



Chapter Anniversary Planning



Planning a Chapter Anniversary

When a Delta Gamma chapter hits a milestone like its 50th, 100th or 125th anniversary, it is time for a grand celebration! A meaningful, memorable event will involve a dependable committee, a long time to plan and a budget to accommodate needs and goals.

The suggestions here are just that; however, they are based on past experiences from numerous chapters celebrating large anniversaries with up to 500 people. While some ideas may not work or pertain to each chapter planning an anniversary, the goal remains the same: reuniting members to celebrate the chapter's Delta Gamma roots and history.

WHEN:

Although certainly not a requirement, a chapter anniversary celebration is typically held in conjunction with a Founders Day or Homecoming weekend. To ensure the largest turnout and the broadest publicity, begin the plans approximately three-to-five years in advance.

WHO:

Typically, local chapter alumnae spearhead the anniversary celebration, with help from numerous alumnae, often in other geographic areas. The planning, however, must be done in conjunction with the collegiate chapter from the start to ensure teamwork, cooperation and success. Most of the collegiate chapter's involvement will be in the year prior to the event, however, the chapter must be included on selecting the celebration date due to academic calendar conflicts like exams or spring break.

The type and amount of involvement will vary for each of these groups:

- Chapter alumnae
- Chapter House Corporation officers
- Collegiate chapter advisers
- Collegiate officers and members
- Executive Offices staff members
- Local alumnae group

HOW:

- Create a small group to determine a few well-networked members for the initial core, as these women will have strong connections to other women who will want to be involved.
- Request spreadsheet electronically of chapter alumnae from Executive Offices.
- Gather the core group to review list of all chapter alumnae.
- Establish communication vehicles.
- Distribute committee chair needs and secure chairs.
- Appoint Class Agent for each class/group of classes as the messengers for each class (do not all have to be local.)
- Set meeting times well in advance that meet the committee's needs.
- Determine goals for committee and event and refer to them during planning.
- Determine date and location(s) of events.
- Develop calendar/timeline, working backwards from celebration date.

COMMITTEE ROLES/DUTIES:

While not every celebration will need all of these roles and some may need additional ones, the following are potential committee roles with associated duties:

25-50-60-70-75-year Member Invitations

- Request a contact list of these members by emailing Executive Offices at AlumDept@deltagamma.org.
- These special invitations should be handwritten; involve the collegiate director of alumnae relations to manage this task with collegiate members.
- Should include special recognition of the membership anniversary being celebrated.

25-50-60-70-75-year Member Recognition (*alumnae chapter president suggested*)

- Typically occurs at Founders Day luncheon and includes at least a cream rose.
- Names should be included in program.

Alumnae Liaison (*collegian(s) working with the alumnae chapter*)

- Will converse with collegiate liaison and take information back to collegiate chapter
- Ensures collegiate director of social events gets busses ordered to bring alumnae to chapter house after luncheon for tour, entertainment.
- Works with hired photographer

Alumnae and Collegiate Nametags

- For alumnae, a hanging nametag allows for coded event stickers, recognition ribbons and continued reuse through weekend

- Collegians can write their names on sticky nametags when they register for the luncheon.
- If possible, include alumnae nametags in registration packet envelope.

ANCHORA Publicity

- Contact Editor at Anchora@deltagamma.org at least one year in advance to inquire about announcement space and timing for publication.
- Send photographs to the Editor and pre-arrange for potential follow-up press.

Anniversary Chairman

- Appoints chairs.
- Calls committee meetings.
- Makes final arrangements.
- Selects food with co-chair and/or committee input.
- Acts as luncheon hostess and emcee.

Anniversary Co-Chairman

Annual House Corporation Meeting

- If the celebration is held in conjunction with Founders Day, typically the annual chapter House Corporation meeting is held on Sunday either at the chapter house or in a large hotel room.
- May follow buffet brunch at hotel; collegians join group for meeting after brunch.

