

**Fall 2019 Nominated Officer Questionnaire**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Please attach your **current résumé** and **Fall 2019 schedule** (class, work, other extracurricular activities).

This questionnaire is due **no later than** **SUNDAY APRIL 14TH at 11:59 PM.** Please send this document and all supplemental materials to [president.apousc@gmail.com](mailto:president.apousc@gmail.com) and cc webmaster.apousc@gmail.com

*Election Day:* Candidates for President and Pledgemaster will have three minutes to give their speeches. Candidates for all other positions will have two minutes.

You may present **one slide** **per position** you run for at the time of your speech. If you are running all or nothing for a co position, you may share a speech with your running mate and have **up to** **two slides**. If you are not running all or nothing, you must have a separate speech and slide. Slides are due by **SUNDAY APRIL 14TH at 11:59 PM** to [president.apousc@gmail.com](mailto:president.apousc@gmail.com). You will not be allowed to pass out additional materials or papers during your speech.

**PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION**

Name: Elizabeth Coughlan

Year: Junior

Major: Accounting/Minor: Applied Analytics

Pledge Class (Year): Alpha Iota Spring 2016

**Please mark which elected position(s) you are running for with an X:**

[  ]  President

[X] Pledgemaster

[  ]  VP of Service

[  ]  Co-VP of Membership

[  ]  VP of Fellowship

[  ]  Co-VP of Finance

[  ]  VP of Communications

[  ]  IC Chair

Name of person you are running with (leave blank if no running partners):

Are you running all or nothing (leave blank if not applicable)?:

**PART II: SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS**

1. **Why do you want the position(s) you are running for?**

I want to be pledgemaster because I want to continue to make a difference within the chapter. I want to emphasis the service aspect to the chapter’s future pledges. I love what our organization does with regards to service and want to highlight this. I believe that what we do for our community is something truly unique to a lot of service organizations. Most orgs are not as well committed and connected to so many different organizations as evidenced by our vast amount of weekly service events. I love this part of Alpha Phi Omega and want to share how we impact the LA community with future pledges.

I also want the position because I believe I am capable of helping to shape future actives of our chapter. I believe that I have learned a lot from attending past semester’s pledge meetings and learned a lot from each pledgemaster. I want to use my knowledge to create an even better pledging semester with as many enrichening experiences as possible. I think that experiences so many different semesters as a pledge, active or excomm member has given me more perspectives that I could use to help make the best semester possible for the Alpha Omicron pledge class.

I also want the position because I have appreciated what I have learned from APO and it has been a crucial part of my college experience as I joined as a first semester freshman. Though I know APO has some areas it could improve upon, as does every student run org, I continue to run for excomm positions as I like to help do something about the issues I see and make a difference. I also wouldn’t run for such an important position if I didn’t believe that I was capable and could do a great job at it.

1. **What is your vision for APO and what are your goals for the position(s)?**

My vision would be to improve on the chapter as a whole with little changes that help make enrich the pledging experience. I really want to keep doing what we are good at while working on areas that APO struggles with at the same time. One of my goals would be to focus more on service within pledge meetings and try to encourage a philanthropy-based pledge service event by giving an extra enrichment point. At this point, I feel that most semesters (not this one), pledges rely on Pledge Beach Clean-Up (my pledging semester included). While it is still valuable, a philanthropy-based event also allows for more of the pledges to step in and help and make the event truly a pledge class event.

I also would want to be accessible and not overbearing. We all know how overwhelming the first pledge meeting is. I acknowledge that there will be times that there is negative feedback but twisting it in a way that serves to be a learning experience is one of my goals. I want to be a resource for pledges. One that knows a lot about the organization and can help guide them to activehood. I also want to share the mnemonics for the Scout Oath and all the ones I have learned for IC chapters, and any other things I can think of to be more helpful in preparing for quizzes. I also want to be very communicative as this is key in a position where a lot of people are relying on you for quick responses. This is something I gained when I was Co-VP of Membership and an area that I know is important for a successful semester.

I want to lead by example at events and be a role model to future pledges regardless of whether or not I get elected. I would want to continue to attend many events, especially service events, though I know I may need to scale back due to the time commitment of the position. I feel that I have the right balance between being their friends and being strict. I want to be fair. I feel that at times I struggled with this while I was VP of Service but got better at through my positions as Co-VP of Membership and also Chapter President. I want to bring what I have gained being a big and a Leventhal student mentor in terms of being a mentor to a whole pledge class. I believe that our organization has a lot to offer and each pledge can get as much out of it as they are willing to put in.

1. **What new ideas can you bring to the position and organization as a whole? Please provide examples.**

I feel that I have learned a lot from my past positions about how we work both as a service organization and internally. I want to combine these two roles for pledges, so they get a wide view of how our fraternity operates. I think at times service falls to the back-burner. I want to re-emphasis the importance of individual impact through switching optional second funtivity to optional random acts of kindness. Though a lot of pledges have done random acts of kindness, I feel that it is something important and personal to do and is a nice way to provide service to the campus. I also recognize the importance of not adding more work to pledging, as many pledges have stated, there is already a lot to do.

