**12 Steps to Organizing your Annual Alumni Golf Tournament**

Hole #1. Identifying your Committee

Planning a quality golf tournament most likely will require a team effort. To start, identify your committee to work with which could include but not limited to: other members from your alumni association, alumni base, or chapter members. Once you have your committee, work through the remainder of these steps and delegate specific tasks.

Hole #2. Defining Purpose and Setting Goals

Now that you have your committee you are in a better position to decide what the purpose of the golf tournament should be. Is the alumni association’s goal to raise fundraising dollars for the active chapter or is it to raise funds for the chapter’s philanthropy efforts? As a committee, make sure to set smart goals, so you may measure your success.

Hole #3. Selecting the Right Tournament Format

The tournament format will depend highly on the skill-level of the participating golfers. Here are a few ideas to get you and your committee started:

* Scramble: One of the primary forms of tournament play for charity events, etc. Usually played with 4-person teams and ideal for beginner-level golfers. In a scramble, all players tee off and decide where to take their second shot based on the best ball. Each player takes their second shot from that location and so on until the ball is holed.
* Best-ball: Each player hits their own ball throughout the round; however, at the end of each hole, the lowest score or “best ball” is used as the teams score.
* Modified Scramble: After each player tees off the team should decide the best ball, which is where each player will hit their second shot. Players should play their own ball for the remainder of the hole. The team score shall be the sum of the two lowest scores for each hole. Play can be either a *Gross Competition* (no handicap allocations) or *Net Competition* (handicaps are applied and deducted from the Gross Scores).

Hole #4. Choose the Best Golf Course

Probably the most important decision you will have to make is selecting the appropriate golf course. Know your golfers and what kind of course they like (easy, difficult, private, etc.). If possible, leverage any current relationships you or someone else may have with a golf course in order get the best deal. The golf course you decide upon will also strongly dictate the cost for someone to participate, so keep your goals in mind when choosing the appropriate golf course.

Hole #5. Promoting Your Tournament

Word of mouth is by far the best way to promote your golf tournament. Try setting up a phone tree among the committee members in an effort to personally invite as many brothers as possible. Also, be sure to send out an event/RSVP; the International Fraternity would recommend utilizing a free service such as MailChimp (click [here](https://www.pikes.org/resources/chapter-resources/chapter-marketing-tools) for tutorial) to send your emails.

As you can imagine timing is everything. Here is a sample timeline to get you started:

* Start your planning at least 6 months in advance.
* Select a golf course 5 months prior to the date of your event.
* Notify golfers at least 2 months in advance with event details.
* Ensure the date of your event does not conflict with any other alumni events, chapter events, major university events (Graduation, spring break, etc.), or major sporting events.
  + Could possibly utilize already planned University events to increase attendance (i.e. Homecoming).

Hole #6. Games & Contests

Integrating games and contests into your golf tournament are a great way to make lasting memories and bring a different dynamic to your event. Make sure to work with the management of the golf course to identify which game you may have for certain holes. Here are some ideas:

* Longest drive contest
* Closest to the pin
* Beat the pro (if you have a real pro)
  + Have the golf pro set-up at one of the holes and individuals may pay money to try and out drive them. Winners are entered into a drawing for a split of the pot.
* Tournament theme
  + Simply having a tournament theme may increase your attendance numbers.

Hole #7. Quality Prizes

The quality of the prizes will dictate the quality of the event. This may be a good opportunity to solicit sponsors for prizes, especially if the tournament is for a charitable cause.

Hole #8. Event Operations

Ensuring that the event starts on time is crucial to the duration of the event. Make sure all committee members and any volunteers know their duties for the day.

Hole #9. Food & Beverage

Consult the golf course you are working with to see if outside food is allowed. An outdoor event is a great opportunity to have a cook-out. Volunteers and any non-golfers could possibly prepare the food while the others are on the course.

Hole #10. Lodging

If it’s a big event, contact the surrounding hotels (high-end and low-end) to see if you can obtain any special rates for your guests.

Hole#11. Photography & Video

Memories last a lifetime. Seek out an alumnus member or a chapter member that may be efficient with a DSLR or higher end camera to capture moments throughout the day.

Hole #12. Follow Up

Follow-up with everyone who was involved with your event from volunteers, the golf course, to participants, and thank them for making your event a success. This is also a good opportunity to turn your event into an annual event.