

AILG Accreditation Program

(H.L. Marshall, Accreditation Committee Chair)

Why We Review

1. Serve MIT
 - Review assures MIT that every living group is **healthy**
 - Health indicators include behavior, finances, governance, physical plant, risk management
2. Serve AILG members
 - Review collects and publishes “**Best Practices**”
 - Review elucidates **problems** and **lessons learned** across FSILG system
 - Community **shares** experiences privately

What We Do

1. Each AILG living group is reviewed
 - Review teams are AILG alumni volunteers
 - Groups complete Basic Data Form (BDF)
 - Reviewers lead discussion of BDF info
2. Team **recommendations** go to FSILG office:
 - Accredit, or
 - Accredit with reservations, or
 - Do not accredit
3. Review on 2 yr cycle or shorter (if reservations)

Who We Are

1. Accreditation Committee oversees program
 - Reports to the AILG Board
 - Develops, maintains process and BDF content
 - Supervises the Accreditation Coordinator
2. Accreditation Coordinator arranges reviews
 - Maintains on-line BDFs
 - Keeps processes on line
 - Conducts reviews
3. Review team (YOU!)
 - Discusses BDF with living group
 - BDF is a **guide**, topics can be wide ranging
 - Writes review reports
 - Sends final report to review attendees and Coordinator

For More Information:

- <http://ailg.mit.edu/committees/ailg-accreditation-program/>
- <http://web.mit.edu/ailg/ailgreviews/>

Some Best Practices

1. Alumni attend Accreditation Reviews, learning and sharing Best Practices.
2. Every member is party-safe trained.
3. Membership development includes ways for new members to assist or become officers.
4. Officer handbooks are dynamically maintained via an on-line system.
5. Capital campaigns are conducted regularly to renovate housing.
6. Alumni are involved in member development via one-on-one consultation, group talks, and even field trips.
7. Lectures by professors improves focus on academics and improves relations with faculty.
8. Members are encouraged to join at least two on-campus organizations or sports.
9. Member development explicitly addresses mental health issues.
10. There is an alumni advisory board that is independent of the house corporation.
11. Membership diversity is deliberately pursued and maintained.
12. Setting aside 20% of the operating budget for capital expenditures can avoid problems with deferred maintenance.
13. Communication with parents (e.g., with newsletters) can facilitate recruitment and improve retention.
14. Quiet hours encourage undisturbed scholarship.
15. Living space and commons areas are clean and well maintained.
16. Living groups cooperate in community service events organized by others.
17. Online tools are used to improve member communication.
18. Non-local alumni are involved in house corporation affairs as treasurer, communications officer, and similar roles that do not require a physical presence on the property.

Some Areas Needing Improvement or Lessons Learned

1. Volunteering for Accreditation reviews helps avoid problems encountered elsewhere.
2. Informal recruitment methods are usually insufficient to maintain or grow.
3. Risks attributed to summer boarders can be mitigated with member "sponsorship" and 1/1 member/boarder ratio or better.
4. Recruitment improves with specific training and process review.
5. Restarting a chapter requires very good records of processes that may get lost.
6. Some groups have not implemented housing contracts for summer boarders.
7. When there is little equity in a residence due to a lease agreement, alumni may not contribute much.
8. Some groups do not have independent judicial boards for dealing with internal, sensitive issues that can distract officers.
9. Pictures posted to the group web site or other public web sites that give the appearance of underage drinking or poor self-control should be removed.
10. Alumni house corporations or advisory boards with low membership are subject to individual burnout, so piecemeal tasks should be developed to encourage new alumni involvement.