Like the other 65 members of the North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC), Sigma Nu considered changes to its event management policies as a result of the two NIC resolutions passed in fall 2018, known as the Hard Alcohol Ban and the Alcohol & Drug Guidelines. Both resolutions required NIC member organizations to make corresponding changes to their organization policies by September 1, 2019 to align with the minimum expectations of each resolution. This article highlights an example of one organization’s attempt to implement the fall 2018 NIC health and safety resolutions with the hope it can be helpful for other organizations and communities, but by no means does the author intend to imply that Sigma Nu has or is carrying out implementation of the policy any better or worse than others.

Considering policy changes necessary to align with the NIC resolutions opened an opportunity for Sigma Nu to conduct a comprehensive review, with general counsel and stakeholder input, of additional policy changes that should be considered by the board of directors (governing authority of the organization in between legislative conferences). That review focused primarily on identifying changes to make the policy easier to understand, and thus easier to implement (at least in theory), and update language to reflect current nomenclature and practice. The end result is an amended policy, known as Sigma Nu’s Risk Reduction Policy, that is 400 words shorter than the previous policy and incorporates all the changes necessary to align with the NIC Hard Alcohol Ban and Alcohol & Drug Guidelines. The board adopted this amended policy at their spring 2019 in-person meeting, with an effective date of August 1, 2019. Next the responsibility shifted to the staff to implement the policy.

Sigma Nu staff identified three primary strategies for implementing the updated policy: one, resource update; two, constituent communication; and three, constituent education.

**Resource Update**
Staff needed to first determine all locations where the old policy was located and referenced. A member of the staff undertook the project to create a spreadsheet listing the webpages and resources referencing the old policy. A total of 100 webpages and resources were identified.

Then the appropriate staff responsible for those pages and resources were assigned tasks to make the necessary updates. The updates were made over a two-week period, beginning in the middle of July, so all 100 of the webpages and resources referenced or included the updated policy by August 1 (the effective date of the new policy).
Constituent Communication
Staff implemented a multi-pronged approach for communicating the policy changes to constituents, the emphasis being to provide collegiate members and volunteers the information and tools necessary to successfully implement the policy changes locally. To assist with framing the communication efforts, staff broke the policy changes into three distinct categories: one, substantive changes; two, minor changes to reflect the NIC Alcohol & Drug Guidelines; and three, minor changes to reflect current nomenclature and practices.

The most important category for constituents to become aware of was the substantive changes, of which there was only one that substantively impacted a collegiate chapter’s operations: the prohibition of alcohol above 15% alcohol by volume (ABV) on chapter premises and at chapter events, except when served by a licensed and insured third party vendor. The rest of the changes refined language to make the policy simpler to understand but did not actually change the expectations of the already in place policy.

With the focus areas established, staff proceeded with the following communication plan for the 2019-2020 academic year:

- June 10, 2019: Initial announcement email to collegiate members, alumni volunteers, and fraternity/sorority life advisors.
- July 25, 2019: Second announcement email (basically a reissue of the initial announcement email) to collegiate members, alumni volunteers, and fraternity/sorority life advisors.
- August 2019 – May 2020: Reminder of policy changes in monthly advisor and chapter officer e-newsletters.
- August 26, 2019: Article about policy changes published to website.
- Fall 2019: Article about policy changes to be included in fall issue of national magazine (The Delta).
- January 2020: Informational flyer to be distributed to all attendees of 2020 College of Chapters (educational conference for chapter presidents).
- January 20, 2020: Reminder email campaign to collegiate members, alumni volunteers, and fraternity/sorority life advisors.

Constituent Education
Staff developed and implemented a targeted education plan to coincide with the communication efforts detailed above. Similar to the communication plan, the key focus of the education plan was equipping constituents with tools and knowledge to implement the updated policy expectations. The education plan comprised of the following steps:
• June 10, 2019: Launch of webpage dedicated to sharing of policy change information and resources.
• June 10, 2019: Release of FAQ and Summary of Changes resources.
• July 10 and 24, 2019: Webinar trainings for alumni volunteers. They were recorded and posted to the website and Sigma Nu YouTube page.
• Fall 2019: Officer training and chapter presentation to be conducted as part of fall 2019 chapter consultation visits by Leadership Consultant staff team.
• Spring 2020: New officer training to be conducted at Sigma Nu Institutes (regional officer training conferences) and as part of spring 2020 chapter consultation visits.

Continued education, including the release of new helpful resources such as Sigma Nu’s recently released article on incorporating the policy changes into chapter tailgate events, and communication about the fraternity’s policies and expectations will have to be implemented on an ongoing basis beyond the initial policy changes rollout implemented in the 2019-2020 academic year. However, hopefully this example provides some helpful ideas as your organization or community considers the efforts that may be necessary to educate and communicate with stakeholders about current and future policy change initiatives.

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Fred is in his 12th year on Sigma Nu’s staff team and currently serves in the director of health and safety role. In that role, he oversees the fraternity’s prevention strategies and initiatives. Fred also is in his second year serving on the AFA Professional Development Committee and is a faculty member of the Interdisciplinary Institute for Hazing Prevention.