THE SAPPHIRE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Student Handbook

Graduating Classes of 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017

The Pennsylvania State University
Smeal College of Business

PENNSTATE

SMEAL College of Business

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Mission Statement and Organization Summary

The Sapphire Leadership Program is committed to providing a unique academic and leadership experience for select undergraduate students in Smeal. This facilitates the advancement of our students through a specialized curriculum, unparalleled professional opportunities, meaningful humanitarian service initiatives, and exceptional leadership development. These experiences empower our members to become the business leaders of tomorrow.

About Sapphire

As part of the Smeal College of Business, the Sapphire Leadership Program provides its members with unique academic content, co-curricular leadership and professional development elements as well as real-world opportunities to apply knowledge gained inside and outside the classroom. In today's competitive recruiting environment, the Sapphire Leadership Program aims to position student leaders of integrity to make an impact on business and on society.

Leadership

Leadership is a difficult quality to define. As intangible as it is irresistible, leadership evades dissection. Instead, leadership tends to be a "holistic" quality, a trait that seems easily distinguishable at first glance but difficult to explain. As such, the Sapphire Leadership Program seeks to develop and augment certain attributes in our members to drive them toward this challenging but crucial quality.

Through the leadership project (see page 6), Sapphire members are encouraged to take initiative and display audacity. While everyone's leadership style differs and while there are times to lead and times to follow, all leaders must take the first step on their own. To that end, the Sapphire Leadership Program challenges its members to develop a cohesive, ambitious vision through which they propel their own enthusiasm and that of their peers. Consequently, the best leadership projects usually involve Sapphires drawing upon the diverse skill-sets of the peers in their cohort, delegating tasks and empowering others to give them the tools necessary to succeed. Over the course of this multi-semester leadership project, the project leader must meet certain milestones and accountability measures to ensure reliability and consistency. Ultimately, the program produces enthusiastic, reliable, and motivated visionaries who understand that leadership development is a never-ending process of introspection, self-

study, and experience. These are the leaders who are ready to meet the challenges of this millennium.

Benefits

- Specialized Curriculum – The Sapphire Leadership Program offers its aspirants and members an academic curriculum designed to identify, improve, and enhance the student's leadership qualities. The courses in this curriculum are in small section sizes designed specifically to encourage interaction among the students and the faculty. In these courses, students will be challenged to demonstrate both academic and leadership characteristics.
- Advising – Students in the Sapphire program have a dedicated advisor in the Undergraduate Education Office. This advisor is available to assist Sapphire aspirants and members starting in the first semester of the freshmen year. This advisor is also responsible for monitoring the progress of each Sapphire student to ensure completion of all requirements in the program.
- Access to Business Leaders – A critical component of the Sapphire Leadership program is giving its aspirants and members unique access to business leaders, through workshops and seminars, and one-on-one discussions. The purpose of this interaction is to enhance the leadership knowledge the student has gained in the classroom.
- Opportunities to Help Others – Intrinsic to the Sapphire Leadership Program is the culture that each Sapphire aspirant and member use their talents to benefit others in need of help. This aspect of the program enhances the concept of "leader as servant" for each Sapphire student.

Overall Academic & Program Requirements

- Maintain a minimum 3.50 cumulative grade point average
- Complete a leadership (humanitarian) project (see page 6)
- Accumulate a minimum of 16 Sapphire points by graduation (see page 6)
- Complete all Sapphire courses (required and optional) with a minimum grade of a "C"

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

There are two components to be a Sapphire student: academics and leadership. *Program note*: With the Sapphire Leadership Program in transition beginning with the freshmen starting in 2014, the academic and leadership requirements will vary depending on your semester status and intended graduation date. As such, the requirements as outlined in this handbook should not be confused with those for future cohorts.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS by GRADUATING CLASS

