

# STARTING A GRADUATE CHAPTER

Starting a successful graduate chapter is much easier than it may seem. It only takes organization and some key brothers to make it happen. Listed below are several steps to consider when starting a graduate chapter. There is help available and brothers willing to participate if the leadership is properly organized.

- Find out what has been done in the past in your area. There may have been a graduate chapter at some point in time. Headquarters staff may have that information. Call the Assistant Director of Graduate Development for assistance. There may also be some graduates still in the area who can help identify key graduates.
- Find a core group of graduates willing to support and help organize the chapter. Your President should come from this group or they should find him. Get the group together to generate ideas and structure a game plan.
- Enlist the assistance of the Headquarters staff. The staff can assist with start up, particularly if you have an interested core group. A database of local graduates from IHQ can help identify the local Phi Gam population.
- When your core group is ready to plan its first event, it is time to send a communication to all local Phi Gams. Headquarters can assist with this as well. Contact the staff at least four to six weeks before the event to plan for sending out invitations.
- After the event has taken place, write letters/send emails to all those who attended thanking them for doing so, and notify them of the next event and encouraging them to bring another brother. Then, send another communication to all brothers who did not attend to report the success of the event. Be sure to notify them of the next event, and encourage their future attendance.
- Be prepared to share with brothers how they can connect with the graduate chapter, or provide this information in follow up communications (see section on Communications).
- At the event, have program ideas ready for introduction and discussion. The more you offer the graduates, the more involved they will become (see the section on Activities and Special Events for more ideas).

Communication and recruitment are key to successful future events. The first meeting does not have to have a large turn out, but it must be well-organized and fun to ensure brothers who attended return for future events. We suggest graduate chapters host a minimum of one event per quarter, with a preference for bi-monthly or monthly events.