Health and Safety Advisor Handbook

2014
Introduction

Sacred Purpose is the truest expression of what it means to be Theta Chi. It is a bold idea that needs courageous undergraduate leaders who are willing to serve with a clear purpose in mind. But, those same undergraduate leaders will need the support of dedicated advisors. Becoming a Health and Safety Advisor is an honor. That title goes to those we trust to serve, to care and to inspire. Thank you for volunteering.

This handbook will explore the role and best practices of the Health and Safety Advisor. This handbook is designed to complement the Sacred Purpose Handbook.

For additional information, please go to http://sacredpurpose.thetachi.org/ or contact the Director of Health and Safety Programming at the International Headquarters, 317-824-1881.
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Role of the Health and Safety Advisor

Mission
 Theta Chi's most sacred fraternal purpose is helping people when they need it most. We believe that caring for and helping another person is the highest expression of manhood and true friendship. By accepting this higher purpose, all brothers have been called to a more noble life. In order to more intentionally live out this elevated view of life, Theta Chi is boldly launching Sacred Purpose.

The mission of Sacred Purpose is simple. It is our goal that Sacred Purpose will inspire a better brotherhood and deeper level of mutual caring for one another. In doing so, the Sacred Purpose movement will do more than assist and protect members. Sacred Purpose will help members live their very best life. This big idea is inspired by our most deeply cherished fraternal value—the assisting hand.

Role
 The Health and Safety Advisor will work closely with the undergraduate Vice President of Health and Safety to support the Sacred Purpose movement within the local chapter so that a new culture of caring emerges and so more members will get the help they need. The advisor will recognize the emotional, physical and relational needs of chapter members and proactively facilitate assistance and resources to those same members. In addition, the advisor will inspire and equip all chapter members to also recognize the needs of others and to provide proactive and relevant assistance.

Specific Responsibilities
• Mentor and advise the undergraduate Vice President of Health and Safety on a regular basis
• Collaborate with the Vice President of Health and Safety to set goals and create an annual strategic plan
• Assist cultivating relationships with campus and community health and safety professionals who can support the mission of the Sacred Purpose movement
• Assist identifying campus and community resources available to the local chapter and make those resources available to individual members as a means of breaking down the barrier to members getting the help they need
• Help inspire and organize the chapter to fully support campus-wide initiatives that advance health, well-being and safety.
• Possess a nuanced understanding of Theta Chi values, procedures and policies
• Maintain regular communication with the Director of Health and Safety Programming
• Serve as a resource during chapter crisis situations
**Requirements**

- *Must have an attitude of caring and a deep desire to help others*
- *Must be able to courageously inspire chapter members to consider their full potential as men and brothers*
- *Should have exceptional interpersonal skills and leadership skills that can inspire culture change*
- *Should have demonstrated ability to cultivate collaborative relationships with campus and community health and safety professionals*
- *Should have keen organizational skills and event planning experience*
- *Should be able to devote at least four hours each month*
- *Must be able to function well with ambiguity*
Overview—Being an Advisor

In its simplest sense, a Health and Safety Advisor is a friend, mentor, role model, teacher, and confidant to the undergraduate Vice President of Health and Safety. The Health and Safety Adviser provides knowledge, experience and expertise to help the Vice President of Health and Safety carry out the duties of his office. The result is a well-run, goal-driven, stable and successful Sacred Purpose movement which promotes positive learning and a transformational experience for members.

The Health and Safety Advisor is not a baby-sitter who does work when the undergraduate officer falls down on the job. Nor, is the Advisor a boss or manager who directs every decision and action. Instead, the Advisor is committed to helping young men develop their own potential as individuals and chapter members. The Advisor is a gentle and inspiring guide who understands that students learn best through personal experiences. In fact, the very best Advisors are able to help students learn from their experiences, decisions and consequences. The role of the Health and Safety Advisor is just that, to advise. The most essential part of the undergraduate learning experience in Theta Chi is interacting as brothers within the chapter. The Advisor’s role is to advise on matters requiring an opinion from someone who has more experience and sophisticated knowledge about Theta Chi, the academic institution, and life in general. A good Advisor can also help students understand how their decisions and actions impact both positive and negative outcomes.

The undergraduates should feel that the Health and Safety Advisor is a part of the chapter but not one of the guys. The students will make the ultimate decision on what advice to accept and what advice to reject. Consequently, when you do give advice, the undergraduates must have a respect for you which allows them to hear and understand what you are saying. Advising, therefore, is a true two-way communicating experience.

Time Commitment

It is difficult to prescribe a time commitment and type of relationship you will have with the Vice President of Health and Safety. Ultimately, the two of you, together, will need to define the nature of your relationship. To begin, you may consider meeting for 30 minutes, every two weeks. The two of you may decide that you would like to spend more time together or perhaps you can get good results without face-to-face meetings. In the end, the relationship should be mutually beneficial and result in accomplishing the goals of Sacred Purpose. It is also important to remember that the nature of your relationship may change depending on the skills and personality of the undergraduate holding office.
Mentoring the Vice President of Health and Safety

Your primary role is to mentor and advise the undergraduate Vice President of Health and Safety. To be successful, it is essential that you have a nuanced understanding of his role and responsibilities.

Click here to read the Sacred Purpose Handbook: A Resource Guide for the Vice President of Health and Safety

The handbook fully explains the role and goals of the undergraduate Vice President of Health and Safety. It also contains practical, step-by-step guides that will be quite helpful during his first three months in office.

