

Appendix A: Best practices in the MIT FSILG community

About 100 "best practices" were identified in the 2014-15 accreditation reviews. Many are of general nature and are listed in the 2013-14 report. New and revised Best practices are listed here.

Governance & Oversight

1. Undergraduate officers regularly participate in house corporation meetings.
2. Officers examine and update job descriptions and transition plans, sometimes at a retreat.
3. Attending AILG accreditation reviews provides insights for officers in training.
4. The living group provides explicit opportunity to review traditions and the group meeting process.
5. House tasks are subdivided sufficiently to avoid overwhelming individuals.
6. Asana is a useful on-line task management system that can help keep track of tasks for both alumni and undergraduates.

Scholarship

1. Financial scholarships are offered for in-house tutoring, supporting the education of other members.

Member Development

1. For a group with more members than can be housed, a class-year based quota system can maintain balance and good connectivity between members.
2. Students are paired with alumni for guidance on career and life issues.
3. Involvement in group functions and leadership is encouraged through rewards such as priority in picking rooms.
4. Membership is increasing awareness of mental health within the living group.

Alumni Programming

1. Alumni support chapter by reviewing resumes.
2. Alumni can support recruitment "behind the scenes", leaving actives to engage prospective members more thoroughly.
3. Regional alumni events, including retreats, and using social media such as FaceBook or Twitter can keep alumni informed and engaged.
4. Alumni are involved in member development with informal house visits, formal one-on-one consultation, and group talks.

Financial and Physical Plant

1. Capital campaigns are conducted to renovate premises.
2. Non-resident members are charged an appropriate fee.
3. The group sets aside 20% of the budget for capital expenditures in order to keep up the facility.
4. Distributing individual debt to the rest of the membership can yield a high payback rate due to social pressure.
5. Cloud-based bookkeeping provides good access to records and doesn't require backup.
6. Recurring alumni donations can be arranged through PayPal, even if in small amounts.

Recruitment and Retention

1. Pre-orientation programs increases living group visibility and improves potential for recruitment.
2. Communication with parents can facilitate recruitment and improve retention.
3. "Bring a friend" events can bring in a few new members as sophomores.

Risk Management

1. Every member is trained in risk management according to council or

organization expectations (e.g. party-safe training).

2. Members are encouraged to live in the house over the summer, improving the ratio of boarders to members.
3. A "coat check" can be used to check guests for outside alcohol.
4. Member "sponsors" of summer boarders can help reduce summer risk and improve rent collection.

Community Development & Philanthropy

1. The group helps with community service and or philanthropic events organized by other living groups.

Appendix B: Areas needing improvement.

Again, many areas needing improvement were flagged in this year's reviews. Common and new issues are listed here.

Governance & Oversight

1. Restarting a chapter requires better records of processes before heritage is lost. A strong national organization can be very helpful here.

Scholarship

1. Academic awareness within membership should improve so that members can receive needed assistance.
2. There are still many groups that are still looking for a Faculty Advisor.

Member Development

1. Retreats should be used more for examining operations and less for partying.
2. Housing contracts are not implemented by some groups and are especially important for summer boarders.

Alumni Programming

1. More alumni should attend accreditation reviews and volunteer to review other FSILGs.
2. Living group anniversaries are excellent opportunities to increase alumni participation in advisory boards and in the house corporation.
3. Boards with low membership are subject to individual burnout as a small number of alumni handle most of the work.

Financial and Physical Plant

1. Some chapters still have little equity in their residences due to original lease agreements, so alumni don't contribute much.
2. There are still groups struggling to maintain membership and avoid the attendant financial risk.

Recruitment and Retention

1. Informal recruitment methods are usually insufficient to maintain or grow membership.
2. Retention is still an issue for many chapters that do not use a year-round recruitment model and do not emphasize moving into the house.

Risk Management

1. Non-member summer boarders still pose significant risk, requiring more oversight by live-in members and local alumni.
2. Some groups do not have an independent judicial board for dealing with sensitive issues that can distract officers.

Community Development

1. Pictures posted to the group web site and other public areas should be removed or cleaned up to avoid the appearance of underage drinking and poor self-control.