

## National Council Frequently Asked Questions

This resource is designed to help answer questions about Phi Mu Fraternity's organizational structure and governance model.

### **Governance and Management**

- How is Phi Mu governed?
  - Phi Mu Fraternity is governed by National Council using the Carver Policy Governance model. Under this model, National Council focuses on the *Ends* (the outcomes Phi Mu exists to achieve) while clearly defining the boundaries within which management operates. This approach ensures strategic leadership, accountability and long-term stewardship of the Fraternity.
- How is Phi Mu managed on a day-to-day basis?
  - National Council hires the Executive Director to manage the day-to-day operations of the Fraternity. The Executive Director, in turn, hires and leads the Phi Mu Fraternity staff. Staff members are responsible for carrying out the work that advances Phi Mu's Ends Policies and Strategic Plan. This work is done in close partnership with Phi Mu volunteers, whose expertise and service are essential to fulfilling the Fraternity's mission.
- What is the difference between governance and management?
  - Governance focuses on what Phi Mu is trying to achieve, for whom and at what cost or priority. It sets strategic direction, establishes policy and ensures accountability.
  - Management focuses on how the work gets done. Management implements strategy, oversees operations and executes programs and services within the boundaries set by National Council.

### **National Council Composition and Role**

- Who is eligible?
  - As defined in the *Constitution and Bylaws of Phi Mu Fraternity*, National Council members must be alumnae members of Phi Mu Fraternity in good standing who have served as a National or Area Officer, Fraternity Committee member, or on a Phi Mu special committee, working group or task force.
  - To be eligible to serve as National President, a member must have served as a member of National Council within the previous three biennia.

- What is the composition of Phi Mu’s National Council?
  - Per the *Constitution and Bylaws of Phi Mu Fraternity*, National Council is comprised of seven members:
    - The National President
    - Four elected Vice Presidents
    - Two appointed Vice Presidents
  
- What is the role of National Council
  - National Council serves as the governing body of Phi Mu Fraternity. Key responsibilities include:
    - Providing strategic vision and long-term direction
    - Governing through servant leadership, prioritizing what is best for the Fraternity as a whole
    - Speaking with one voice, setting aside individual agendas once decisions are made
    - Establishing and reviewing policies
    - Hiring, supporting and evaluating the Executive Director
    - Holding the Executive Director accountable for organizational performance and results
  
- What does the National Council do on a regular basis?
  - Participate in regular meetings to discuss strategy, review reports and make policy decisions.
  - Connect with members by attending National, chapter and local events.
  - Review and refine the policies to ensure clarity and relevance.
  - Assess organizational performance by monitoring the Ends Policies and Executive Limitations.
  
- Why can’t I be a Chapter Adviser and serve on National Council?
  - National Council members govern at a strategic level and must avoid conflicts of interest. Chapter Advisers are directly involved in operational and support roles at the chapter level. Serving in both roles simultaneously could blur the distinction between governance and management and compromise the objectivity required of National Council members.

### **Carver Policy Governance**

- What is Carver Policy Governance?
  - Carver Policy Governance is a framework that clearly separates the roles of a board [National Council] from those of its chief executive [the Executive Director]. This model emphasizes clear accountability, strategic focus on outcomes, empowerment of management within defined limits and speaking with one voice. This model helps Phi Mu remain mission-focused, adaptable and well-governed.



- What is “linkage” in the Carver model?
  - Linkage refers to National Council’s responsibility to stay meaningfully connected to Phi Mu’s members. This ensures that decisions reflect the values, priorities and aspirations of the membership.

### **Nominations Process**

- What is the process to be considered for National Council?
  - Eligible members can self-nominate or be nominated by another member.
  - All candidates must complete the formal application including providing three references.
  - Candidates will participate in interviews with the Nominating Committee.
  - The Nominating Committee will select a slate of candidates.
- What skills are needed to serve on National Council and how can I best position myself?
  - Strong candidates demonstrate a clear understanding of Phi Mu’s mission, Ends and governance model, experience with strategic leadership or complex organizations, the ability to think at a systems and policy level, and a commitment to servant leadership and collaboration.
  - The Fraternity has developed a set of competencies to share the behaviors and skills needed to excel in this role. Read more [here](#).
- What do I need to have for the application?
  - Applicants should be prepared to submit:
    - A current resume or CV.
    - Personal narrative responses that reflect leadership philosophy, strategic thinking and commitment to Phi Mu.
    - Three references who can speak to leadership, judgment and readiness for national service, one of whom must be a Phi Mu.
- Who would make a strong reference?
  - Individuals who have observed your leadership over time, can speak to your strategic thinking and decision making, understand Phi Mu’s mission, values and governance structure and can objectively assess your readiness to serve at this level would make strong references.

