



Phi Alpha Delta Law Fraternity, International

Oral History Interviewing Guide

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Introduction



Phi Alpha Delta initiating President Harding (1922) and Phi Delta Delta visiting President Coolidge at the White House (1924)

Phi Alpha Delta's history goes back over 120 years, and unfortunately much of that history has been lost. Records have been lost or destroyed, and many of our members and prior historians have either passed out of contact or passed away. In October 2022, the Fraternity appointed its first Chief History Advisor/International Historian and appointed a P.A.D. History Committee to work with the International Historian to recover, preserve, and share Phi Alpha Delta History.

One of the committee's ongoing projects is gathering oral histories from its members and encouraging individual chapters to gather oral histories related to their own chapters. In furtherance of these efforts, the Committee created this guide to assist members in creating these oral histories. It is our hope that this guide will inspire our members and assist them in turning to the key members of their chapters, districts, and communities as sources of Fraternity history.

The guide includes some suggestions for getting started, conducting/recording interviews, and making those interviews available to others. It also includes sample lists of questions in different categories to assist in eliciting historical information.

Getting Started



Charter Members of Gunter Chapter at Univ. of Colorado 1928 *Charter Members of University of Chicago Prelaw Chapter 2017*

Know Your Objective

There are several things to keep in mind when identifying potential interview candidates and the questions you will ask them. The most important of these may be knowing the purpose of your research.

If you are working on establishing a historical record of your own chapter, you may want to identify the charter members or more specifically the charter officers who were likely to be involved chartering the chapter. (Keep in mind, that the charter members for older chapters will most likely no longer be available for interview.) Are you looking to preserve the history around significant events in the chapter, district, or Fraternity? Or are you looking at how the Fraternity deals with significant political or social events and issues? For this purpose, you may wish to identify members in leadership roles or active at these during developments.

Your purpose may be to learn more about members who have become prominent outside of the Fraternity (in law, business, politics, etc.).

Know Who to Interview

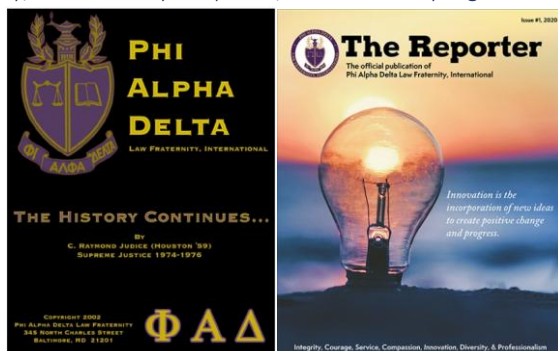
The Online Directory



The screenshot shows the PAD.org website's Member Directory Search interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: Contact Us, Shop, My Profile, Manage Profile, About Us, Join, Foundation, and Members. Below this is a search bar labeled "Member Directory Search". Under the search bar, there is a "Name" input field and a "Member Type" dropdown menu. The dropdown menu is open, showing options: Law Student, Pre-Law Student, Alumni, Lifetime Member, and Faculty. To the left of the dropdown menu is a small icon of a person. Below the dropdown menu, the text "Searching the Online Directory" is displayed.

The Fraternity maintains an online directory of members at its website www.PAD.org. This online directory may be the best place to start your search for interview candidates. It is important, however, to know what is included as well as the limits of the directory. First, if the Fraternity believes the member to be deceased, lost, or dormant, they will no longer be on the directory. Additionally, the accuracy of the information in the directory is largely reliant on information voluntarily provided by the members themselves and the contact information may very well be out of date. The good news is that reported initiation dates, law school graduation years, chapter membership, etc. will be included in the directory entry, and you can search the directory using such criteria. The directory may also indicate (though not always accurately) whether the member ever attended a Fraternity convention as well as the conventions they attended. For more recent members, the directory may also indicate whether they held chapter or Fraternity leadership positions as well as which positions they held. Even if contact information in the online directory is not current, this can be supplemented by online searches and referencing local bar directories and other sources.

