

RECRUITMENT TOOLKIT

FOR VIRTUAL OR SOCIALLY DISTANT OPERATIONS

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OVERVIEW

There's no denying that social distancing forced most, if not all, chapters to make quick and substantial pivots in terms of chapter operations this past spring. While this was an uncomfortable and less than ideal situation that likely challenged the leadership skills of officers and members, APO chapters across the country answered the call and found ways to ensure students stayed connected, supported each other and their communities through crisis, and continued finding ways to be a leader, be a friend and be of service. The commitment of our students to improve the world for those around them, no matter how far apart the world might seem, was awe-inspiring.

Chapters are beginning to pivot operations and make adjustments to programming to match the current state of the chapter and campus environment. In doing so, programs like recruitment and retention should be at the forefront of chapter officers' minds so the community each chapter has built over the past term, year and beyond can be maintained.

This toolkit has been designed to help chapters make adjustments to recruitment with innovative ideas, tips to consider when making changes and much more.

IDENTIFYING YOUR CAMPUS

To accurately evaluate the chapter's previous recruitment strategies and pivot them to meet the needs of the chapter and campus now, chapter leaders should have an understanding of the campus environment in which they will be operating. Will classes and events be entirely online? Are students living in on-campus housing? To get started, use the criteria below to help identify whether campus operations are virtual, socially distant or a hybrid mix of both.

VIRTUAL CAMPUS

- Classes are online
- Events are online
- Meetings are online
- Students are not returning to campus

HYBRID CAMPUS

- Classes are in-person or online
- Events are in-person or online
- Meetings are in-person or online
- Students can choose to be on campus or remote
- Social distancing guidelines are to be followed when in person

SOCIALLY DISTANT CAMPUS

- Classes, events and meetings are mostly or all in-person
- Most students are back on campus
- Social distancing guidelines are to be followed when in person



TIPS AND TRICKS

TO MODIFY RECRUITMENT

There's no denying that recruitment will look more different this year than ever before. The ways in which brothers communicate with other students, share the message behind Alpha Phi Omega and welcome interested students will need to adjust according to the needs of the chapter and campus guidelines. Check out the tips below to get started!

VIRTUAL

SAFETY IN VIRTUAL SPACES. Use discretion when sharing the web address for meeting spaces. If possible, set a password that's shared privately with meeting attendees to secure the meeting space against inappropriate online behavior.

DON'T SPAM! We know you're excited to get involved, so transfer that excitement into innovative ways to connect with students on campus beyond email messages.

MAKE MEETINGS ACCESSIBLE. Create an inclusive environment by catering to the learning and communication needs of members and other students. Include closed captioning on all videos, provide image descriptions to photos and use gender-neutral language when speaking.

SOCIALLY DISTANT

AVOID PHYSICAL HANDOUTS AND TAKEAWAYS. To maintain distance, ditch the takeaways for online goodies like digital gift cards, audiobooks and Apple or GooglePlay Store gifts.

MAKE RESOURCES AVAILABLE ONLINE. Whether it be a flyer, contact sheet or event details, store resources for potential new members in a public online "hub" that can be easily accessed and is consistently communicated throughout recruitment efforts.

HOLD REGULAR OFFICE HOURS. Find a consistent and socially distant location where chapter officers can be stationed once a week for potential new members to meet, ask questions and learn more about upcoming APO events.

HYBRID

REMINDE LEADERS THEY STILL NEED TO PREPARE. As we all navigate new processes and technologies, remember it's still important to prepare or practice trying something new in advance.

ADOPT ONGOING PRACTICES. New member recruitment should always be a continuous practice rather than a one-time event at the start of the term. Keep that in mind as the chapter navigates a new environment and new processes. The dynamic on campus looks more different than it ever has before and the chapter's programming should match.

BE PREPARED FOR CHANGE. The campus environment has the potential to change if the state of the pandemic changes. Begin making alternative plans just in case campus goes 100% virtual again.

MODIFYING RECRUITMENT AND PLANNING AHEAD

As your chapter evaluates current recruitment practices to make necessary adjustments for the year ahead, it's also important to visualize what those adjustments will look like. The calendar below is an example of what recruitment could look like through the upcoming fall term and can be adjusted to fit the spring term as well.

