



KAPPA DELTA PI

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INTERNATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY IN EDUCATION

**Standing Committee Chair  
Volunteer Handbook**

3707 Woodview Trace  
Indianapolis, Indiana, USA 46268-1158  
KDP.org

## About This Handbook

This committee chair handbook gives you an overview of what it means to serve as chair of one of Kappa Delta Pi's international committees—the roles, responsibilities and expectations of chairs, and the tools and resources to make your service and committee a success.

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### Support from International Headquarters

Need suggestions or advice? Your committee staff liaison is ready to answer any of your questions or talk with you about your committee work or other KDP-related items. Call toll-free 800.284.3167; outside of the United States and Canada +1.317.871.4900. Or go to [www.kdp.org/contactus](http://www.kdp.org/contactus). Hours of operation: 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. (ET year-round)

*“Let us not wait a moment. Let each of us work to build organizations where everyone can make a contribution . . . where everybody counts . . . organizations which will continue to change the world.”* –Elizabeth Dole



## Dear Standing Committee Chair,

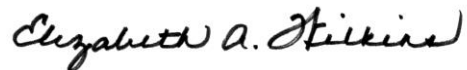
On behalf of the Kappa Delta Pi Executive Council, staff, and members, we want to thank you for your support and commitment to serve as chair for one of Kappa Delta Pi's international committees.

As a committee chair, you and your committee members will be supporting the work of the Executive Council and advancing the mission and strategic goals of the Society. Moreover, you will be an integral part of creating the vibrant communities, exceptional experiences, and essential resources for educators worldwide.


For more than 100 years, volunteers have been the heart of Kappa Delta Pi's work. The ongoing commitment and efforts of volunteer leaders have empowered educators to change how they teach and lead in their classrooms, schools, and communities.

We look forward to working with you as we continue to promote excellence in education.

Sincerely,



Dr. Elizabeth A. Wilkins  
President



Faye Snodgress, CAE  
Executive Director

The **mission** of Kappa Delta Pi is to honor the achievements of educators and promote excellence in education.

## **Getting Started: Role and Responsibilities of Committee Chairs**

Committee chairs, in conjunction with their staff liaisons, develop goals that guide the committee's work during the fiscal year. The committee goals serve to further the strategic priorities of the Society. The Executive Council drafts committee goals that align with the current strategic plan. During the first committee meeting conference call of the fiscal year, the goals are shared, giving committee members an opportunity to help create the action plan, with assignments and a timeline for completing the goals.

The chair of each standing committee participates in a conference call with the Executive Council and/or submits a status report to the President of the Executive Council or to the Council member liaison at least every six months, or more frequently at the request of the Executive Council.

As chair, you need to schedule a conference call with your committee each quarter, or more frequently, if necessary. Additional responsibilities include:

- In July or August of each fiscal year, the committee will develop an action plan of projects and activities with associated goals and benchmarks in support of the strategic plan that will serve as the focus of the Committee's efforts. The President of the Society will approve the Committee's annual action plan.
- In June of each fiscal year, the chair will provide a written summary of the progress made by the committee.
- Committee chairs provide an initial one-page report outlining the goals and activities of the committee.
- Each committee chair also is required to prepare a one-page report in September of the second year of the biennium for inclusion in the Convocation Business meeting booklet, and to represent the committee during the Business meeting. This report highlights the goals and actions completed by the committee.
- Committee chairs may join the Executive Council during its Convocation meeting.
- Regularly thank or acknowledge the work of the committee members.
- Hold people accountable for completing their tasks.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of Committees**

KDP's committees support and inform the work of the Executive Council and assist in furthering the goals of the strategic plan of the Society. Committees are charged with developing recommendations for the Executive Council, when appropriate, and implementing initiatives and projects established by the committee. To ensure continuity of effort, a member of the Executive Council and a Headquarters staff member serve as liaisons to each Standing Committee.

The Standing Committees of the Society are outlined in the [Kappa Delta Pi International Bylaws](#) . Currently, these committees are:

- Budget
- Chapter Services
- Communications
- Constitution and Bylaws
- Graduate Student
- International
- Leadership Development and Nominations
- Membership

Other international committees include:

- Advancement
- Audit
- Public Policy

In addition, the Executive Council can establish ad hoc committees or task forces to complete specific tasks. An ad hoc committee disbands upon completion of its task or at the end of the biennium.

Go to [www.kdp.org/communities/getinvolved.php](http://www.kdp.org/communities/getinvolved.php) for specific roles and responsibilities of each standing committee and other committees. Committee lists for the current biennium can be found at [www.kdp.org/aboutkdp/ourleadership.php](http://www.kdp.org/aboutkdp/ourleadership.php).

## **Working with Your Staff Liaison and Headquarters**

Your committee staff liaison is your primary staff contact for your committee and works with you to ensure that the committee's work is aligned with the Society's mission and strategic goals. In addition, the staff liaison can provide you with background information, updates on relevant Headquarters activities, and assistance as needed. Building a strong working relationship with your staff liaison will help in making your committee a success.

## **Effective Committee Meetings**

Committee members need to feel that their time is being used productively, which requires careful planning of each meeting agenda and of the work assignments between meetings. In addition, it is important to understand how setting guidelines on how the committee operates, setting the tone for general group dynamics, and acknowledging different generations of members can lead to more effective committee meetings.

Committee conference calls are scheduled at a minimum quarterly, but committees may meet as often as once a month in order to facilitate work in completing strategic goals. Calls are typically 60 minutes in length.

