

**GUIDE
TO RUNNING
FOR
DISTRICT OFFICE**



**TAU BETA SIGMA
WESTERN DISTRICT**

Created 2008

I. Getting Started

One of the greatest opportunities that Tau Beta Sigma affords its membership is the chance to constantly be exposed to leadership opportunities. One of these opportunities is running for a District Office, and giving back to the Organization you have come to love. If you are reading through this packet that means that you have either already made the choice to run for Office, or are considering it at some point in your course of active membership. That is great! Being a District Officer and having the opportunity to serve our District and get involved on another level is a great experience. This guide is designed to serve as a resource for all Sisters interested in Running for Office. This packet will inform you on what is required of you to run for Office, but it also gives recommendations, suggestions, and helpful tips while you seek to serve as a District Officer.

II. Choosing the Office

One of the first things to think about, once you have made the decision to run for District Office, is to decide what Office you should run for. One of the most important items is to consider the different responsibilities of each Office. Be sure that before you make your decision, you have a very concise understanding of the different Offices and their obligations. The office you choose should reflect your background, experience, interest, and strengths. However, also keep in mind that just because you may not have a particularly large amount of experience in one area, that should not keep you from running for Office.

Steps to finding out about the different Offices:

- Ask the current (or former) District Officer about their position
- Review the National Constitution and District Constitution
- Refer to the Role and Expectations of District Officers portion of this guide

III. District/National Requirements

Before you dive in head first, you need be aware of the constitutional requirements to running/becoming a District Officer. The following requirements come from the Tau Beta Sigma Western District Constitution and the National Constitution, respectively:

2.01 Candidates for elected District Office shall:

2.01.1 Be an active member in good standing.

2.01.2 Complete an interview with the Nominations Committee.

2.01.3 Submit a cover letter and resume including personal information and goals for the office.

2.01.4 Submit a letter of recommendation from their Chapter.

2.01.5 Submit a letter of recommendation from their Chapter Sponsor.

2.01.6 Candidates for the Western District President shall be an active member for at least one (1) calendar year.

2.02 Each District Officer shall hold no more than two(2) consecutive one(1)-year terms in the same office.

5.302 Each District Officer shall be at least a sophomore student and an active member of the Sorority in good standing, at the time of election. Officers elected during their final year of college may serve out their current term of office, provided that they are a Life Member by September 1 of their term in office. Each District Officer shall have exceptional business or professional ability and shall be capable of representing the Sorority and District when called upon to do so. Each District Officer shall have the best interest of the Sorority at heart and be willing and able to devote the necessary time to execution of the duties imposed by the office and shall be actively participating in or serving bands during their term of office. All District Officers shall serve without compensation.

IV. Qualifications To Think About

As part of choosing the Office that is right for you, you must consider the qualifications that all District Officers are recommended to have and what the individual Office qualifications are. Remember, these are all recommendations and not "requirements" of individuals who wish to run for District Office.

GENERAL EXPERIENCE

As part of your candidacy, you will need to be able to demonstrate the different leadership and organizational experiences you have. Types of experiences that should be considered:

- Have I ever held a Chapter/District Office or Committee Chair Position?
- Have I ever attended Sorority Events (i.e. National Convention, District Convention, District Leadership Conference, or State Days, etc.)?
- What Committees have I served on (Chapter, District, and National Level)?
- Have I ever attended other Chapter's Events (i.e. Degrees, Social Activities, Formals, Membership Education/Recruitment Activities, Anniversary Celebrations, etc.)?
- Have I held any positions in my band program that will lend valuable experience to a District Office?
- What other kind of positions outside of band and TBS have I held that are representative of my leadership skills?
- Have I received any special recognition in band or TBS (Distinguished Sister Award, Best Marcher, etc.)?

DISTRICT OFFICERS – GENERAL

There are general characteristics that all District Officers need to possess in order to fulfill their duties at the highest level possible. The following is just a glimpse at the basics in regards to what you can expect by serving as a District Officer.