The Fraternity History, The Quarterly / Reporter, and PADHistory.org



The Official History of Phi Alpha Delta (2002) and the cover of a 2020 Issue of The Reporter.

The Fraternity has an official history (*Phi Alpha Delta: The History Continues*) which is available to download in .pdf for free on the Fraternity website. The history is also searchable if you want to look for references to your chapter, particular events, or even prominent members who may be mentioned by name. “Our Living History” is a work in progress which includes updated and revised history and other materials. At this time, Part 1 of the history and appendices containing detailed charter information for Phi Alpha Delta and Phi Delta Delta law chapters has been published to the new archives site at PADHistory.org. It is expected that additional materials will be regularly added.

The fraternity magazine, *The Reporter*, is traditionally (though not always) published quarterly. A large collection of past issues going back to the early 1900’s is available at PADHistory.org. These may also be good sources for information about P.A.D. members, chapters, and events. Sometimes Reporter articles (or pictures) are also a good way to refresh the recollection of your interviewees or can help you prepare for an interview.

Some other miscellaneous items are now available on PADHistory.org including early chapter charter petitions, newsletters, and directories.

ALL ITEMS ON PADHISTORY.ORG ARE SEARCHABLE.



www.padhistory.org home page

Chapter and University Records



Additional resources may be available locally. Some things to consider include: whether your chapter maintains local records, scrap books, etc.? Whether your school archives school newspapers, yearbooks, and other records which may be available to you either at the school library or online? Most universities maintain archival collections (either hard copies, online, or both). These are an excellent source for information about your local chapters.

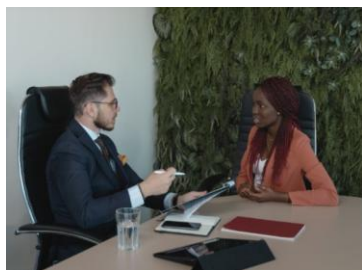
Think About How to Reach Out

In the initial outreach (usually by email or letter), you should identify yourself, your objective, and the reasons why you're reaching out to them. You may wish the initial outreach to be more casual and seek some basic information to help determine whether the person is a good candidate for interviews. Asking them to share some information or stories initially via email will help you make this determination.



If the person you wish to interview is a person of some fame or of some stature in the profession, you may wish to reach out through a mutual acquaintance or utilize the P.A.D. Network to make the initial approach.

The Interview



To get the most out of your interview, you need to prepare. Going into the interview, you should already be as familiar as possible with the background of the interviewee and the topic about which the interviewee will be interviewed. In addition to the sample questions included in this guide, you will want to prepare some questions specifically intended for this interview (or tailor those provided). It may also be helpful to have some things on hand to refresh the interviewees recollection such as articles, pictures, etc.

Consent to record the interview (video and/or audio) and use the recording should be obtained from the interviewee. Thankfully, the technology has progressed so that recording interviews should be relatively

simple and not require any special equipment. Most virtual meeting software (such as Zoom or GoToMeeting) have functions for recording meetings. In person meetings can be recorded by using phones or notepad computers. The quality may not be the same as a studio production, but the most important thing is to preserve the history in a medium which can be used and shared.

While this guide provides sample questions, the interviewer should be prepared to ask follow up questions of the interviewee to draw out more information which may be of value. Where chapter activities or Fraternity members are mentioned, the interview should attempt to elicit more information about these activities and members.

Sample Questions



General Background

Before diving into Phi Alpha Delta, it may be a good idea to get some background information about the interviewee asking open ended questions. For example:

1. Before we begin in earnest, can you share a little bit about yourself and your background before you went to law school?
2. Are there any special memories about your early life or your family that you'd like to share?
3. Were there any key role models in your early life that you think had a big impact on who you are or the educational and professional decisions you made? Can you tell us a little about them?
4. Why did you decide to go to law school, and what made you choose _____ as your school?
5. Were your family and friends supportive of your choices?
6. Is there anything else you would like people to know about your background?

Joining Phi Alpha Delta

1. Why did you join Phi Alpha Delta?
2. Was there a particular person who invited you and/or encouraged you to join? What do you remember about them?

