

ALPHA CHI FORUMS

PROGRAMS WITH A PURPOSE

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A workshop presented by the Indiana Beta Chapter of Alpha Chi (Huntington University) at the AX National Convention. St. Louis, MO. March 28, 2014



PURPOSE

This presentation discusses Alpha Chi led academic programs, suggestions for attracting a campus audience (including collaborative efforts), ideas that have been successful in the past, and the importance of establishing programming “traditions”. Included are a list of academic programming ideas and feedback/participation from those who attended the 2014 workshop.

The Alpha Chi Forum Approach

At Huntington University, we have evolved an approach to programming under the rubric of “Alpha Chi Forums”. This label provides continuity and helps promote some degree of name recognition for our programs even when these are new ideas or concepts.



The Campus Tradition Approach

Another way of developing programs with a purpose is to establish them as a tradition. We found that a quiz bowl involving faculty and students was a popular idea. We found that having a forum on graduate study was useful to both AX members and students at large. The idea then is to try to make sure that we hold these each year so that when one comes up, our potential audiences think “Oh, yeah, I remember that. Maybe I should go.” The difficulty, of course, is getting the tradition or traditions started, but after the second year this should be done. Don’t try to re-invent the wheel: look back in your chapter records to see what may have been done in the past.



The “Collaboration with Others” Approach

Collaboration with others is key to both program and audience expansion. There are any number of groups, offices, or interests on campus that Alpha Chi can work with in doing programming that will widen your prospective audience. Does your student government promote programming? Are there departments that would co-advise academic programs with you? Does your academic dean have funs to do programming with that he/she would be happy to have AX provide the ideas and execution for? Would your career placement or testing center be interested in doing a program with you? Do your art, music, digital media, or theater departments have programing that could lead into a Forum discussion, such as a panel discussion following a controversial play? Sometimes the partner is more than happy to put up minimal funding materials, prizes, or publicity if AX does the heavy lifting or organizing the program side. Working with departments is usually a winner because faculty will participate, and this provides free lecturer or discussant input. Each campus is different, so you need to be creative, but it is a certainty that collaboration possibilities are numerous, interesting, and low cost. Each campus is different so some ideas can't be pursued on your campus, but you might be able to work with existing programs or think of complementary ones.



SOME HUNTINGTON AX PROGRAMMING EXPERIENCES/IDEAS



- ❖ Events which honor the academic achievements of students
- ❖ Examples
 - ❖ Allow students to present academic works to student body in an Academic Research Forum.
 - ❖ Scholar of the Year Award which recognizes the AX member who has done the most to contribute to and promote AX ideas of scholarship and character.

SOME HUNTINGTON AX PROGRAMMING EXPERIENCES/IDEAS ⁷



- ❖ Events which present learning in fun and creative ways
- ❖ Examples
 - ❖ Trivia competitions such as a “Are You Smarter than a College Student?” quiz which pits a student panel against a faculty panel who proposes questions from the core curriculum.
 - ❖ Quiz Bowls, on the other hand, has a variety of topics (such as during J-Term with the questions from J-Term offerings). Such competitive events create good attendance.

SOME HUNTINGTON AX PROGRAMMING EXPERIENCES/IDEAS



- ❖ Events which meet the pressing needs of a group of students
- ❖ Examples
 - ❖ Graduate School Forum to discuss the ins and outs and the pitfalls involved in gearing up to apply for graduate school.
 - ❖ Panel discussions on community concerns: academic integrity, academic freedom, grade inflation.
 - ❖ Events which collaborate with already scheduled school events such as a faculty lecture, university lecture series, plays or other artistic performances or events. These can be a hit and miss depending on how interesting the program was. Works best with controversial speakers or productions.

AX Forums: Suggestions for Campus Programs with a Purpose

- ✓ Organize panel discussions on your institution's mission, purpose, commitments
- ✓ Organize a panel on Learning and Values based on the values of your institution
- ✓ Organize panel discussions on the value of a higher education
- ✓ Organize panel discussions on current, controversial, or classic issues
- ✓ Organize panel discussions on community concerns
- ✓ Organize panel discussions on plays, operas, musicals, art displays, movies

AX Forums: Suggestions for Campus Programs with a Purpose

- ✓ Do an annual themed series each year, a kind of Alpha Chi emphasis program
- ✓ If your institution has an annual issues emphasis, try to get AX involved in the planning and leading
- ✓ Organize debates on current, controversial, or classic issues
- ✓ Organize debates related to elections
- ✓ Get involved with your institution's honors program
- ✓ Explore ways of working with freshman honor programs
- ✓ Do something with students that come in with the highest-level scholarships