Essential Skills and Qualities:

- Good Communication/Correspondence Skills - Verbal and Written
- Ability to set goals and meet deadlines
- Ability to be proactive, plan ahead, and delegate
- Ability to be open-minded and willing to test new ideas/ways of doing things
- Ability to keep personal ambitions and emotional reactions from interfering
- Ability to separate yourself from your Chapter, you will represent ALL Chapters
- Understanding of all National, District, and Chapter Operations & Policies
- Have enthusiasm and passion for Tau Beta Sigma and its Ideals
- Have the best interest of Tau Beta Sigma and the Western District in mind at all times

DISTRICT OFFICERS – SPECIFIC

Along with all the above skills and qualities, below are some examples of experiences that will help you in specific Offices along with the Constitutional requirements.

President:

Experience as a Chapter President/Officer or Committee Chair is very beneficial, because then you have had experience setting agendas, running meetings, creating goals and holding yourself and others accountable. It is also advised that you are very familiar with overall Sorority Operations (such as the Constitution, Robert's Rules, etc.) This will help you in your ability to assist the District Membership with any questions that you may be able to answer. It is also recommended that you speak with the current District President and the District Counselor about other specific time requirements and duties.

2.04.1 Communicate to the Chapters on matters pertaining to District business and National affairs.

Vice President of Membership:

Experience as a Chapter Vice President, Education Instructor/TA, or position dealing with membership education or post-membership education is recommended because then you have had lengthy experience with the National Membership Education Program, recruitment of new members, and ideals of the Sorority. This Office focuses on ways to improve Chapter Membership and Education and then continue the teachings on a District Level. Along those lines, a new component to this office is a focus on the accessibility and utility of the Western District website. This includes making new resources available to the district membership and providing a forum for members to connect. Advisement on National and District Operations will also be needed, so being familiar with key points in those areas are recommended.

2.05.1 Be responsible for regular communication and correspondence with the appropriate chapter officer regarding membership retention, membership education, and expansion.

Vice President of Special Projects:

Experience as a Chapter VPSP, Historian, Social Director, Ritual Chair, or Service Officer/Committee Chair is recommended. As the VPSP you will need to be able to execute the planning and promotion of old and new District Programs, maintain history, and promote Sisterhood and the Ideals of Tau Beta Sigma.

2.06.1 Be responsible for creating and developing projects to benefit the District, as directed by the District Council and Counselor.

2.06.2 Compile events, names, dates and activities of importance to the district and update the district history each year. History shall be published to the district prior to District Convention via the Western District website and announced via the Western District listerv.

Secretary/Treasurer:

Experience as a Chapter Secretary or Treasurer is very much endorsed, because in this Office you will need to be able to record minutes, correspond via email/phone/or snail mail, and have an understanding of bank ledgers and financial statements (specifically Excel spreadsheets). Also, you should have experience with organizing large scale fundraisers and responding to emails (and generating emails) in a timely matter as outstanding funds can be disruptive to sorority functioning.

2.07.1 Record, publish, and distribute the minutes of all meetings of the District to the District Council, the District Counselor, and the National President.

2.07.2 Control the receipt and disbursement of all monies of the District.

2.07.3 Compile and distribute a District Directory twice a year.

2.07.4 Submit a detailed ledger to be included in the above minutes of all of the district expenses during their term by the beginning of the opening joint session at the District Convention.

2.07.5 Submit a proposed budget to be included in the above minutes for the following term that is based on the above ledger to the district by the beginning of the opening joint session at the District Convention.

2.07.6 Submit via the Fall Packet a detailed ledger and proposed budget updated to reflect the months following the prior District Convention, to be used in considering the need for a Ways and Means Committee.

V. Making the Decision

Once you have defined which District Office you possess the most skill and qualifications for, and once you determine which District Office the District Membership would benefit most from you serving in, you only have a few more considerations before you announce your Candidacy.

It is Recommended that You:

- Talk with your Chapter Sisters and the Chapter President to get their thoughts and suggestions
- If you have one, talk with your Brother Chapter to also get their support
- Talk with your Chapter Sponsor
- Determine if you will have the time to put the amount of effort that is required by holding a District Office

Important Points To Ponder:

- Do I fully understand the role and duties of the Office I have chosen?
- Do I want to run for/could I handle a Chapter Office for the same academic year?
- Will school and work schedules allow me the time needed to hold District Office?
- Will my Chapter and Chapter Sponsor approve of my Running for Office?
- Do I have the financial capabilities that will be required of the position?
- Will I be able to attend ALL District Events (i.e. National District Leadership Conference, National Convention, Summer Council Meeting, Western District Leadership Conference, State Day Events, Pre-Convention Meeting, Western District Convention, etc.)?