Attendance Gift/Favor

- Should be included in the cost of the luncheon event, so price the event accordingly. Everyone who attends the lunch gets the favor, including the collegians.
- Consider a commemorative item that would be made available by pre-order, like a specially designed pin, for example. Additional commemorative items that can be pre-ordered include t-shirts, sweatshirts and a DVD/CD of the chapter slideshow presentation.
- Must be pre-paid and pre-ordered to avoid lost income.

Candlelighting Ceremony

- May incorporate select members as a special recognition, collegians, anniversary members, out-of-town attendees, etc.
- Must be someone familiar with rituals, especially a former/current Cabinet member or former Council member
- Utilize presentation folders that hold speakers' parts and look appropriate for ceremony.

Chapter Liaison (*an alumna working with the collegiate chapter*)

- Talks with collegiate chapter to ensure hostesses are at the right place at the right time.
- Works with Chapter Management Team and ten collegians as decade dinner greeters.

- Practices greeting/touring of alumnae with collegians to be like recruitment party (it is helpful to have former ATC or recruitment adviser in this role).

Chapter Alumnae of Distinction (creates, maintains and publicizes list in program)

- Inquire at least six months in advance to Executive Offices for notable chapter alumnae members since the chapter was founded.
- Will include all Fraternity scholarship and fellowship recipients, award recipients, notable community/national/world leaders, celebrities, Fraternity past/current Cabinet and Council.

Chapter House Alumnae Entertainment Hostesses

- Staff the chapter as greeters the entire weekend, from late Friday afternoon to Sunday evening. The house is never without two greeters at a time.
- Sign up for time slots to greet alumnae as they drop by the chapter house throughout the weekend.

Class Agents (Decade Chairs) Communications

- Divide the chapter alumnae list into decades (or groups of years) and there will be a class agent for each group.
- Serve as the lifeline to the women in their groups.
- Send decade-specific mailings to their groups, yet includes all of the other information.
- Network, find and maintain list of lost sisters to fuel attendance and interest.
- Keep running list of e-mails; passing it on to new one if they want to change.
- Send event date and initial news immediately after the first committee meeting.
- Contact all women, including those without e-mail.

Collegiate Chapter Entertainment

- Determines with collegians when they would like to perform and what they would like to do. May be at more than one event.
 - May occur at the main event and/or at the chapter house, where alumnae are taken on busses for dessert (consider a decorative themed cake), entertainment and tour after the main event.
 - May be singing, a skit, a musical performance, historic fashion show, etc.
- Coordinates tour guides; hostess breaks off and then waits in with dessert for her alumna to return. Each alumna has one greeter – like recruitment.

Convention & Visitors Bureau Liaison

- May be able to provide assistance with planning ideas and contacts as well as possible group discounts through select vendors, depending on the size of the town or city where the chapter is located.

Decade Dinner Hostesses

- Divide the attendees into three groups: beginning years, mid years, later to present. These groups will be the dinner groups.
- Have three rooms, with each having its own section, agenda for evening, songs, PowerPoint presentation, microphone, etc.
- After dinner, walls of rooms open to one large room.

Decade Dinner Speaker (one per dinner)

- Opens room/walls to ballroom after decade dinner.
- Organizes photos by decade and class. Each individual decade will have a photo.
- May incorporate a theme into dinner
- Utilize someone in the group that can be the decade speaker; one per dinner.
- Include only alumnae; suggest formal attire to set tone
- Include one collegian per decade as greeter/hostess
- Have punch or something to drink for early arrivals in foyer before doors open, with greeter at punch table.

Decorations

Facilities (*venue/hotel liaison*)

- Negotiates and signs hotel contract for block of rooms and other needed spaces and any meals. Potential spaces needed include:
 - Registration area,
 - Reception area,
 - Ballrooms,
 - Meeting rooms
- Reserve an on-campus venue if possible as an excellent choice for receptions, lunch banquet and dinners.
- Choose a central location close to campus and the chapter house.

Fraternity Awards (Cable, Loyalty, Shield, etc.)

- Will work with the local alumnae chapter to coordinate any awards that are to be presented.
- Should be an officer in the local alumnae chapter.

