

# Comparison of Traditional and Membership Development Concepts/Programs

## ASSIMILATION (Membership Development)

### EMPHASIS IS ON THE INDIVIDUAL

Each person is considered to be unique, having different values, needs, goals, talents, and skills. Each new member is assessed individually, identifying talents and weaknesses as they relate to the chapter as a whole.

### CHAPTER UNITY IS STRESSED

New members already have so much in common that they will NATURALLY be attracted to one another. The REAL challenge is to integrate new members into the chapter. When a person joins, goal is that he/she joins the chapter, not the "pledge class", yet we seldom put our energy into providing opportunities for meaningful interaction with brothers/sisters.

### NEW MEMBERS ARE DRAWN INTO THE WHOLE OF CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

If the purpose of the new member program is to create good brothers/sisters, we should help new members get to know what responsibilities, and realities of being a member are - e.g. serving on committees, shadowing officers, participating in the setting of goals, and helping to achieve goals.

### RESPONSIBILITY OF THE NEW MEMBER FALLS ON EACH MEMBER

Each chapter member exercises his right to assist new members throughout the assimilation process. The size of the new class may actually be determined by counting how member brothers/sisters will accept this responsibility fully and follow through with it.

### THE GOAL OF NEW MEMBER LESSONS IS NOT SIMPLY TO MEMORIZE THE MATERIAL, BUT TO UNDERSTAND AND BE ABLE TO APPLY IT

### DEVELOPMENT CONTINUES FOR THE DURATION OF AFFILIATION

Members are aware that there are always new skills to be members," and fraternity officers. Just because a person is initiated doesn't give him the right to "coast" or sit back on his/her proverbial "laurels" while others do the work. The Chapter provides members with opportunities for growth.

### PRIME MOTIVATORS ARE PRIDE, ACCEPTANCE, UNDERSTANDING, AND THE EMERGENCE OF SELF-RESPECT AND CONFIDENCE

Brothers/Sisters are responsible for setting a good example for new members to follow. Expectations are explained and established early and regular individual evaluations are used to progress throughout the new member period.

## rites of passage (Traditional Pledge Programs)

### EMPHASIS IS ON THE GROUP

Attitude of "What's good for one is good for all." Equal/same treatment based primarily on tradition and the convenience of the brothers.

### PLEDGE CLASS UNITY IS STRESSED

Chapter makes a "big deal" out of the "pledge class" as a single unit, requiring and encouraging group pranks, separate projects, etc. Meeting discussions are away from those of the brothers/sisters.

### NEW MEMBERS PARTICIPATE MAINLY IN "PLEDGE" ACTIVITIES

In traditional programs, new members are "sheltered" or "protected" from participation in chapter, the rights, decision making, and goal setting.

### THE NEW MEMBER EDUCATOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE PLEDGES

After rush, active members often dust their hands of responsibility for new members, and the new member educator is left (alone, usually) to prepare many and acculturate new members.

### NEW MEMBER LESSONS ARE CHARACTERIZED BY ROTE MEMORIZATION

### GROWTH AND LEARNING END WITH INITIATION

Initiation signals "you've finally arrived," learned as "active "I made it and survived". Somehow, scruffy new members miraculously turn "cool" and "acceptable" over night.

### PRIME MOTIVATORS ARE FEAR AND INTIMIDATION

These tactics may have fairly good short term results, but do not foster respect and commitment to the organization. Rather, the new member evaluate learns of values antithetical to the mission of the fraternity and sorority.