you will enjoy the opportunity to interact with today's students of business.

Your response will be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Jill Smith
Delta Sigma Pi Vice President - Professional Activities
(513) 555-1234

Follow-Up to Initial Letter

- Follow up in about 10 days with a phone call. Do not wait much longer than that for a response.
- Persistence pays off and follow-up on the initial contact is the rule of thumb rather than the exception. How often have we heard that many employers today may not even look at a resume until you call and follow up?
- Talking directly with the speaker may result in a commitment.
- If the speaker accepts, it is a good idea to call and thank him/her for consenting to speak and inform the speaker that you will be sending additional details in a letter within the next few days.

Confirmation Letter

A letter following a speaker's acceptance should contain the following information:

- Coordinate or confirm a speech topic related to the chapter theme or goals.
- Specify or confirm the date, time and place of the meeting.
- Provide a map with the appropriate parking areas and buildings circled. Indicate that someone will meet the speaker when he/she arrives on campus or will provide transportation if necessary.
- Express time preferences for the presentation and mention the length of the question and answer period.
- Request a biography of the person and any other information that may be helpful to the member making their introduction.
- Provide information about the audience, such as details of the current professional program, the number expected to be in attendance, the composition of the audience (ages, majors).
- Offer help with any required equipment (computer, podium, LCD projector, etc.).
- Assist in planning travel or accommodations if the speaker is from out of town.
- If possible, extend an invitation to dinner with the chapter, executive committee or VPPA. Alternatives to the dinner include a mixer prior to the presentation or a social hour after the speech.

For tours, provide information on the professional program content, the length of the visit and the expected number of attendees. Also include the make-up of the chapter (majors, grade classification, professional goals, etc.).

Dear Mr. Green:

Confirming our telephone conversation of August 13, our meeting will take place on September 7, at 7:30 P.M. in Room 312 of the Student Union. I have enclosed a map that will help you to locate the meeting room and parking facilities. I will meet you at 7:15 P.M. outside Room 312.

Your presentation on “Corporate Philanthropy - The Need and the Benefit” should add to our professional program on the social responsibility of business. After your presentation, which should last 30-45 minutes, there will be a question and answer period. Following this, we will have an informal social hour so that our members may meet you.

Could you send me a short personal biography that I could use for your introduction and also a copy of your company’s annual report for last year? This will help us to become better acquainted with your company and may help us to determine questions for you.

Our chapter is diverse, being coed, having 55 members and being equally divided among freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors. We have several finance and marketing majors as well as a number of members majoring in insurance and accounting. I anticipate that between 45 and 50 people will attend the meeting.

If there is any equipment that you might need, such as an overhead projector, a lectern, etc., please let me know and I will arrange to have it for you. If you have any questions, please contact me at (513) 555-1121.

We are looking forward to you being with us on September 7 and appreciate your taking time to contribute to our professional program and learning experiences.

Sincerely yours,

Jill Smith
Delta Sigma Pi Vice President - Professional Activities
(513) 555-1234

Day of the Event

Substitute Speakers

The VPPA should have substitute back-up speakers available, just in case.

- More likely candidates will be professors or personnel on campus or local business people who would be able to attend on fairly short notice.
- Substitutes should be advised of their status, consent to it and have knowledge of when they may be called to fill in.
- Each substitute should receive a schedule of the chapter’s professional activities and should also be aware of the theme and goals for the professional program.
- The list of substitute speakers should be retained in the chapter files and should be passed on to subsequent VPPAs for possible use.

Once on campus the speaker should not be without someone to help introduce chapter members and engage in conversation until the time of the speech.

Offer assistance with audio-visual aids. Coordinate any equipment or personnel needed. Ensure that someone in attendance knows how to operate and repair the equipment.

When guests attend your events, recognize them and make them feel welcome.

Introduction

- The introduction of the speaker should be brief—one minute or less.
- Highlight the individual's position, the topic of the speech, any noteworthy positions or awards received and other information of particular interest.
- Practice the introduction. The introduction does not need to be memorized word for word, but should be smooth.

A sample introduction would be:

"Tonight it is a pleasure for Omega Omega chapter to have with us Mr. Joseph Green. Mr. Green, Omega Omega Chapter welcomes you and hopes that you will feel at home with us.

