

**Kansas State University**  
**Category 2: New Member Education**  
**2010-2011 Chapter Programming Award**

At Kansas State University FarmHouse, new member education always has an overarching theme—to build men. While the chapter realizes that this process is never complete, and therefore cannot be completed in 12 weeks of new member education, the program is still designed in a way that helps promote a positive building process the new members will continue in the rest of their lives. (New programs are denoted with a \*.)

**Goals:**

**1. Increase the positive attitude toward the new member class.**

- The chapter continued to facilitate whole-house relationships by scheduling several brotherhood building activities after its weekly Wednesday night chapter meetings. This included an all house game of Ultimate Frisbee, in which there was approximately 80% participation from members of the chapter.
- The chapter put an emphasis on its big brother program, as it encouraged big brothers to meet with their little brothers outside of scheduled meeting times in addition to what was already planned.
- The chapter placed emphasis on trying to make the environment in the house ever-congenial while still emphasizing the development of new member class friendships.
- Although the chapter held the word “pledge” with no ill intent, it has chosen to remove it from all written documents concerning the new member education program to eliminate the improper or derogatory use of the word.\*

**2. Initiate 100% of the new member class at January formal initiation ceremony.**

- This was one—if not the—top priority in the chapter’s new member education program. In order for a new member to be initiated, he had to achieve at least a 2.4 GPA during the first semester. The chapter instituted many resources and academic “check-ups” to help facilitate the success of its new member class this year.
- At the beginning of the fall semester, the active chapter met the new member class with this challenge, thus making them aware of the difficulty and providing them the opportunity to unify behind it.\*
- The scholarship chair met with each new member individually near the middle of the semester to monitor how new members were adjusting to college. During these meetings, the scholarship chair also calculated new members’ GPAs at the time to give them an idea what needed to happen in order to get a 2.4. Those new members who were not on track for a 2.4 were then met with regularly to check up on their progress.
- The chapter’s scholarship chair presented a brief workshop on study skills and time management to the entire new member class.\*
- At the end of the fall semester, the new member class achieved a cumulative 3.500 GPA, a 0.176 improvement over the previous year’s class, which illustrates the effort placed on this goal from the strong new member class.

**1. Encourage both new Member class and chapter unity.**

- New members were required to complete “PA” (new member-active) talks with in-house active members, three out-of-house members, the chapter’s cook and housemother. They were also required to conduct an interview with alumni, either over the phone or in person. These talks gave both new members and actives the chance to share background information about each other, as well as gave active members an opportunity to share the deeper aspects of our brotherhood.
- The new member class traveled to Illinois University during their annual new member class sneak. This trip gave the members an opportunity to build unity as a class, as well

as experience how other chapters are different from Kansas State University FarmHouse. In addition, the annual new member class sneak serves the vital role of building relations with other chapters.

- Each year the new member class is assigned the task of cutting enough wood for the chapter fireplace to last the winter. This activity was greatly physical and was an opportunity to build teamwork as a new member class.
- Once a week, an out-of-house member would lead a Bible study for the new members. This was attended weekly by about 12 members of the new member class. This gave the new members the opportunity to grow spiritually together and also challenge each other to live up to the standards of FarmHouse Fraternity and the Bible.

2. **Seek improvement of the new member education program through review, alumni involvement, and creative thinking.**

- Each year in the spring semester, a group of men, led by the new member educator, leads a revision of the previous new member education program. At least 3 recent initiates must be involved in this process.
- Through this revision, the chapter has eliminated the written word "pledge" from all materials.\*
- This process began defining the traits of the "FarmHouse man" that the chapter hopes to build.\*
- The chapter has begun to document the perceived purpose and outcomes of its activities during new member education, enabling it, in the future, to hold itself to the desired outcomes and let unedifying tradition dissolve.\*
- The chapter recognized our area alumni as a strength to our program and has seen an increase in the past year of their involvement in new member education.