3. Were there other legal fraternities active at your school?
4. Can you tell us a little bit about the process to join your chapter when you joined?
 - a. Were there any restrictions on membership?
 - b. Was there a pledging process?
 - c. Was there a voting process on potential members?

Activities as a Student Member (Pre-Law or Law)

(If interviewee was a member of both pre-law and law chapters, it may be appropriate to ask the following questions about both chapters.)

1. Can you share a little bit about your chapter when you joined?
 - a. Who were your chapter leaders? *(If specific individuals are identified, one could also ask to share stories of information about these leaders.)*
 - b. What kind of activities did you chapter sponsor?
 - c. What was the reputation of your chapter at the school? What were you known for?
 - d. Any favorite members from your chapter when you were a student?
 - e. What are your favorite P.A.D. memories from when you were a student?
2. Did you have any leadership roles in your chapter?
3. Are there any accomplishments, either yours or your chapter's, of which you are particularly proud from when you were a student?
4. Do you remember anything about your chapter's interaction with other chapters (student or alumni) or your District Justice and local alumni?

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Moving the Fraternity Forward on its Path to Inclusion

1. When you started law school, how diverse was your class/school? What percentage of your class do think were made up of women.... Of minorities?
2. Do you remember any discussion about inclusion of women/minority members in the school or in the Fraternity?
3. What are your recollections of these discussions and how the Fraternity evolved in this area?
4. What was the diversity of your chapter like when you joined? Were there many minority or women members? How about by the time you graduated – had this changed?

5. Do you think women and minorities felt welcome to apply and participate?
6. Did you attend any chapter meetings or conventions where this was discussed? Can you tell us anything about these discussions?
7. If membership policies changed or had recently changed while you were a student member, what do you remember about this process? Did your chapter immediately embrace these changes?
8. Do you remember any resistance to the removal of any membership restrictions or the evolution of the Fraternity into a more open membership – either at your chapter or nationally?
9. Do you remember if there was any continued resistance to the new membership policies after they were approved?
10. Our research has indicated that several chapters would initiate minority or female members into their local chapters in defiance of membership restrictions before these restrictions were lifted. Do you remember hearing about this in your chapter or in other chapters? What can you tell us about this and the reaction from national when it happened?
11. How would you describe, overall, the evolution of Phi Alpha Delta from an organization with restrictive membership to the open membership organization it is today?
12. What do you think the most significant factors were in this evolution?
13. Do you think Phi Alpha Delta has done enough to make members from diverse backgrounds feel welcome and what further steps do you think need to be taken to ensure Phi Alpha Delta is open and welcoming to all potential and current members?

Questions About Phi Delta Delta



These questions can be asked interviewees who were members of Phi Delta Delta prior to the merger or were members of Phi Alpha Delta during the time immediately preceding the merger, during the merger process, or immediately after the merger.

For PDD Members:

1. Why did you first join Phi Delta Delta?
2. Was there a particular person who invited and/or encouraged you to join? What do you remember about them?
3. What can you tell us about Phi Delta Delta's mission and values?
4. What do you think were the biggest differences between Phi Alpha Delta and Phi Delta Delta (other than the obvious)?
5. Can you tell us a little bit about the process to join your chapter when you joined?
 - a. Were there any restrictions on membership?

- b. Was there a pledging process?
 - c. Was there a voting process on potential members?
6. What do you remember about the rituals of Phi Delta Delta?
 7. In Phi Delta Delta's initiation ritual, there is a secret phrase mentioned that the name Phi Delta Delta connoted/abbreviated, but the phrase was never written in the book of the ritual. Do you remember this phrase, and can you share it?
 8. Can you share a little bit about your P.D.D. chapter when you joined?
 - a. Who were your chapter leaders? *(If specific individuals are identified, one could also ask to share stories of information about these leaders.)*
 - b. What kind of activities did your chapter sponsor?
 - c. What was the reputation of your chapter at the school? What were you known for?
 - d. Any favorite members from your chapter when you were a student?
 - e. What are your favorite memories from when you were a student member?
 9. Did you have any leadership roles in your chapter?
 10. Are there any accomplishments, yours, your chapter's, or Phi Delta Delta's of which you are particularly proud?
 11. How did you stay involved in Phi Delta Delta after law school? *[Ask only if the interviewee graduated before the merger.]*