Setting Goals

Our Vice Presidents of Health and Safety are elected during the weeks leading up to the Holiday break and assume office in January. They will serve for an entire calendar. Their first order of business is to set goals and create a written strategic plan for their year in office. That written plan should be presented to the executive council and also to the entire chapter. The Sacred Purpose Handbook includes a process and format for completing their written plan. We recommend their written plan be reviewed and updated after six months.

As a Health and Safety Advisor, you serve an essential function in the goal setting process. Although the provided format is intuitive, we recommend that you meet with the Vice President of Health and Safety before he begins the goal setting process. It is critical that he understand the importance of a written strategy and that he establishes a deadline for completing the plan.

After the first draft of the plan is completed, you should schedule a 30-minute meeting to review his initial ideas. That meeting will focus on the nuances of the plan. During the meeting you should highlight the plan's strengths and also address potential challenges before the final version is completed. In addition, the two of you should discuss how you (as the Health and Safety Advisor) can best support the plan and also identify other essential campus/community resources. Finally, you should discuss a strategy for presenting the written plan to the executive council and to the chapter.

The written plan should contain SMART goals. SMART goals are:

Specific: A specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished than a general goal. To set a specific goal you must answer the six “W” questions:

Who: Who is involved?
What: What do I want to accomplish?
Where: Identify a location
When: Establish a time frame
Which: Identify requirements and constraints
Why: Specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal.

EXAMPLE: A non-specific goal would be, “Host a campus-wide health and safety related event.” But a specific goal would say, “Partner with the campus counseling center to sponsor an alcohol and drug awareness workshop on March 5.”

Measurable: To determine if a goal is measurable, ask questions such as: How will I know when it is accomplished? How will I know if it was successful?

Attainable: Is the goal realistic and attainable? Students and chapters can attain most any goal they set when they plan their steps wisely and establish a time frame that allows them to carry out those steps. Goals that may have seemed far away and out of reach eventually move closer and become attainable, not because your goals shrink, but because students grow and expand to match them. When chapters list their goals they build confidence. They see themselves as worthy of these goals and develop the habits that allow them to possess them.

Relevant: Is the goal relevant to the Sacred Purpose movement? Why are you doing it? How will it impact the chapter and the campus community?

Time Bound: A goal should be grounded within a time frame. If there is no time frame tied to it, there is no sense of urgency. For example, if the chapter wants to host a guest speaker, when do they want to do it? “Someday” is not a timely answer. But if they anchor it within a timeframe, “by March 15th”, then they have set their unconscious minds into motion to begin working on the goal.

Cultivating Relationships with Campus Health and Safety Professionals/Partners

The Sacred Purpose movement relies on local campus and community health and safety professionals to meet the ongoing needs of our members. The Vice Presidents of Health and Safety are specifically tasked with cultivating relationships with those professionals and resources. In developing those relationships, we have two specific goals. First, our members will have greater access to outstanding local resources. Second, our chapters will provide leadership and support to advancing campus-wide awareness of important health and safety related topics.
As a Health and Safety Advisor, you can support those essential goals. You can do that in a handful of ways. First, you can introduce yourself to those campus partners so you are fully aware of their resources. Second, you can inform the chapter about the numerous campus resources that exist. Third, you can teach the undergraduate Vice President of Health and Safety how to navigate the campus and best harness the potential in those relationships. Fourth, you can rally the chapter’s full support and participation at local health and safety related events, speakers, and initiatives.

Although their exact titles may vary from campus to campus, you should ensure relationships with the following professionals:
- Greek Advisor
- Health Center Director
- Counseling Center Director
- Campus Security/Police Director
- Health Education Coordinator
- Fire and Life Safety Coordinator

Recognizing the emotional, physical and relational needs of chapter members

Perhaps the most important role as a Health and Safety Advisor is keeping a watchful and discerning eye open to the emotional, physical and relational needs of our undergraduate members. You do not need to be a health and safety expert to effectively fill that need. Instead, you simply need to be intentionally aware. In order to recognize when a member is in trouble, it is important for you to remain watchful and observe members when things are going well. By observing those behaviors, you will more easily recognize when members deviate from their “normal” way of living. It is the differences in behavior that can provide you with insight as to when a brother is in trouble.

If you believe a brother is in trouble, the natural first step is having a private conversation with that member. The Sacred Purpose Handbook offers some helpful advice for initiating that conversation. If the situation requires expertise beyond your experience or training, you can certainly seek the advice of campus professionals who will support you and the student.
Resources

The communication hub for our Sacred Purpose movement is http://sacredpurpose.thetachi.org/. It will house all resource materials, videos, and an active blog. You can sign up to receive email notifications anytime content is added to the website.

The Risk Management and Standards Manual is home to all Theta Chi policies and procedures.

Be sure to collect and become familiar with local health and safety related resources. It is easy to pick up brochures at the campus health center and counseling center. It will also be helpful to know and announce the dates and times for health and safety related speakers.

For additional information, please go to http://sacredpurpose.thetachi.org/ or contact the Director of Health and Safety Programming at the International Headquarters, 317-848-1856.

Liability Protection for Advisors

Health and Safety Advisors are covered under the Theta Chi Blanket Public General Liability Policy while acting within the scope of their duties on behalf of Theta Chi Fraternity. Coverage does not apply if you are acting outside the scope of your duties, if you are not in compliance with all Theta Chi policies and regulations, if an illegal act is performed, or if an intentional act is performed. Additional information about the Blanket Public General Liability Policy can be found in the Insurance and Claim Manual. For additional information and to request a copy of the Insurance and Claim Manual, please contact Jim Powell, Associate Executive Director at 317-824-1881 or jpowell@thetachi.org.