Some of you may be familiar with Mr. Green, who is an alumnus of our university. He has been active for several years in the business world and is currently President of the International Corporation in Cincinnati. He is also active in several business and commercial groups, being the Past President of the National Association of International Manufacturers.

As president of a major company, he deals with many problems and opportunities. Tonight he is going to tell us about one aspect of his job—International trade and its effect on the American economy.

Brothers and guests, I present to you, Mr. Joe Green."

Question and Answer Session

- The VPPA should set an approximate time limit and observe it.
- The VPPA should have questions ready to get the discussion moving if necessary.
- It may be helpful to distribute a list of possible questions to chapter members before the actual event.
- Be flexible.

Thanking the Speaker

- A Certificate of Appreciation is available from the Central Office or one can be made. The certificate should be framed before presenting it to the speaker.
- The chapter may also want to present a small gift such as a pen set, university or Fraternity mug, etc.
- In the closing remarks, raise an important point that you will remember from the presentation. This will make the speaker feel good and prove that the members learned from the speaker's presentation.
- Each chapter member should attempt to thank the speaker personally. Remember that the speaker is the guest of the entire chapter, not just the VPPA.

A sample appreciation gift presentation would be:

"Mr. Green, that was an excellent presentation on international trade. I did not realize that so much money was involved. On behalf of the chapter, I would like to express our appreciation to you for being with us, for informing us with your presentation and for responding to our questions. You have made a significant contribution to our professional program and your presentation has been a learning experience for all of us.

As a token of our thanks, please accept this certificate from the chapter. We hope that you have had as enjoyable an experience being with us as we have had with you.
(applause)

I would like to invite all of you to a social hour in Room 311, which will give you a better opportunity to meet and talk with Mr. Green. Again, thank you, Mr. Green, for being part of Delta Sigma Pi's professional program."

Even if the potential speaker rejects the invitation or has to cancel at a later date, a follow-up letter should be written thanking the person for his/her consideration. Leave the person with a favorable impression of Delta Sigma Pi.

Dear Mr. Green:

On behalf of the Omega Omega Chapter of Delta Sigma Pi at State University, I would like to thank you for your presentation last Sunday evening at our chapter meeting. Our members thoroughly enjoyed what you had to say along with the opportunity to ask you questions. Your presentation was an excellent contribution to our theme, "The Social Responsibility of Business."

One of the things we must become more aware of is the changing nature of our society in relationship to the role of international business. Your talk and your responses to our questions helped to do just that for our members.

We appreciate you taking the time from your schedule to be with us and to share your experiences as the past president of the National Association of International Manufacturers. We learned much from your presentation and it contributed greatly to our professional program and to our understanding of problems facing business today.

Again, thanks for being a part of our program.
Sincerely,

Jill Smith
Delta Sigma Pi Vice President - Professional Activities
(513) 555-1234

cc: Chapter Advisor
Dean of Business School

Chapter Management Program (CMP) Reporting and Outstanding Professional Activities Award

Professional events are one of the best ways DSP helps you grow. Each chapter is expected to plan and host professional activities regularly like guest speakers, company tours, or skill-building workshops. These events must be organized or co-sponsored by the chapter (just attending a campus event doesn't count).

What's expected? The chapter should hold about one professional event each month that is valuable to at least half the members.

Chapter "Health" Levels

- **Exceptional Health:** Event in the last month with 70%+ of members attending
- **Strong Health:** Event in the last month with 50%+ attending
- **Marginal Health:** Event within the last 3 months with 70%+ attending
- **Poor Health:** Event within the last 3 months with 50%+ attending
- **Unhealthy:** No event with at least 50% attendance in the last 3 months

The indicator evaluation is based on the most recent event reported. If there's a gap without events—or attendance is low—your score will slide down.

The Outstanding Professional Activities Award is presented each year to collegiate and alumni chapters which plan and implement the broadest and most effective programs of service to others. Information submitted for CMP is gathered towards the chapter's award submission. The Boyd Professional Development Fund will provide a cash grant to the national and provincial winners of the Outstanding Professional Activities Award for a Collegiate Chapter. For complete details about this, and all awards, refer to the [Awards & Recognition Guide](#).