For PDD members and PAD members initiated prior to the merger or in the seventies:

1. What do you remember about the merger between P.A.D. and P.D.D. and the merger process?
2. Why do think the membership of Phi Delta Delta decided to merge?
3. Why do you think the membership of Phi Alpha Delta decided to merge?
4. Were you in attendance at the 1972 convention that approved the merger?
5. What can you tell us about that convention?
6. Do you have any particular memories of the debate or vote to approve the merger?
7. One of the original proposals prior to convention, was that the merged organization be called "Phi Alpha Delta Law Society, International". Do you remember any discussion about becoming a society rather than a fraternity and why it was ultimately rejected?
8. Our understanding is that Phi Delta Delta was also invited to merge with Phi Delta Phi and a committee was formed to explore this possibility, why do you think the Phi Alpha Delta merger was preferred?

Chartering or Reactivating a Chapter of Phi Alpha Delta



Installation of the West Suburban Alumni Chapter 2006



Installation of Alpha Phi Chapter (P.D.D.) at Univ. of Miami 1931

These questions should be used if the interviewee was involved in the chartering or reactivation of their chapter.

1. Were you involved in the chartering/reactivation efforts for your chapter?
2. Who were the organizers?
3. What was the motivation behind the effort?
4. How did they go about recruiting new members?
5. Did they work with anyone outside the chapter?
6. What do you remember about the installation/reactivation ceremony?

Activities as an Alumni Member

1. How did you stay active in Phi Alpha Delta after graduation?
2. Did you take on any volunteer roles?
3. Were you involved in any alumni chapters?
4. Can you share a little bit about the alumni chapter(s) you were involved with?
 - a. Who were your chapter leaders? *(If specific individuals are identified, one could also ask to share stories of information about these leaders.)*
 - b. What kind of activities did your chapter sponsor?
 - c. Any favorite members from your chapter when you were involved?
 - e. What are your favorite memories from when you were active with the chapter?

Convention Memories

1. Did you ever attend a fraternity convention? How many?
2. Any favorite convention memories/stories?
3. Convention format and content have changed a lot over the years. Can you tell us what conventions were like when you attended your first convention and the changes you've observed over the years?
4. Do you remember any heated debates or controversies from conventions you attended?
5. Did you form any long-term friendships/relationships with P.A.D.'s you met at convention?
6. Did you meet anyone at convention that you will always remember?
7. What can you tell us about convention politics?
8. Are there any memories you can share about any convention roles you have played as an officer or committee member, perhaps?
9. What would you tell a member who is considering going to convention?

Favorite / Significant Phi Alpha Delta Stories

1. What has been the most rewarding part of your membership in Phi Alpha Delta?
2. Who have you met through Phi Alpha Delta that had the biggest impact on your life – professionally and/or personally?
3. What type of relationships did you form with other PADs? Are they close friends/spouses? Do you still see or communicate with P.A.D.'s regularly?
4. Sometimes we hear about "secret" or unofficial chapters of Phi Alpha Delta? Can you tell us about any of these that you heard about or became a member of?
5. Is there anything about Phi Alpha Delta that you think most members today may not know that you want to share?
6. If someone asked you if they should join Phi Alpha Delta, what would you say? What would you tell them about P.A.D. to convince them to join?

Memories of P.A.D. Leaders and DSC Members

These questions are intended for interviewees who have been active at conventions and nationally with Phi Alpha Delta to elicit information about P.A.D. members who played key/interesting roles in Fraternity history.

1. There are a lot of Phi Alpha Delta members throughout our history that we consider key or interesting members, past Justices, members of the Distinguished Server Chapter, etc. I wonder if I could give you some names and you can tell us what you remember about each person or any favorite stories you may have about them?

