May 25, 2000

Mr. Paul Kellermann
24 Scott Building
University Park, PA 16802

Dear Mr. Kellermann:

SUBJECT: Addressing professionalism at Alpha Rho Chi Fraternity

I am writing this letter to request your approval to write a formal report on the topic of increasing the level of professionalism within my fraternal organization. As Vice-president of Alpha Rho Chi Fraternity, it is my responsibility to sustain and uphold the basis upon which our organization was founded. This proposal will outline the recent problems with decreasing professionalism in the fraternity and touch on the ways in which I plan to bring the high standards of Alpha Rho Chi back into the fraternity. I will also discuss within this proposal my plans for research, a schedule indicating when research and writing will occur and my qualifications for doing this report. The results of this project, if approved, will be presented to the entire organization at our first chapter meeting of the Fall 2000 semester.
The Problem

Alpha Rho Chi (APX) is the national co-educational professional fraternity for students and professionals of architecture and the allied arts. Alpha Rho Chi was founded to organize and unite architecture students, and students of the allied arts in the universities and colleges of America. Members unite for educational and professional purposes, and to promote the artistic, scientific, and practical proficiency of the organization’s membership and professions. Members should be committed to striving for excellence in serving all of those who have a stake in Alpha Rho Chi's success: our profession, universities, volunteers, members and society.

Due to apathy among the members of the PSU chapter of the organization over the past several years, the professional objectives of APX have become practically non-existent. With the exception of the occasional guest speaker or student/faculty mixer, professional events are few and far between. Once formal weekly chapter meetings have become loud and unruly. Parties have become the main reason the organization comes together every weekend.

As with any organization, new members are of the utmost importance to the survival of Alpha Rho Chi. Sad as it may be, it is often easier to attract new members with less than professional happenings, such as alcoholic events or socials. As a result, the image the fraternity has been portraying has not been holding true to our ultimate objectives. Members have been making their decision to join our fraternity based on what APX can
offer them socially, not professionally. Having new members join under such premises has only caused professionalism to decline more rapidly, as the once high ideals of APX become lost with the graduation of older, wiser members.

The loss of professionalism from Alpha Rho Chi Fraternity concerns both present and future members. If nothing is done about this problem, Alpha Rho Chi will become just another fraternity will little more to offer than a strictly social experience.

**Research Plans**

I will begin my research with a fraternity-wide survey sent via email that will aid me in forming a general mission statement for what the fraternity would like to achieve from this effort. The information on the survey will include the worst and best things about APX, why individuals feel professionalism has been on the decline, why they joined the fraternity, and what they see for its future.

In addition to taking the survey, I will be looking at enrollment numbers over the past several years. This will help me to determine if this new social outlook the fraternity has taken on has helped or hindered our number of new and active brothers.

A current strong point of APX is the incredible network of alumni who care a great deal about the fraternity. I will continue my research by conducting interviews with APX alumni to find out what types of professional events and activities were held in years past.
when the social aspect of fraternity life was being well balanced with the professional. From that I can hopefully gain some ideas from past functions that can serve to foster a greater sense of professionalism within the organization today. If time allows, I will also talk to other professional organizations and find out how they balance the social and professional sides of their individual groups in today’s society.

Schedule

May 25
- Proposal final draft

May 25 – June 1
- Create and email fraternity surveys
- Replies accepted until June 1

June 1 – June 5
- Research enrollment numbers
- Progress report due June 8

June 8 – June 13
- Alumni interviews and gather their suggestions and opinions

June 13 – June 19
- Generate ideas for possible solution(s)
- Talk to other professional organizations about their events

June 19 – June 29
- Create outline of information for feasibility report
- Start writing the first draft
June 29

- Feasibility report rough draft due
- Peer review sessions

June 29 – July 3

- Refine and polish feasibility report

July 6

- Feasibility report final draft

Qualifications

As a concerned member of Alpha Rho Chi Fraternity, it is my duty to work towards to ultimate goals of the organization. The position of Vice-President that I hold in the fraternity is an elected one. The duties of the Vice-President include heading up all professional events, supervising fraternal publications, and keeping a general sense of rapport and professionalism at chapter meetings. My brothers are well aware of how much I care about our organization, and have put me in an office where they know I can do something about the issues we are facing.

I will approach the professionalism issue as a concerned and well-informed Vice-president should. During my two years in the Greek system at Penn State University, I have participated in several Greek workshops and training sessions including The 1999 Greek Leadership Conference and the weekend long *Fighting Apathy in Your Organization* held by the PSU Interfraternity Counsel. I feel that these workshops have
given me a great edge in knowing how to research, design, and implement new ideas on a fraternity level.

I strongly believe that a definite problem exists on the professional side of Alpha Rho Chi Fraternity. As a well-qualified officer and brother I have an understanding of what this organization is now and what it can be in the future. I look forward to gaining your permission in helping the PSU Chapter of Alpha Rho Chi in realizing its goal of being a national co-educational professional fraternity for students and professionals of architecture and the allied arts.

Sincerely yours,

Matthew ***
Vice-president
Alpha Rho Chi Fraternity