I also would like to highlight our partner service orgs at the beginning of each pledge meeting at each slide. Similar to how Amy Zhao (AK Semester Pledgemaster) highlighted key issues in the community. I believe that telling people more about the orgs we worked is beneficial to learning about our chapter. An example being how instrumental we have been for Kid City and how when their funding was cut, we provided the much-needed volunteers to help the organization stay afloat. These facts also may encourage pledges to try different weekly service organizations, or at least be aware of what each ones are. I also believe that adding more service related ways to earn enrichment points could also encourage more of a pledge class focus on service or at least increasing the amount of enrichment points earned by these methods in comparison to other ways of earning enrichment points. I know that people struggle with earning enrichment points and it can be a mad dash at the end to finish, so by giving more earlier may be more enriching in the long run and prompt more thought out event ideas or suggestions.

I would continue to the new tradition of having two pledge fundraising chairs as it has worked so well. Fundraising has the responsibility for putting on multiple events to raise money throughout the pledging semester, unlike other positions where they are in charge of one big one. It also helps give more pledges the chance to demonstrate leadership and have a fun learning experience. I also would want to get rid of pledge committees and instead have a requirement of needing to help with one of the pledge class events in some way. I think having a weekly meeting isn’t always as productive at times and often times it actually conflicts with events, making leads more difficult. Pledges would still need to attend an active committee but would have more flexibility in how they could contribute to each event – whether helping buy supplies or being in charge of one aspect at their event.

As pledgemaster, I want to be a system of support and encouragement and not focus on just the negatives. One way of incorporating this is through ‘highs and lows’ each week. At Sectionals, I learned that AZY pledgemaster asks for highs and lows of the week from pledges as a way to gauge their mood. By doing this, it helps her set the mood for the pledge meeting. I think it is a great way to see if they need a mood booster versus if it can be a more serious meeting.

I also feel that there are some issues with binder checks. Last year, lowering the passing rate to 80%, helped solve the systemic issue of pledge classes failing 3 to 4 of their quizzes on the first try. At some point, a pledge class should not fail every single binder check on the first try and also retakes. Though through what I have seen, a lot of the burden does fall on pledges to make sure they have the right numbers etc, I believe that pledge team can be more helpful by officially providing a document where pledges can add top information for actives. This way, pledge team, membership and president can look in advance and ensure that the information is correct and hopefully it would also reduce spelling errors for pledges who take the time to look through their binders and check the document. I would also be open to discussing a more substantial revamp with relevant parties as I do see some flaws in the system.

Not all of these are necessarily new ideas but also revamps of old ones. I want to learn from past semesters and take what has worked and what hasn’t to consistently improve the chapter’s pledging semester. As previous pledgemasters have told me, there is already a lot for pledges to do, so refining our current practices vs adding more stuff is my goal for the position.

1. **What relevant experience, if any, have you had working in committees or other organizations for the position(s) you are running for? Please be specific.**

Within APO, I have multiple leadership roles that I believe combined give me a vast amount of knowledge that I could help share with pledges and hopefully creating lasting actives.

* I was Pledge Class President which I feel like made me more responsible and accountable. I took on an active role as PCP and was helped to plan our service event.
* Alpha Lambda semester, I was VP of Service and I think I learned a lot during that position and also grew throughout it too. It involved a lot of communication with other organizations and I feel like I have a firm grasp of how APO works externally and also how to better balance the fairness aspect that is required of pledgemaster.
* A year ago, I really enjoyed working as Co-VP of Membership with Pann. I believe this position gave me a lot of insight into how APO works internally and also areas that the active body would like to see improvement. I learned a lot about communication with a co as Pann and I communicated daily and checked in with each other a lot. I believe I can bring this positive experience of working with a co to working with a pledge team who is united in their decisions most of the time and will be as consistent as possible in giving feedback to pledges.
* Last semester, I was able to be Chapter President. I learned more about communication and effectively managing my time as well as the administrative work behind the position, both with filling out Nationals forms as well as USC campus forms.
* Finally, as Philanthropy Co-Chair, I was able to see the impact of a lot of service that we do as a chapter as well as more communication skills while working with Anmol.

1. **What other time commitments will you have next semester (i.e. other student organizations, work, research, etc.)? How do you plan to balance APO executive board duties with those commitments?**

I will still be doing a few hours a week for my internship, in which I work remotely. I also may be a Leventhal Accounting Mentor again next year. This is something I participated in this year and doesn’t take more than a few hours each week of my time. I have never had an issue not being able to perform my duties previously as I do consider myself an organized person. I am aware with the administrative work behind the position and believe my experiences through inputting hours as VP of Service, managing masterdoc as Co-VP of Membership and event planning as Philanthropy Co-Chair have helped me recognize the importance of time management.