Event Hostesses

- One collegian per room in chapter house during tour
- Two collegians on Friday evening
- Two collegians at registration;
- Two Saturday morning at house entrance

Friday Evening Fundraiser (auction, raffle, etc.)

- Should include Foundation, House Corporation, alumnae chapter

Gifts (speaker(s), chairs, etc.)

Guest Speaker(s)

Hired Photographer Liaison

- Utilize a photographer that has online viewing and ordering capabilities to allow all attendees to order with a password.

- Determine discounts from the photographer that can be used for ordering prints for historic purposes.

Invitation Mailing

- Determine if the mailing can go under the umbrella of the local alumnae Panhellenic for bulk rate.
- A committee will be needed to assemble and prepare the mailing.

Local Alumnae Web Site Coordinator

- Elements from the planning such as marketing, logo, registration, payment system and attendee updates will need coordination on the Web site.
- Coordinate with collegiate chapter Web site, if there is one.

Luncheon Program Awards (*alumnae chapter president*)

- Alumnae Awards
- Collegiate Awards
 - Presented by the collegiate chapter president and vp: social standards.

Marketing Coordinator

- Coordinates printing of all materials, including banquet program.
- Coordinates signage (consider a banner that may be taken from venue to venue).

Registration Co-chairs

- Coordinates registration packets (there will be enough material to warrant an 8 x 12 envelope); if possible, include nametags in envelope.
- Consider electronic registration via the local Web site.
- Utilizing an á la carte registration menu makes it easy for members to select and pay for the events they choose to attend.

Roll Call

- Is assigned by Chair
- Must be able to pronounce Greek chapter letters (there will be other alumnae present not from the anniversary chapter, like from the local alumnae chapter, for instance).
- Calls out all chapters that are represented at the luncheon, with the anniversary chapter called last.

Song Chair/Pianist

- Coordinates all music for weekend, is ideally someone who plays the piano.
- Arranges for piano and songs after Decade Dinners.
- May find Delta Gamma song lyrics online in the DG website library.

Special Invitations/Announcements (*Council/Regional Team*)

- Send invitations with the understanding that the recipient's way is being paid by the host; announcements are sent with the understanding that the recipient is paying her own way.

Transportation

- May include busses to and from events and hotel/chapter house.

- May need to organize alumnae drivers to and from airport.
- Organizes busses to run every thirty minutes between the main event and chapter house.
 - Assign a ticket to each person; is included in registration packet.
 - Depart main event 30 minutes following lunch, with one bus making a continual loop; bus keeps running until all are back

Treasurer (suggest that this also be the Registration Chair)

- Maintains budget and attendance list for registration.
- Forwards registration list to chairs and registration chair.
- Use and link PayPal to the local Web site to enable women to pay and register electronically.
 - Build in PayPal fees or allow for them in the budget.
- Consider utilizing Google docs, where documents may be viewed and updated by more than one person in a central location.

MARKETING & PUBLICITY

With the core committee in place, a logo and other thematic elements should be decided. A logo should:

- Create an identifiable brand on all communications pieces and vehicles.
- Be associated with the celebration from inception to the big event.
- Be available in various electronic formats for usage (PDF, JPG, EPS)
- Incorporate recognizable and relevant images, such as:
 - Chapter letter(s)
 - Delta Gamma symbols
 - Name of school
 - School colors
 - School mascot
 - Year of chapter founding

It is never too soon to begin publicity. Publicity must:

- Meet the diverse needs and ages of all attendees and
- Utilize media of all types to market the celebration accordingly.

Publicity and marketing includes the following potential marketing vehicles:

Alumnae Groups

- Contact Director: Alumnae Resources at AlumResources@deltagamma.org

The ANCHORA

- Announcement sent to Editor for publication

Collegiate Chapter Website

Email:

- Announcements
- Invitations (not as a substitute for a hard copy, mailed invitation)

- Newsletters (local alumnae newsletter, chapter alumnae newsletter)
- Reminders
- Save-the-date card

Facebook

Fraternity Website

- Contact DG-EO@deltagamma.org for potential announcement via Fraternity outlets.