VI. Announcing Your Candidacy

Once you have made the decision to run and your Chapter and Chapter Sponsor endorse this action, the next step is to announce that you are running for District Office.

Where and How do I announce my Candidacy?

Chapter:

You will need the approval of your Chapter in order to run for District Office, so announce to them first. This will give them a chance to give you feedback and ask questions

Brother Chapter:

Approval from your Brother chapter is not required, but if you have one it would look impressive to have their support as well. After all, a lot of the Western District events and programs are joint, so our Brotherhood/Sisterhood bond is just as important on the district level!

District Leadership Conference:

You don't have many opportunities like this where the whole district is together before Convention, so take the opportunity to announce you intent to run as well as mingle with district members and share your ideas/get their feedback.

State Day(s):

Some of your biggest supporters will come from inside your State. Hopefully, you have been to some State functions and have come to be familiar with the Chapters closest to you. At State Day you will have the opportunity to inform them that you are running, this is a great chance for people in your State to talk with you about your qualifications and goals for Office.

Other Events:

Anytime you attend an event for the District or a Chapter it is a perfect time to let people know you are running. This way when you get to District Convention people will know who you are and the extent of your experience and goals.

Western District Listserv:

This is a great place to reach many Actives. Just send an email to the listserv that announces your Candidacy. It is also very helpful to include what position you are running for, why you are running, and what past experiences you may possess.

Current District Officers:

Inform the current District Council, because these Sisters can help you prepare the most for your running. They can answer questions, offer suggestions, and key you in on important aspects of Running for Office.

VII. Materials Preparation-OFFICER PACKET

One of the items that you will need to prepare prior to District Convention is your Officer Packet. Your packet contains everything about why you are running and what you have to offer the Office and the District. The Nominations Committee and Chapters will use Candidate's Packets as guides to determining the person they should select for District Office.

Here is what should be in your packet:

Letter of Intent

A general letter about yourself and the reasons you are running for Office. It should state some past experience and future goals.

Resume

Should include all Chapter, District, and National experience (i.e. events attended, positions held, etc.) Also, include outside leadership experience and musical involvement. You may include school status and employment status.

Letters of Recommendation

You will need the following Letters of Recommendation:

- Chapter Approval and Chapter Standing Verification Letter
- Letter of Recommendation and Approval from Chapter Sponsor
- Any other Letters of Recommendation (Brother Chapter, Director of Bands, etc)

Projected Timeline

An outline of when you would like to complete the projects within your chosen office.

All of these items should be included in your packet that you will submit to the Nominations Committee at District Convention. By including all of this info, you will save the Committee and Active Membership a great deal of time, and they will have the opportunity to ask you specific questions rather than just having time to ask you the general questions. This affords you an advantage because then the Committee and Chapters will have more information on your goals and experiences specifically.

VIII. District Convention Preparation

The majority of your effort will go into preparing for District Convention. What often hurts Candidates is their lack of knowledge of what to prepare for the District Convention and what will happen regarding District Officer Candidates.

What should I prepare for District Convention?

Post-Convention meeting:

This is scheduled for Sunday after Convention is done, so do not schedule a flight during this time. If you are elected, it is imperative that you attend a meeting with the rest of the new council and the outgoing council to get your new box of stuff and to meet as a council to plan a direction for the Western District over the next year.

Packets:

Be sure to bring plenty of copies of your packet. At the very least have enough for every member of the Nominations Committee (10), but it is recommended to have enough for the District Council (6) and Chapter Delegates (8)

Nominations Committee:

It is the responsibility of the Nominations Committee to interview all Candidates and create a recommendation of District Officers, which is called a slate.

Interview

The Committee will have you come in at a certain time to meet with them. This meeting should be taken seriously because remember it is the committee that makes the slate. They will ask questions about you, your experience, and goals. They will also judge you based on professionalism, character, communication skills, and presentation skills. Just like a job interview, this time with the committee is for you to have the opportunity to present to them why you would be the best person for the position. It is recommended to dress like you would for a job interview.

Slating of Candidates

The Committee will make a slate, which will be released to the Convention Delegation on the Saturday night of Convention. The slate is a recommendation of which Candidates would fulfill the positions the best. The slate is an automatic nomination, but other Candidate's may be nominated from the floor. Although, the vote is not always reflective of the slate, very often it is.

