



DR. HECTOR CUEVAS

(he/him)

Associate Director of Operations
Emory University

Candidate, AFA Board of Directors

Please concisely outline your professional volunteer experience (most recent position first) and any other volunteer experience, both within and outside of the association, that is directly related to association management, board service, or the position for which you are accepting a nomination. Be sure to include both the position held and dates of service.

Doctoral Student Community Collective (DSCC) Coordinator, Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors (Fall 2025-Present): Co-coordinate a professional learning community for FSL practitioners pursuing doctoral degrees, managing member communications, programming, and panelist events in partnership with AFA's annual meeting infrastructure. Awards & Recognition Committee Member, Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors (2024-Present): Serve on the committee responsible for reviewing nominations and recognizing excellence across the FSL profession. Graduate Student Experience Committee Member, Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors (2023-Present): Contributed to initiatives supporting graduate student engagement and professional development within AFA. Lead Facilitator, Undergraduate Interfraternity Institute, Association of Fraternal Leadership & Values (2024-Present): Serve as a lead facilitator for one of the interfraternal movement's premier leadership development programs, supporting facilitator teams and participant learning. Chapter Facilitator (2025) / Lead Facilitator (Summer 2026), Wooden Institute, Beta Theta Pi Fraternity: Progressed from chapter-level facilitation to leading facilitator team coordination for Beta Theta Pi's flagship values-based leadership program.

Describe your understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the AFA board of directors (BOD). What strengths or characteristics do you possess that would make you an effective BOD member? How, specifically, have you demonstrated this?

I did not come to this profession by accident. As a Latino fraternity alumnus who has spent over eight years advising the very communities that did not always make space for people like me, I understand both the promise and the weight of this work. That perspective shapes everything I bring to AFA and everything I would bring to this board. The Board of Directors governs with integrity, sets strategic direction, ensures financial accountability, and represents the full breadth of this association's membership. I understand those responsibilities not as abstractions but as lived practice. At Emory, I served as Interim Director of FSL, leading 30+ chapters and more than 1,300 students, supervising staff, managing complex conduct

cases, and partnering with senior university leadership to make consequential decisions under pressure. I know what it means to be accountable for outcomes that affect real people. My recently completed Ed.D., with research examining how Latino men in historically white fraternities make meaning of binge drinking culture, reflects my commitment to bringing rigorous, equity-centered thinking to the hardest questions in our field. I do not shy away from complexity. I study it, name it, and build toward something better. As DSCC Coordinator and a lead facilitator for UIFI and the Wooden Institute, I have invested in this profession's future while doing the daily work of the present. I am ready to serve at the level this association deserves.

The fraternity and sorority profession (and higher education in general) is a complex, interdisciplinary space with many key stakeholders. Who do you see as some of the Association's primary stakeholders? What do you see as the greatest opportunities to build stakeholder alignment, consensus, and partnership? How would you effectively lead the association through this exercise in alignment?

AFA's primary stakeholders span a wide and often competing landscape: campus-based FSL professionals, inter/national headquarters, institutional administrators, undergraduate members, alumni, governing councils, accrediting bodies, and the broader higher education community. Each brings a distinct set of priorities, pressures, and definitions of success. The complexity is not a problem to be solved. It is the nature of this work. The greatest tension, in my view, lives in two places. The first is between inter/national organizations and campus professionals who often operate under fundamentally different accountability structures and timelines. The second is between FSL as a field and the institutional administrators who hold the resources, policy authority, and political will that determine whether our communities thrive or are dismantled. Building alignment across these fault lines requires more than good intentions. It requires trust built over time, data that tells a shared story, and the courage to name disagreement before pretending consensus exists. As a board member, I would lead this work by centering AFA's Core Competencies and Strategic Framework as a common language across stakeholder groups, advocating for structured dialogue that brings campus professionals and inter/national partners into the same room with shared purpose rather than competing agendas. My background as a researcher, practitioner, and facilitator has prepared me to create conditions where hard conversations become generative ones rather than performative ones. Alignment is not agreement. It is a shared commitment to moving forward together even when the path is not perfectly clear. That is the kind of leadership I am prepared to offer.

One of the main responsibilities of board members is to maintain financial accountability of the organization. Board members act as trustees of the organization's assets and must exercise due diligence to oversee that the organization is well-managed and that its financial situation remains sound. Please describe a time when you have had to make difficult financial and/or resource allocation decisions and how would you use that experience as you serve on the board.