Local Alumnae Chapter Website

Regional Teams

- Enlist help from Regional Team to help spread word via regional communications.

Mail

- Save-the-date card (for those without e-mail; will be sent by Decade Chairs)
- Invitation (everyone receives one)
- Newsletters (for those without e-mail)

Phone Networking

- By year/decade/geographic distribution

University Alumni Magazine

- Request and inquire as soon as date is known.
- Coordinate announcement at least a year in advance due to possible publication space and individual university policies.

BUDGET:

The entire weekend should be self-funded. Start-up money will be needed.

- Determine how much will be needed for printing and mailing of the invitation.
- Solicit funding from the House Corporation, the local alumnae chapter and the collegiate chapter; divide start-up costs into thirds.

Once registration payments begin, the weekend starts to fund itself. The budget should:

- Consider some basics that are part of hosting any event.
- Be substantial enough to cover committee goals and ideas.

Registration fees:

- Must cover line items like speakers, for example, that are not covered by individual event fees.

Individual event fees:

- Will cover all items in that specific event, like meal/favor/decorations, as not every individual will be able to attend every event.
- Must cover each event, including all service charges, taxes, decorations and favors.

Potential budget line items include:

- Candles
- Collegiate chapter portion
- Corsages (speakers, chairs, etc.)
- Decorations
- Fundraiser donations
- House Corporation portion
- Labels
- Nametags
- Paper
- Pens
- Postage
- Printing costs
- Registration packets
- Speaker gifts
- Speaker travel/accommodations

Additional items for budget might include:

- Memorialized brick for walkway at Executive Offices
- Special touches like custom-printed ribbon with chapter letters, logo, etc.
- Décor, candy (on tables, as gifts), favors

WEEKEND ITINERARY:

The following itinerary is filled with various events that will attract different people to different things. It is merely a suggestion in terms of what is possible and what has worked for chapters in the past, although there are certain key elements such as recognition and rituals that are vital and help make the celebration memorable and special.

The timeline might include:

FRIDAY

- Friday night registration at hotel
- Alumnae reception open house at hotel
- Small dinner with committee core and guest speaker or other small event with local alumnae and special guests

SATURDAY

- Registration continues at hotel
- Saturday Founders Day luncheon/banquet (fee)
 - Roll call
 - Guest speaker
 - Candlelighting Ceremony
 - Anniversary member recognition

- Dessert/tour at chapter house, if there is a house
- Decade dinners (fee)
 - Group photos (determine by year/decade/number of people for breakdown)
 - Dinner/decade celebration
 - Singing
 - Final ceremonies:
 - By the Light of Delta Gamma
 - Human Dignity Ceremony
 - Delta Gamma Philosophy
 - Oath of Friendship

SUNDAY

- Sunday buffet breakfast for alumnae at hotel (fee)
- Annual House Corporation Meeting
 - Follows breakfast.
 - Includes collegians that arrive after breakfast.

SPECIAL TOUCHES:

The celebration will focus on history, recognition, accomplishments and memories. Alumnae of all ages will be in attendance throughout the weekend celebration. Older alumnae should be a focal point of the celebration, as they are the backbone of the chapter and represent a great amount of chapter history. All alumnae that have been members of Delta Gamma for 50 or more years should be given special consideration, including:

- Assigning a collegian to each 50+-year member as her weekend hostess. She will greet her alumna at each event, sit with her at the luncheon and get to know her. (*Depending on the size of the collegiate chapter, there may need to be more than one alumna per collegian.*)
- Seating all 50+-year alumnae at tables in the front of the room. Their collegiate hostesses will sit with them.
- Utilizing a special registration table for 50+-year members.
- Ensuring that all local older alumnae have rides to events.
- Sending personal notes to alumnae after the event from their hostesses.

RESOURCES:

For chapter history information and historic photos, contact Executive Offices at least six months prior to event. Additional items may be found in the chapter house, with local alumnae, chapter House Corporation and in the university library archives.

Remember, the most special part of the celebration is being together and remembering your Delta Gamma roots. Enjoy the planning and enjoy bringing your chapter history alive!