STUDENTS GRADUATING IN 2017
Academic Requirements – Freshman Year

- Cumulative GPA of 3.50
- Completion of MGMT 397
- Completion of PS006S

Academic Requirements – Sophomore Year

- Cumulative GPA of 3.50
- Completion of BA 297C
- Completion of any department specific requirements

Academic Requirements – Junior Year

- Cumulative GPA of 3.50
- Completion of 496 course (Leadership project – see page 6)
- Completion of any department specific requirements

Academic Requirements – Senior Year

- Cumulative GPA of 3.50
- Completion of BA 411S
- Completion of any department specific requirements

STUDENTS GRADUATING IN 2016
Academic Requirements – Sophomore Year

- Cumulative GPA of 3.50
- Completion of BA 297C

- Completion of any department specific requirements

Academic Requirements – Junior Year

- Cumulative GPA of 3.50
- Completion of 496 course (leadership project – see page 6)
- Completion of any department specific requirements

Academic Requirements – Senior Year

- Cumulative GPA of 3.50
- Completion of BA 411S
- Completion of any department specific requirements

STUDENTS GRADUATING IN 2015
Academic Requirements – Junior Year

- Cumulative GPA 3.50
- Completion of 496 course (leadership project – see page 6)
- Completion of any department specific requirements

Academic Requirements – Senior Year

- Cumulative GPA of 3.50
- Completion of any department specific requirements

STUDENTS GRADUATING IN 2014
Academic Requirements – Senior Year

- Cumulative GPA of 3.50
- Completion of leadership (humanitarian) project
- Completion of any department specific requirements

Experiential leadership development is a critical component of the Sapphire Program. Each sapphire student graduating in 2017 will be required to accumulate a minimum of four Sapphire points per academic year and a minimum of sixteen Sapphire points by graduation. Sapphire students graduating in 2014, 2015, and 2016 will also need to accumulate a minimum of four Sapphire points per academic year and a total of four, eight, and twelve Sapphire points by graduation, respectively. The Undergraduate Sapphire Advisor will monitor these. There will be many opportunities for Sapphire students to accumulate these points. Below is a short description and Sapphire point allocation for the leadership development categories.

Corporate Executive Interaction – One Sapphire Point

During the semester, the Sapphire Program, along with the Smeal College of Business, will host visiting business executives who will speak on various business topics. Sapphire students will have the opportunity to attend these presentations and interact directly with the executive. For each presentation attended, the student will earn one Sapphire Point.

Corporate Relations – One Sapphire Point

Sapphire seeks to provide unique, individualized events to further Sapphire students' professional development. Through Sapphire-sponsored networking events and workshops with corporate connections, Sapphire students will not only be exposed to recruiters but also learn firsthand the skills necessary to succeed in the business world. Each event will award one Sapphire Point.

Case Study Competition - Three Sapphire Points

Many companies sponsor case competitions during the course of the academic year. These cases expose the students to real business problems and allow them to develop analytic, team, and leadership qualities. Participation in a case competition will allow a Sapphire student to earn three Sapphire Points.

Leadership Position Inside or Outside of Smeal – Three Sapphire Points

Many student organizations exist inside and outside of Smeal, all having governance structures. A Sapphire student who becomes president or executive board member of one of these organizations can earn three Sapphire points for the academic year he/she holds office. For any organization not a certified Smeal organization, please contact the Sapphire faculty Director for approval.

Community Service – One Sapphire Point

Leaders make an impact on their communities. Through campus blood drives, recycling initiatives, THON involvement, or volunteering at local animal shelters or nature preserves, Sapphire students leave places better than they found it. Any comparable service opportunity or university event can be considered for one Sapphire Point.

SAPPHIRE LEADERSHIP PROJECT

A hallmark of the Sapphire Program is the student leadership project. Normally completed during the junior year, this project requires each Sapphire student to undertake a task that helps someone else in society. Starting a for-profit business is NOT considered an acceptable Sapphire project. The project can be done individually or in a team of no more than four students. The Pink Zone, now famous at Lady Lion basketball games, was the result of a Sapphire project. A student can propose a new idea for a project or can continue a project that was started by a previous initiative.