AX Forums: Suggestions for Campus Programs with a Purpose

- ✓ Advise something during Freshman Orientation, like a discussion on academic integrity
- ✓ Make an advisor or co-advisor a speaker in a campus lecture series
- ✓ Organize an AX lecture series with professors or members of the local community
- ✓ Organize an AX dinner lecture series with professors over dinner in the university dining commons
- ✓ Set up a Farewell Address with professors who are retiring or leaving
- ✓ Organize a Quiz Bowl competition

AX Forums: Suggestions for Campus Programs with a Purpose

- ✓ Organize “Fun” activities, such as a “Are You Smarter than a College Student” competition with faculty or Human Scrabble or a Core Curriculum Trivia Bowl
- ✓ Set up academic competitions such as an Academic Olympics with prizes
- ✓ If your institution doesn’t have an academic awards ceremony or honors convocation, organize one. If it does, try to get AX involved with the planning and execution.
- ✓ Advise a Teaching Excellence Award each year for the faculty and have the winner give a lecture at an Alpha Chi – advised Forum.

AX Forums: Suggestions for Campus Programs with a Purpose

- ✓ Advise a faculty research series at which faculty are asked to present their work
- ✓ See if academic departments or divisions would like to co-advise forums with AX
- ✓ See if your campus library would like to host and co-advise some of the panels, debates, and so forth mentioned in this listing or programs linked to books and research
- ✓ Agree to produce a regular AX column in your campus newspaper
- ✓ Organize student presentations of their scholarship papers at a forum

AX Forums: Suggestions for Campus Programs with a Purpose

- ✓ Organize student presentations of scholarly work
- ✓ Organize AX member presentations of their scholarship papers at a forum
- ✓ Set up workshops on preparing for graduate school and other subjects
- ✓ Do a chapter brainstorming session on ways to promote academic excellence on your campus
- ✓ Do a chapter brainstorming session on ways to reward and/or recognize academic excellence.
- ✓ Try to develop a recurring series of Forums to create familiarity with AX programs

WORKSHOP DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK

Here are some of the ideas and suggestions that emerged in our workshop discussion and feedback:

1. Be clear on the purpose of your programs: promote academic concerns? Service-oriented? Promote scholarship? Recognize students or faculty? Visibility for AX? Fun? Building alliances with other campus organizations or offices? Combination of the above?
2. Problems: trying to get the campus to see that AX programs are not just for AX members; scheduling since many campuses don't have a general calendar or master schedule to check for conflicts (maybe AX could lead a campaign to get such a calendar set up); AX members are very busy and involved in addition to trying to maintain their academic records. We must work with volunteers who may be over-committed.

WORKSHOP DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK

Here are some of the ideas and suggestions that emerged in our workshop discussion and feedback:

3. Working with other campus honor societies was an idea that is being pursued on some campuses and interested a lot of people in this workshop. We have common interests; let's work together.
4. The workshop focused on primarily academic programming, but there are other related ideas such as tutoring programs/academic assistance or service projects (working with a local food bank) that chapters need to consider as well.
5. What about working with local pre-college schools in various ways, from doing programs for them to tutoring to competitions? This might be especially helpful for under-privileged schools.
6. Fundraising to facilitate programming elicited a lot of discussion; both pro and con.

WORKSHOP DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK

Here are some of the ideas and suggestions that emerged in our workshop discussion and feedback:

7. Chapter meetings should be held on a regular basis.
8. Use the National AX service project for both educational and programming purposes.
9. Do campus poster presentations in the library, the main hall of important academic buildings, etc. The idea here is that there are usually art displays to show the work of theater students: why are there no displays to show the work of other disciplines? Poster sessions could do this.
10. AX advised awards: to outstanding students, to outstanding faculty, for outstanding performances; for outstanding service.
11. Do a regular Forum on key academic issues and values: grade inflation, plagiarism, integrity, academic freedom, stewardship of talents.

WORKSHOP DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK

Here are some of the ideas and suggestions that emerged in our workshop discussion and feedback:

12. Publicity: local chapters should do a publicity audit and see what ways programs could be publicized on and off campus.
13. Advisor academic paper competitions on campus.
14. Advisor academic competitions for high school students.
15. Make sure that your chapter has at least one advisor and one student attending the National Conventions to pick up program ideas.
16. Publish an online “journal” of the best student papers.
17. See if AX students could present brief papers at your school’s Board of Trustees meeting.
18. Advisor interdisciplinary symposia.

WORKSHOP DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK

Here are some of the ideas and suggestions that emerged in our workshop discussion and feedback:

19. Advise a symposium with your institution's president or chief academic officer.
20. Do seminars or presentations at Freshman Orientation.
21. See if AX students could present brief papers at a faculty meeting.
22. Ask your academic administration for regular budget support.
23. Do a brainstorming session in your chapter on program ideas early in the year. No idea too crazy or too big.

PROGRAMS WITH A PURPOSE

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THANK YOU

Huntington University, 2014
Indiana Beta Chapter of Alpha Chi