Distinguished Service Chapter Members		
NAME	Chapter	Inducted
Frank E. Gray	Ford	1966
Carl E. Dietze	Ryan	1966
Charles Tom Henderson	Brewer	1966
Charles E. Wittaker	Benton	1967
J. Harry LaBrum	Taft	1968
Hon. Tom C. Clark	Taney	1969
William B. Robertson	Taft	1970
Robert E. Redding	Taft	1972
Matthew S. "Sandy" Rae	Rutledge	1978
Fredrick J. Weitkamp	Ross	1978
Hon. C. Raymond Judice	Houston	1980
John J. McAulay	O'Niell	1980
Don Hutson	Jay	1984
Donald R. Moore	Taft	1985
Frank J. McCown	McKinley	1986
Walter G. Bridges	Morgan	1992
John F. Weitkamp	Ford	1996
Hon. Richard P. McCully	McKellar	1998
Clifford Schechter	Wormser	2002
Rhonda K. Hill	Cole	2008
Frederic H. Pearson	Chase	2010
Jack L. Miller	Benton	2012
Norman M. Owen	Beaumont	2014
J. Derek Hill	Hull	2016
Ron Winter	Alden	2016
Joe Deems	Sammis	2018
Larry Crigler	Hoffman	2018
Melody Crick Peters	Truman	2018
Robert L. Schimmel	Rasco	2018
Arnold Hirsch	Coke	2020
Amelia DeVecchio	Alpha Rho (PDD)	2020
Hector Mendez-Loucil	De Diego	2020
Homer Taft	Hay	2020
Shelley Weinstein	McCormick	2020
Curtis Anderson	Ross	2024
J. Steven Clark	Garland	2024
John K. Norris	Blackstone	2024
Jay Ross	Patterson	2024

Andrew Sagan	Redding NCAA	2024
Other Notable P.A.D. Members / Leaders		
NAME	Chapter	Known For
Tom Bentz	Webster	Foundation Chair / IEB Member / DJ
Maree Wiggins Blackston	Pinckney	IFR / PreLaw Director / Executive Director
Luis Armstrong-Cortada	deDiego	IEB Member / DJ (Puerto Rico)
John Peter Curielli	Story	Foundation Trustee / Fraternity Registered Agent / Various leadership roles
Anthony A. DiGrazia	Story	Supreme Justice
Erenie Greco	Connelly	DJ / Chapter organizer
Philip Greenberg	Rapallo	IEB/Tribunal
Dan D. Halpin	Brandeis	Long Serving DJ
Alex A. Hotchkiss	Benson	Supreme Justice
Elden S. Magaw	Harlan	Supreme Justice / Alum Chapter Namesake
Stanley H. Kohn	Pinckney	Intl. Justice
Dalphine MacMillian	Zeta (PDD)	Sup. Board/PDD Board
Henry C. Rohr	Ross	Supreme Justice
Enid William Ross	Omega (PDD)	Sup. Board/PDD Board
Alan Zerkowitz	Champ Clark	IEB Member/ District XI DJ

- Are there any other P.A.D. members we haven't discussed that we should talk about before we finish?

Professional Activities and Career

- Can you tell me a little more about yourself, particularly your career after law school?
- What was your first job out of law school and how did you get it?
- How did you move forward in your career from there?
- Can you tell us about some of your most rewarding professional experiences?
- Is there any accomplishment that you are particularly proud of?

(Additional questions should be prepared based on your knowledge of and research into the interviewee's career.)

Family

If appropriate, this is an opportunity to add color to the interviewee by learning about spouses, significant others, children, etc.

1. Can you tell us a little bit about your family?
2. How did you meet your spouse/significant other?
3. Do you have children? Can you tell us about them?
4. Any favorite memories you'd like to share about your family?

Questions for This Interview in Particular

In addition to the sample questions here, you should also assemble questions of your own. As you prepare for your interview, learn all you can about your interviewee (in and out of Phi Alpha Delta) and take the time to prepare additional questions tailored to the person you are interviewing. After learning what you can of their story, what about them or their P.A.D. experience intrigues you? What about them interests you? What topics do you think they are uniquely positioned to offer insight on?