EXAMPLE: AUGUST 2020

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
				Start Social Media Posts		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
First Day of Classes						
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
First Virtual Information Session with Live Q&A	Organization Fair*	Virtual Tabling	On-demand Information Session	Virtual Tabling	On-demand Information Session	

* indicates an event that may or may not be held per college or university guidelines

MODIFYING RECRUITMENT AND PLANNING AHEAD

EXAMPLE: SEPTEMBER 2020

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	New Member Social Media Campaign		Digital Service Event	Digital Coffee Talk	Chapter Meeting	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Leadership Learning - Group TED Talk		On-demand Information Session with Live Q&A			Induction Ceremony	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	Kahoot! Trivia Tuesday				Chapter Meeting	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
		APO Lunch & Learn			Chapter Meeting	
28	29	30				
Region X Roundtable Webinar						

MODIFYING RECRUITMENT AND PLANNING AHEAD

EXAMPLE: OCTOBER 2020

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
			1	2	3	4
			Digital Service Event		Chapter Meeting	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Kahoot! Trivia Tuesday	Leadership Learning Day			Chapter Meeting	On-demand Information Session with Live Q&A
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Digital Coffee Talk			Social Media Giveaway		Chapter Meeting	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
		On-demand Information Session with Live Q&A			Initiation Ceremony	
26	27	28	29	30	31	
	Team Building Webinar					

MODIFYING RECRUITMENT AND PLANNING AHEAD

EXAMPLE: NOVEMBER 2020

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
						1
					Chapter Meeting NSW Kickoff!	National Service Week Event
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
National Service Week Event	National Service Week Event	National Service Week Event	National Service Week Event	National Service Week Event	Chapter Meeting NSW Wrap-up	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
			Team Building Webinar		Chapter Meeting	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	Kahoot! Trivia Tuesday				Final Chapter Meeting	
23	24	25	26	28	29	30

MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS ON A VIRTUAL CAMPUS

Advertising in Alpha Phi Omega, like other areas of chapter operations, will look more different than it ever has before. The chapter will not only be navigating new methods and practices throughout the upcoming year, but will also be making an effort to build more connections and develop more servant leaders through those changes. Listed below are virtual initiatives chapters can adopt according to the chapter's experience with marketing and advertising.

BEGINNER

- Flyer, infographic and social media posts
- Interacting with student groups online
- Updating profile pictures, cover photos and stories to match
- Gift card giveaway or mail promotional items
- Informational meeting
- Invite a friend
- 5 for 5 method

INTERMEDIATE

- Join first-year-centric social media groups
- Student Activities Office advertisements
- Utilize school list servs
- Host or participate in university-sponsored programs
- Speak at other organizations' meetings
- Lead in other organizations
- Speak in appropriate department classes

ADVANCED

- Sponsor or host campus-wide events
- Establish recognizable traditions
- Host fundraising events throughout the community
- Write and display APO- or chapter-related press releases

MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS ON A SOCIALLY DISTANT CAMPUS

Advertising in Alpha Phi Omega, like other areas of chapter operations, will look more different than it ever has before. The chapter will not only be navigating new methods and practices throughout the upcoming year, but will also be making an effort to build more connections and develop more servant leaders through those changes. Listed below are socially distant initiatives your chapter can adopt according to the chapter's experience with marketing and advertising.

BEGINNER

- Create social media posts that promote in-person engagement
- Chalk on campus pathways
- Post "take one" flyers with chapter website and contact information
- Participate in the campus involvement or organization fair
- Share APO takeaways at tabling events
- Invite a classmate to chapter events
- Implement 3 to 7 method

INTERMEDIATE

- Help lead campus tours
- Have a chapter-wide dorm storm
- Hang APO banners around campus, where appropriate
- Provide APO-branded health and safety supplies to students
- Print APO announcements in campus news
- Create graphics for campus billboard

ADVANCED

- Get involved with high school service groups
- Collaborate with recognizable organizations in the community
- Collaborate with a non-profit management or leadership development department on campus
- Print chapter business cards to leave around campus and hand out to students

CONVERSATION STARTERS



Whether the chapter is large or small, gathering names of potential members can be challenging - especially in a world of online operations. Driving names is vital to keeping any organization thriving, not just Alpha Phi Omega, and there are many ways to gather a strong contact list of students who are interested in making the world a better place. Below are over 20 innovative ways to grow the chapter's names list and impact recruitment.

VIRTUAL METHODS

- 1.** **PROVIDE ACCESS TO THE VIRTUAL INFORMATION SESSION.** Whether provided on-demand or in a socially distant meeting, the virtual information sessions allow chapter officers to focus on chapter-specific details and answer general questions about joining Alpha Phi Omega.