### ***Before the meeting***

- The committee chair sets the date, time, and place of the meetings and works with Headquarters staff to prepare the agenda. An agenda template can be found under the Volunteer section of the KDP web site.
- The proposed agenda is distributed to the committee by the chair in advance of the meeting, together with any documents pertaining to the matters to be discussed. These should be placed in the community area of KDP Global.
- The staff liaison schedules the meeting using the appropriate program: either conference call or GoToMeeting software for a visual component.
- An agenda and call-in information should be sent about 2 weeks in advance of the call, with a reminder sent 24–48 hours before the call.

### ***During the meeting***

- The chair conducts the committee meetings and guides the committee through the agenda items.
- At the first meeting conference call, the chair outlines the contributions expected from committee members.
- During the first meeting, the chair and committee members set the group expectations of how the committee will work together.
- Minutes are kept of each meeting conference call. A volunteer can serve to take minutes for the committee, or the task can be rotated through the members of the committee. A meeting minutes template can be found under the Volunteer section of the KDP web site.
- Committee members are expected to report back to the committee on any activities or tasks done between meeting calls. It is important to ensure that the committee clearly understands its charge.
- A committee is most effective when activities continue between meetings.
- The chair must encourage the constructive discussion of diverse viewpoints and encourage all committee members to participate in the discussion and to share their opinions.
- Starting each meeting with a five minute “Strategy Discussion” can be a good way to engage participants. A “Strategy Discussion” is a specific discussion question designed to stimulate discussion. It would be an explicit part of the agenda. For example: “If we could do only three things, what would they be?” or “What is the smallest action we could take that would have the biggest effect regarding \_\_\_?” The KDP staff liaison can offer suggestions based on current considerations facing the Society as a whole.

### ***After the meeting***

- The person recording the minutes distributes them to all committee members within ten days of the call.
- The Chair contacts any committee members for follow up on assignments, as needed.

## Setting Group Expectations

One way to improve meeting effectiveness and create group cohesion is to establish committee group expectations at the first meeting conference call.

Group expectations are a set of guidelines agreed to by all participants, specifying how a committee operates. These expectations improve meeting effectiveness by helping members stay on task. These either may be set by the chair or through discussion; however, all members must endorse the group expectations.

Setting expectations does not mean regulating every aspect of group interaction; rather it is an opportunity for the group to express its values. It also can be used as a team-building activity to build group consistency.

Examples of group expectations are:

- Start and end on time.
- Respect the agenda.
- Be prepared for the meeting.
- Actively contribute and listen to others.
- Seek to understand, then to be understood.
- Agree to disagree without being disagreeable.
- Respect every perspective and comment.
- Avoid side meetings (only one person talks at a time).
- Respect confidentiality. What is agreed to remain among the group members stays in the group.
- Make all decisions by consensus.
- Evaluate the meeting.
- Celebrate successes.
- Have fun.

## Group Dynamics

A committee is like a living organism made up of many individuals, and it is important as the leader of the committee to encourage the committee to develop in a healthy way.

Understanding how a group develops and interacts will help you in this process. Bruce Tuckman's theory of group development (Forsyth 2010) and its five stages will best describe the progress you will see as the committee interacts.

- Forming: Committee members become oriented to one another.
- Storming: Conflicts can arise in the committee as it sets goals and develops an action plan.
- Norming: Conflict subsides and the committee becomes more structured and evolved across shared standards.
- Performing: The committee moves past disagreement and concentrates on the work that needs to be done.
- Adjourning: If the committee is an ad-hoc committee, it completes its task and disbands.

It is very normal for effective committees to move along the middle three stages throughout the same meeting. Also, the group will go through the stages again when a new member joins the committee. As chair, it is your role to moderate these interactions and facilitate the robust discussion of differing points of view. Encourage members to remain focused on the goals of the committee's action plan and Society to assist the storming phase of interaction.

### **Engaging Different Generations of Committee Members**

Generational differences can affect how a committee does its work. Also, these differences play an important role in how volunteers perceive whether their time and commitment are worth giving to the organization. The actual experience of volunteer committee work may determine for the committee member whether he or she will volunteer again and, possibly, the value of his or her membership in the organization.

For example, baby boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) join associations because "it's the right thing to do" for their industry, profession, or community. Generation X (1965–1981) and Millennials (1982–1995) join associations when it's the right thing for them personally. They refuse to engage in a culture that isn't open to their participation and fails to address their needs.

Furthermore, boomers are driven by the opportunity to serve and will gladly make an effort to "fix" whatever is ailing an association. That's not the case with Generation X and Millennials. They expect a great experience and want to affiliate themselves with a great cause. Negative, disorganized, stressful situations are a sure-fire way to turn them off to your association (Sladek 2011).

The importance of feedback and recognition also may vary depending on age. Millennials like to be given feedback often, and they will ask for it often. They want clear goals and expectations. Their reward is the fact that it is meaningful to them. Generation Xers like regular and constructive feedback, but are self-sufficient in wanting only some structure and coaching, and a more hands-off type of supervisory style. They are not enamored with public recognition, and freedom is their best reward. Baby boomers want less regular feedback, and with documentation. They are motivated by public recognition and praise for their long hours and hard work.

There are numerous sources and reports on the Web on generational differences. Go to <http://www.wmfc.org/uploads/GenerationalDifferencesChart.pdf> to view one chart that breaks down the details of these differences.

### **Additional Committee Chair Volunteer Resources**

You can find additional tools and resources under the [Volunteer Resources](#) section of the KDP web site.

- [Kappa Delta Pi Constitution and Bylaws](#)
- [Standing Committees Roles and Responsibilities](#)



- Committee Agenda Template
- Committee Minutes Template
- Sample Committee Action Plan
- Glossary of Kappa Delta Pi Terms and Acronyms

### *Sources*

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