Project Requirements

- The intent of each project is to help someone in need
- A for-profit business is not a project
- Participating in the Penn State Dance Marathon does not satisfy the project requirement
- The project is normally started during the junior year
- The Undergraduate Sapphire Advisor will monitor completion of the project for each Sapphire student
- The project can be individual or team-based with no more than four students per team

Project Process

- Get a faculty/staff advisor to agree to be your project supervisor. If you do not already have a project idea, you advisor might be able to suggest one.
- Sign up for three credits of 496 with your advisor (the department hosting the course, e.g., MGMT or ACCT, will depend on where the faculty advisor is housed). Fill out the project form, which is available in the Sapphire Leadership Project Handbook found on the Sapphire web site. The role of your advisor is to make sure that you are making progress to complete your project. Once completed, your advisor will sign the project form and assign you a grade for the 496 course. You then submit your signed project form to the Undergraduate Sapphire Advisor.

For more information on the Sapphire Leadership Project, see the Sapphire Leadership Project Handbook.

KEY EVENTS

First-Year Sapphire Welcome Breakfast

As a freshman, you enter Smeal and Sapphire in a cohort with other Sapphire students. To help you get acquainted with the members of your cohort and Sapphire upper-classmen, the Sapphire Program holds a Welcome Breakfast in the Atrium of the Business Building. This will provide you an opportunity to meet other Sapphire students and Smeal faculty as well as allow you to make new friends.

Team Building Ropes Course (First Year Student Event)

At the beginning of the Fall semester of your freshman year, you will attend a team building ropes course event at Stone Valley Nature Center. Managed by a professional staff, this extraordinary opportunity will allow you to assess your leadership skills and areas where you need improvement. It will also allow you to develop stronger bonds with your Sapphire cohort.

Leadership Symposium

This annual all-day event, open to all Penn State students, brings high-level business executives to Penn State to conduct workshops on various aspects of leadership. The topics covered will be specifically tailored to meet the needs of Sapphire students. This symposium gives Sapphire students an excellent opportunity to interact with high-level executives from many different companies.

Pinning Ceremony

Sapphires who complete all the requirements of the program will receive a lapel pin specifically designed for the Sapphire program. This pin will be awarded at a ceremony in the Business Building to coincide with the University's graduation schedule. This will give you the opportunity to have your family and friends to witness your accomplishments.

IMPORTANT POLICIES

- Sapphire students who receive a poor grade (below a "C") in a required course may opt to take it again; however, such students should seek the advice of their advisor before making such a decision.
- Sapphire students are allowed one semester GPA below a 3.5. If they have *two consecutive* semesters below a 3.5, regardless of their cumulative GPA, they forfeit their Sapphire status permanently.
- Failure to meet the minimum of two Sapphire points in each of two consecutive semesters will results in the student being put on probation for one semester. Failure to accumulate a minimum of sixteen Sapphire points by graduation (applies to graduating class of 2017 only) will cause a student to forfeit his/her Sapphire status.
- If a student fails to meet either the academic or leadership requirements of Sapphire due to extenuating circumstances, the student may appeal their dismissal from the Sapphire program by providing an explanatory statement to the Faculty Director of the Sapphire program. The Faculty Director and the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs in Smeal will review the statement.

SCHREYER HONOR PROGRAM JUNIOR GATE

For those Sapphire students who do not also start out as Schreyer Honors students during freshmen year, it is highly recommended that you consider becoming a Schreyer's Honors student using their Junior Gate program. More details on this process can be found on the Schreyer's Honors College web site.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Each Executive Board member will serve one calendar year. When the calendar year has ended, one has the eligibility to apply for a different position. Chair position elections will be held in the new year after Executive Board members have been elected. For an updated labeled and named organization chart, please visit the official Sapphire website.