As Assistant Director of Sorority and Fraternity Life at Emory University, I led the evaluation and restructuring of our Community Advisor staffing model within our housed chapter facilities on Eagle Row. The existing model relied on undergraduate student staff whose compensation structure had become increasingly misaligned with both institutional standards and the evolving demands of the role. After a thorough assessment of program impact, compensation equity, and operational effectiveness, I recommended transitioning to a Graduate House Director model, a decision that directly affected student positions, chapter communities, and departmental budget allocation. This work extended beyond FSL. In my current role as Associate Director of Operations, I have also overseen compensation models for the Resident Advisor program within the Office of Residence Life, navigating the institutional, financial, and human complexity of ensuring student staff are compensated equitably and sustainably. When I later served as Interim Director, I managed an operating budget of over \$300,000, bringing that same discipline and equity lens to every resource decision. These experiences shaped how I understand financial accountability at the board level. Trustees do not simply approve budgets. They interrogate assumptions, ask whether current resource models still serve the mission, and make difficult recommendations even when consensus is hard to build. I know what it means to recommend change that

AFA's strategic plan, 'Forward to 50', will be coming to a close in 2026, and the AFA Board of Directors will be called to think about AFA's future strategic direction. Looking forward into the next five years, in what ways you see AFA being uniquely called to serve our profession? Discuss how you typically approach prioritization and allocation of strategic planning efforts, and what you see as the Board of Directors' role in strategic plan development.

Forward to 50 built something important. Its four pillars of developing professional competency, advancing research, advocating for the profession, and creating community gave AFA a coherent framework for growth and impact. As that plan closes in 2026, the board must do something harder than execute a strategy. It must imagine what this profession needs next. AFA is uniquely positioned to serve as the connective tissue of a profession under significant pressure. Hazing, Title IX, declining enrollment, the politicization of diversity and inclusion efforts, and growing institutional scrutiny of fraternity and sorority life are not isolated challenges. They are interconnected, and they demand a national association capable of translating complexity into clarity for practitioners in the field. The next strategic plan must double down on research-informed practice, invest in developing and retaining professionals from underrepresented backgrounds, and strengthen the case for FSL's value in an increasingly skeptical higher education landscape. My approach to prioritization begins with listening to what members are experiencing on the ground, identifying gaps between AFA's current offerings and practitioners' daily realities, and letting data lead. From there, I focus on clarity over volume. Fewer priorities pursued with depth and intention rather than many pursued broadly. The board's role is to set vision, ask hard questions, and hold the organization accountable to outcomes. I am

Allocation Exercise

You receive 100 points, each of which can be spent to prioritize the board's time. Allocate these 100 points based on what priority areas you think the board should spend their time on. Allocate more points to those areas that you think are more important.

Priority Area	Points Allotted	Remarks
Annual Meeting Planning	4	The Annual Meeting is AFA's most significant membership touchpoint and a major revenue driver. While operational planning belongs to staff, the board has a governance interest in ensuring the meeting reflects the association's strategic priorities and remains financially sound.
Educational Program Selection	2	While program selection is primarily a staff and committee function, the board should ensure educational offerings align with the association's competency framework and strategic direction. Governance here is light but not absent.
Budget Oversight and Financial Management	20	Financial stewardship is among the board's most fundamental responsibilities. Ensuring the association's fiscal health, reviewing audits, and making resource allocation decisions that align with strategic priorities are non-negotiable board functions that require consistent attention and rigor.
Developing Strategy for Members' Professional Competency and Mentorship	17	AFA exists to elevate the standard of practice for FSL professionals. The board must own the strategic direction of how the association develops its members, even when execution lives with staff and committees.
Stakeholder Outreach & Partnership (NASPA, ASCA, FSL Umbrellas, etc.)	14	The FSL profession does not exist in isolation. Board members serve as ambassadors and relationship builders with NASPA, ACPA, inter/national headquarters, and other partners. These relationships directly shape AFA's influence and relevance in higher education.
Communication Strategy	6	How AFA communicates its value, positions, and opportunities directly affects member engagement and the association's reputation. The board should provide strategic direction on how the association tells its story, even when execution belongs to staff.
Personnel and Association Human Resources	11	A board that does not invest in the health of its staff infrastructure is a board that will eventually face an organizational crisis. Supporting and evaluating executive leadership is a core governance responsibility.
Creating Professional Community through Technology and Identity/Affinity Spaces	4	Building belonging across a diverse membership is central to AFA's mission. The board should ensure community-building efforts are resourced and intentional, particularly for professionals from historically underrepresented backgrounds.
Advancing Research	8	Research is what separates opinion from evidence in our profession. The board should champion a culture of inquiry, support the journal and research initiatives, and ensure AFA remains a credible voice grounded in scholarship.
Policy and Position Statement Development	14	In a profession navigating hazing legislation, Title IX, and the politicization of DEI, AFA's voice matters. The board is responsible for ensuring the association speaks clearly, courageously, and credibly on issues that affect our members and the students they serve.
.Other (Please describe in the appropriate field)	0	No additional allocation at this time. The categories above capture the full scope of board responsibility as I understand it.