[Access the virtual information session here!](#)

- 2.** **MAKE SIGN-UPS STRAIGHTFORWARD.** If someone is interested in joining APO, it should be effortless for them to learn more the organization and indicate their interest by signing up to be contacted or for an upcoming event. This can be done through the chapter's social media platforms or website. When an interested person wants to learn more about the chapter, the information available to them online should share what steps they need to take next to connect and allow them a place to provide their contact information and more information about them.

SOCIAL MEDIA CONNECTIONS. There are countless ways to utilize social media to drive names onto your list.

- 3.** Here are some basic ideas to consider when making social media use more intentional:
 - Paid ads - Utilize inbound marketing techniques that result in names on your list, such as aiming all interactions at a landing page that collects contact information.
 - Searching for connections - Spend time looking through profiles of individuals who have self-identified as incoming students. Learn about them, connect with them if appropriate, and offer to be a resource in their lives.
 - Seek referrals - What's social media for if not sharing? Don't be afraid to let your audience know the chapter is seeking to connect with students pursuing a passion for leadership through service.

- 4.** **PARTNER WITH SELECT ORGANIZATIONS.** The chapter can utilize the shared connections it has built and maintained throughout the years by inquiring about how the chapter can be featured on social media or in online communication methods. A quick shoutout or highlight on a partner's page could help the chapter tap into an audience the chapter has not connected with yet.

CONVERSATION STARTERS



SOCIALLY DISTANT METHODS

- 1.** **COLLECTION DRIVE.** Combine service and recruitment by partnering with a local shelter or other non-profit and going door-to-door through the residence halls asking for donations. Donation bins around campus are a great alternative. If the person donates, ask if they would like to help even more and invite them to a service event your chapter is hosting at the non-profit. Be sure to exchange contact information to grow your names list.

For door-to-door interactions, the pitch can sound something like, “Our organization is collecting [socks, toiletries, canned goods, etc.] to donate to [name of the non-profit partner.] Would you be willing to help those in need with a [gently used pair of socks?]”

- 2.** **MOVE-IN/MOVE-OUT DAY.** The concept of student organizations helping first-year students move into their residence halls is not new. However, there are more effective ways to do it than swarming the student and their family, handing a business card, and carrying a few boxes. The best practice is to send teams of two over to the residence halls, begin your interaction with “Hi, what can I help you with?” and be sure to exchange contact information rather than just handing over a business card/flyer. Also, while move-in days are commonplace, move-out days may be an untapped market.

For more distance between yourself and others on campus and limiting contact between surfaces, use carts or dollies to help tow students’ belongings to their new digs.

- 3.** **CAMPUS TOURS.** Many colleges and universities offer opportunities for pre-freshmen to spend a day or two on campus to learn more about what campus life looks like. Connect with the office on campus that oversees programs like this to see how APO members can get involved. During your time with prospective students, be what you know best - a leader and a friend!

- 4.** **I CAN HELP! RECRUITMENT SHIRTS.** Members tend to be involved and knowledgeable students who would like to be as helpful as possible to first-year students during their first few weeks, so be helpful! Be the chapter that truly provides service to the campus by being the unofficial campus guides, information centers, bookstore assistants, inside information sources, and social network builders.

CONVERSATION STARTERS (CONT'D)



SOCIALLY DISTANT METHODS (CONT'D)

- 5.** **CALL ON CAMPUS LIFE.** Become the premier campus volunteers Alpha Phi Omega members strive to be by partnering with administrators and staff to host activities for incoming and prospective students throughout the year. Develop relationships in various departments like admissions, residence life, student affairs, and more to tap into opportunities that already exist or learn how the chapter can fill a new need.

Sponsored programs may include:

- Orientation leaders
- Admissions meetings
- Campus tour guides
- Student shadowing
- On-campus activities
- Hosting international students

- 6.** **POSITIVE INTERACTIONS.** There are times during the academic year when it becomes harder to gain the focus of non-APO members, namely midsemester when students are focused on grades as they walk through campus with their head down. Utilize bold members of the chapter to carry out positive interactions that are attention-grabbing and out of the norm like:
- Instead of buying pizza for a closed meeting, buy pizza and hand out free slices in exchange for a socially distant conversation
 - Ask non-members to tape flyers to their backpacks or residence hall doors rather than posting them on bulletin boards

- 7.** **FREE TEXTBOOKS.** Partner with the campus bookstore to host a raffle to reimburse all or some of the cost of a winner's books, offer a \$100-\$250 textbook scholarship, give away stylish merchandise or provide an exclusive coupon. After students enter for a chance to win, the chapter has contact information for several potential new members and a reason to contact them with a "Welcome to campus" message.