Chapter Caucusing for Candidates

During Convention, Chapters are individually divided in order to facilitate caucusing for the candidates running for District Office. Although it is not required that you attend each caucus, Chapters may request that you come to their caucus to answer additional questions of you. If there is something specific you want to address, you may also request to set-up a time with every chapter. The individual Chapters regard this time with you as very important in evaluating and deciding the best Candidate. Do not be nervous, and again it is not the best policy to tell the Chapters what you think they might want to hear. Just be honest and truthful about your answers and ideas.

IX. Suggested Do's and Don'ts

There are some considerations and actions that can benefit you and then there are some that can hurt you in your quest for District Office.

- Don't lie about your goals or answers
- Don't promise things you are unable to do
- Don't be derogatory about your opposing Candidates
- Don't be unrealistic about your goals
- Don't run for Office, "just to run"

- Do take the Interview/Chapter Caucusing seriously
- Do get to know the current District Officers
- Do talk to your Chapter about what they expect from a DO/want to see improved in the District
- Do think before answering questions
- Do put considerable amounts of effort into developing your ideas and finding ways to present them
- Do present yourself in a professional manner
- Do be confident in your experiences and abilities to fulfill this Office
- Do have FUN and BE YOURSELF! Remember, although it is a professional process, it is important to showcase your personality, enthusiasm, and sense of humor to the District!

X. Conclusion Points

Having the opportunity to serve as a District Officer can and will be one of the best experiences you will have. District Officers and the District Council as a whole are looked to for guidance from the District, as well as a source of input and information to the National Council. Prepare yourself for hard self-directed work, fun memories, and a lesson in leadership that is not commonly found. Good luck with your candidacy and experience in running for district office. Hopefully you found this packet to be useful and helpful in preparing items for your Candidacy. Utilize your experiences in Tau Beta Sigma to serve it in the best capacity you can.

“It is an honor to be selected to serve”



Appendix A: The Role and Expectations of District Officers

General Expectations and Duties:

- **Must have best interest of the Western District and Sorority at heart**
- **Must be willing to devote necessary time to execution of duties imposed by holding Office**
- **Should be able to exert professionalism and business ability**
- **Should be capable of “separating” themselves from their Chapter in order to serve and represent the Western District and participate in District Council Business**
- **Maintain strong communication with Chapters, Council Members, and Counselors**
- **Have knowledge of all Chapter, District, and National Policies, Documents, and Operations**
- **Must be proactive and take initiative on all levels of Office duties**
- **Will need to attend semi-frequent Chat Room and Conference Call Council Meetings**
- **Will need to write articles for *The Accent* and possibly The Podium**
- **Must Create a Report for District Convention**
- **District Officers are required to travel throughout the year. (i.e. National District Leadership Conference, National Convention, Summer Council Meeting, Winter Council Meeting, Pre-Convention Meeting, Western District Leadership Conference, State Day(s) Events, District Conventions, Chapter Visits, etc.)**

District President Expectations and Duties:

- **Presides at all meetings of the Western District**
- **Writes agendas for all meetings of the Western District**
- **Shall represent the District at National Convention**
- **Shall serve as a resource for the Western District Membership**
- **Help organize and maintain goals of the District Council**
- **Shall create and organize Fall and Spring Informational Packets**
- **Responsible for organizing and coordinating WD Leadership Conference and WD Convention with rest of the District Council**
- **Shall collect and coordinate District Convention Chapter Delegate and Committee Chair Information**
- **Shall assign Delegates, Chairpersons, and Advisors to District Committees**
- **Shall appoint Committees when deemed necessary**
- **Shall set District Convention Committee Charges**
- **Shall correspond frequently with TBS Western District Chapter Presidents**
- **Shall maintain a relationship with other District Presidents**
- **Shall correspond frequently with the KKΨ President**
- **Shall be available to the National Council to serve on Committees and assist as needed with National Level Projects and Initiatives**

District Vice President of Membership Expectations and Duties:

