

GRADUATION PLEDGE ALLIANCE

Start a Pledge Program

Guide

11/20/2007



<http://www.graduationpledge.org>

Starting Your Pledge Campaign

Welcome and thank you for your interest in the Graduation Pledge. This guide provides tips and suggestions to help you launch a Pledge campaign at your institution.

There are many ideas below to help your campaign. However, it is not necessary to incorporate all of these ideas to have a successful campaign. These tips and suggestions have been compiled from campaigns from all participating institutions, and each campaign incorporates the tips and suggestions which work best for their school. It will be up to you to decide which ones will fit your institution and campaign best. We encourage, however, that you do incorporate as many tips as possible to increase the success of your campaign.

Please Note: If you are starting the Graduation Pledge at your school, please let us know! [E-mail us.](#)

3 Keys to Success

Have a Successful First Year

When starting the pledge at your school, there is nothing more rewarding than having a successful campaign. During your first year, you'll have to judge how much time and effort you (and whoever else you can recruit) want to put in, and develop a list of goals and tasks which you can accomplish in that time. The most essential tasks for you to accomplish are making Pledge ribbons and cards and a way for seniors to sign the pledge (good times are at cap and gown distribution and at commencement rehearsal). After allocating time for those, you can then work on more publicity for the Pledge (flyers, e-mail messages, school newspaper articles); seeking clubs, organizations and class officers (perhaps to help cover cost of materials, and maybe even volunteer time at Pledge signing event); seeking administrative support (getting the Pledge mentioned at the commencement ceremony); and recruiting a new leader to lead a pledge program next year (interested underclassmen, campus club, next year's class officers).

Get some help!

While you certainly can bring the Pledge to your school by yourself, it will be much easier (and often more successful) if you can get help. Find some friends who share a common interest with you. Or find a club which would be interested. Perhaps you know a faculty member (often helpful, might know students who would be interested in helping out)? Anyone who is interested will be of great help. First, it always helps to divide up the work load. Second, you can brainstorm which methods will be most effective for your campus. Third, it gives you a partner to be accountable to. Fourth, and most importantly, it's usually more fun.

Make the Pledge sustainable

I mentioned it before, but try your best to get the pledge to take root at your school. Having the first year, the year you design and work so hard on, be successful is very rewarding, but knowing after you graduate, and for years to come, that the pledge is still alive and well at your schools is very rewarding. Find the underclassmen, class officers, campus club, faculty member, or administrator who will carry the pledge on into the next several years.

Suggested Practices and Tips

Start Your Campaign Early

It's never too early to start your campaign. Create a list of tasks which can be completed ahead of time to alleviate pressure when graduation time comes near and academic pressures increase.

Distribute Pledge Cards and Ribbons

Print Graduation Pledge cards (found at <http://www.graduationpledge.org/cards.html>) to pass out to seniors who have signed the Pledge and give green ribbons to wear on the graduation robe. Both items should be distributed when seniors sign the Pledge.

Spread the Word on the Pledge

Seniors who hear about the Pledge prior to signing it are more likely to sign when the time comes. Advertise the Pledge by hanging flyers around campus, creating a campaign website, add the pledge to Campus announcements, have a information table at a campus or student center. Utilize as many resources as you can.

Establish a Time and Location for Seniors to Sign the Pledge

Pick a time and location for seniors to sign the Pledge and advertise it well. Suggested times to have seniors sign are during commencement rehearsal, cap and gown pick up, senior class events, and tables in high traffic areas.

Incorporate the Pledge into Commencement

Contact administrators who are organizing commencement and see if the Pledge can be incorporated into the ceremony. The Pledge can be incorporated by mentioning it in the commencement booklet or during a speech.

Additional Resources

For more information, visit the Graduation Pledge Alliance [Website](#).

Please e-mail the [Gradution Pledge Alliance](#) questions or suggestions you may have.