- 8.** **RESOURCE CENTER.** A great way to serve the community and gather the names of potential new members is to run a resource center on campus. Consider working with your Dean of Students or Student Life Office to create a resource center that meets the needs of students on campus, especially students your organization is directly targeting for membership. Supplies could include:
- Men's/women's health needs
 - Textbook exchange
 - Campus involvement
 - Study group sign-up

CONVERSATION STARTERS (CONT'D)



HYBRID METHODS

- 1. MEMBER REFERRALS.** Chapter members have connections that extend well beyond the chapter environment, many of which have untapped potential to become future members of the Fraternity. Connect with other student organizations, athletes, Greek life groups and leadership societies on campus to introduce Leadership, Friendship and Service to the friends of members' friends and beyond.
- 2. 5 FOR 5 CHALLENGE.** Chapters often pass up the opportunity to interact with non-members on campus. To complete the 5-for-5 Challenge, ask five members to meet five non-members on campus for five consecutive weekdays. If implemented correctly, that's 125 new names in five days! This simple challenge with clear measurables has been proven effective and efficient on college campuses across the nation.
- 3. RULE OF 3 TO 7.** A substantial hurdle many chapters encounter is being located on a primarily commuter campus. Others feel they experience an overall lack of interest in people wanting to join APO altogether. The great equalizer? Class! Maximize this daily commitment and ace both your courses and recruitment. Show up 3-to-7 minutes early and sit in the first 3-to-7 rows -- research indicates the best-performing students sit here -- and develop 3-to-7 relationships in each class.
- 4. FACULTY/STAFF REFERRALS.** In a one-on-one conversation, ask faculty or staff for recommendations of students they consider to be leaders, scholars, and well-respected students. Consider the following script when expressing your interest:

"Dr. Smith, I am part of a team of student leaders who strive to improve the quality of service on campus and how students are impacting the community at large. Through servant leadership we work to develop conscientious global citizens on our campus by meeting more like-minded students. We want to spark a passion for service in as many students as possible; however, we know we're missing some of the best leaders on our campus. Would you mind sharing with me the names of several of your most engaged students?"
- 5. PAST RECRUITMENT INTEREST LIST.** The membership vice president or pledge educator likely has the contact list(s) from past recruitment cycles. Reconnect with students that decided APO wasn't for them at the time to spark new interest now. Be sure to skip students who have already joined or have specifically asked to not be contacted by the chapter.

CONVERSATION STARTERS (CONT'D)



HYBRID METHODS (CONT'D)

- 6.** PARENT RECOMMENDATIONS. Utilize honors and recognitions from parents or guardians outside the campus network to brag about their child or loved one and nominate them for special awards. The chapter can host a special recognition for top student leaders by sending a special solicitation to freshman and sophomore parents who can nominate their student to be a recognized leader.

If the chapter wants to consider other similar methods, mail a letter or email parents and guardians a few weeks before an exam period with a branded form where they can send a note to accompany a care package prepared by APO members on campus.

- 7.** HIGH SCHOOL VISITS. Does the academic year end about a month before local high schools leave for summer break? What about spring break? Do college students leave for vacation earlier than high school students? These breaks are an opportune time for members to visit local high schools or their alma mater to share more about college life, getting involved and making a positive impact on the community and world through Alpha Phi Omega. Be mindful of school guidelines and regulations before visiting.

- 8.** COLD WEATHER OPPORTUNITIES. When it's cold outside, there are two opportunities available for outreach: bring people together for indoor activities or exploit the weather. Fair-weathered campuses can get creative on the beach, too! Either way, be the group that creates social occasions that bring new friends together through various events like:

- Snowball fights
- Winter campus Olympics
- Snow/sand fort competitions

- 9.** ORGANIZE STUDY GROUPS. Academics are of the utmost importance in a student's collegiate career. Many students learn and study best in groups of their peers who are taking the same course or exams. A week or two before an exam or a quiz, members should be asking professors about members leading a study group or to make an announcement about chapter-led study group meetings.

- 10.** TEXT FOR SOMETHING. Members of APO are in the business of making a positive impact on campus and in the community. Through posters, social media and other correspondence, ask students to text to vote based on the provided prompt. For example, "Which professor is changing the most lives? Text your full name and your vote to 000-000-0000."