

Getting Started Facilitating Pledge Education Meetings

The role of the Vice President-Pledge Education is to facilitate the approved Pledge Education Program. The in-person components are intended to be complementary and used to apply the concepts, policy, and procedures outlined within the online modules. As a facilitator, the VPPE is not only expected to present information, but also to **engage** pledges in activity and discussion to illustrate the need and use for the information discussed in the online modules.

What is Facilitation?

Facilitation is the process of guiding a group of students through a learning experience and includes:	Effective facilitation requires facilitators that are:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Supporting the curriculum through discussion and activities ★ Creating connections of shared information and experience ★ Helping pledges process information and solidify learnings ★ Providing focus and direction during discussion and activities ★ Appropriately challenging and questioning pledges as outlined in the program ★ Help pledges get good information and affirmation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Natural and genuine ★ Interested in all participants ★ Engaged in a series of conversations with a variety of participants ★ Clear and non-judgmental in their communication ★ Flexible and able to adapt to different situations ★ Focused on the participant's experiences and struggles ★ Developing appropriate relationships between pledges and them self

A facilitator is a different role than that of a teacher or instructor. A facilitator encourages engagement in the activities of all participants. The following are a few tips and tricks for serving as a facilitator:

Facilitator Best Practices

Do	Don't	Do	Don't
Focus attention on pledges	Make it about you, your experience or your success	Allow situations to unfold	Force, control or try to regiment learning
Help pledges focus on their learning	Act like a parent	Value differences between groups	Compare small group learning experiences
Encourage participation	Put pledges on the spot or force interaction	Understand and welcome mistakes or challenges	Stress when things don't go according to plan
Allow pledges to think, debate, and struggle with concepts	Give them the answers	Expect a variety of student reactions and engagement	Take lack of engagement personally
Allow for silence	Fill quiet moments by talking	Anticipate frustrating or overwhelming moments	Assume that facilitation is easy

Six Core Competencies of a Facilitator

<p><u>Communication</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Express ideas clearly and accurately ● Be attentive and show interest in the content ● Think quickly and be prepared for difficult conversations ● Show a sense of humor, but know when to steer conversions into a serious tone 	<p><u>Personal Interjections</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Call the group’s attention to helpful statements ● Rephrase pledge’s idea/thought to bridge between topics ● Avoid emphasizing personal opinions, agendas, etc. 	<p><u>Group Participation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure participation by each pledge during pledge education and chapter meetings ● Ensure one individual does not dominate the conversation ● Maintain eye contact with pledges and ensure personal body language is welcoming to the group ● Be alert to the body language and cues from pledges
<p><u>Group Atmosphere</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a climate of respect within the group that allows pledges to discuss differences, without attacking individuals ● Show interest in the opinions of all group members ● Ensure there is no favoritism with the group ● Allow pledges to share minority views comfortably ● Help pledges view/discuss issues from many angles before reaching conclusion 	<p><u>Guiding Discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide the “meat” for discussion, without dominating the conversation ● Provide examples and ideas from personal experience to emphasize point ● Listen critically to discussions to identify confusion, unanswered questions, etc. ● Direct discussions away from inappropriate topics/remarks and privately confront individuals who make these comments ● Have pledges provide summaries of key points 	<p><u>Encourage Growth</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gently encourage pledges to question the validity of their arguments or reasons ● Help pledges examine their current realities outside the norm or against accepted standards ● Share experience that may help pledges identify new ways of doing things, confronting inappropriate traditions, etc. ● Encourage pledges to verbalize how their ideas/reasoning may have changed during the program