- **Presides at all meetings of the District in the absence of the District President**
- **Provide resources for Chapter Vice Presidents/Membership Education Chairs regarding membership education and membership retention, and ensure that the Chapters comply with the National Guide to Membership Education**
- **Shall work to maintain/increase accessibility and utility of Western District Website with the help of the District Webmaster**
- **Shall correspond frequently with the KKΨ Vice President**
- **Shall correspond frequently with TBS Western District Chapter Vice Presidents**
- **Shall maintain a relationship with other District Vice Presidents of Membership**

District Vice President of Special Projects Expectations and Duties

- Promote strong and active correspondence between all Chapters and Colonies of the District
- Shall contact each Chapter a minimum of two times in Fall and two times in Spring
- Responsible for designing and implementing programs as determined by the District Council
- Responsible for maintaining the District History (including the creation of the annual Western District Slideshow to be presented at Convention)
- Shall correspond frequently with all TBS Western District Chapter Counterparts (Historians, VPSPs, Service Officers/Chairs, Parliamentarians, Alumni Coordinator, Social Chair, etc.)
- Shall correspond frequently with the KKΨ District Member-at-Large
- Shall maintain a relationship with the other District VPSPs
- Update/publicize/collect District Awards
- Send reminders and information to Chapters regarding National Awards/Programs

District Secretary/Treasurer Expectations and Duties:

- Record and maintain the District Convention Minutes, District Committee Reports, District Chapter Reports, District Bylaws, Approved at the District Convention during his/her term of Office electronically (outgoing)
- Publish and distribute copies of these documents to all Chapters in the District, District Council, District Counselor, National Council, and National Headquarters within two (2) months of Convention Adjournment (incoming)
- Distribute District Council Meeting Minutes in hard/soft copy form to the District Council and District Counselors
- Oversee, as necessary, the Receipts and Disbursements of all moneys of the District
- Submit financial reports to the District Counselor and District Council
- Break down the previous year's receipts to compare projected budget with actual budget
- Responsible for coordinating all District Fundraisers
- Ensure that all Delegate Fees are collected at District Convention
- Maintain roster of District Officers, Chapter Officers, and Chapter Membership, which shall be distributed to all District Officers, and Counselors
- Send reminders to the District about deadlines, paperwork, fees, applications, and other submissions that are due
- Write and Coordinate the Ways and Means Report for District Convention, which should include current years expenditures, projected income, and proposed District Budget to be voted on by the Delegation
- Shall correspond frequently with all Western District Chapter Secretaries and Treasurers
- Shall maintain a relationship with other District Secretary/Treasurers
- Shall correspond frequently with the KKΨ Secretary Treasurer

Appendix B: Running for District Office Checklist

Getting Started

- q Have interest in serving as a District Officer

Choosing the Office

- q Reviewed Officer Requirements in the National and District Constitution/Bylaws
- q Contacted Current District Officer in the position
- q Reviewed The Role and Expectations of District Officers portion of this packet

Qualifications To Think About

- q Reviewed recommended qualifications
- q Have had experience that will come as an asset in the Office and to the Western District

Making the Decision

- q Talked with my Chapter President and Membership and have received their Approval
- q Talked with my Brother Chapter and have received their approval
- q Talked with my Chapter Sponsor and have received their Approval
- q Reviewed my schedule for the following year, and determined I do have the time to put forth the effort that is required by the Office, including attending ALL District Meetings and Events.
- q Reviewed my financial capabilities, and determined I am financially able to serve as a District Officer
- q Fully understand the Officer requirements and duties and feel that I will be able to fulfill them

Announcing My Candidacy

- q Announced to my Chapter
- q Announced to my Brother Chapter
- q Announced to the Members of my State
- q Announced at other District Events
- q Announced over the District Listserv
- q Announced to the current District Officers

Packet Preparation - Make Sure My Packet Contains the Following

- q Letter of Intent
- q Resume
- q Letters of Recommendation
- q Projected Timeline
 - Including:
 - Chapter Approval and Chapter Standing Verification Letter
 - Letter of Recommendation and Approval from Chapter Sponsor
 - Any other Letters of Recommendation (Brother chapter, Director of Bands, etc.)

District Convention - Make Sure I Have Prepared for the Following

- q Bring enough packets for all members of Nominations Committee, District Council, and Chapter Delegates (23+)
- q I have prepared my goals, experience, appearance, professional behavior, and presentations skills for the following: Nominations Committee Interview and Chapter Group Caucuses