

**UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND INVOLVEMENT**

**SORORITY AND FRATERNITY AFFAIRS
POLICY ON EXPANSION
FOR SOCIAL SORORITIES AND FRATERNITIES**

The Policy on Expansion for Social Sororities and Fraternities outlines the guidelines and procedures for application, review, and registration of a new social sorority and/or fraternity at the University of Florida.

A new social sorority or fraternity may register with the University only after a formal invitation has been granted by the Vice President for Student Affairs. In order to receive a formal invitation, the petitioning organization must meet all the documentation and certification requirements as set forth by this policy. Following the submission of all documentation and certification requirements, an Expansion Committee consisting of council presidents, chapter presidents, and University administrators will convene to review all documentation and certification requirements, and to make a recommendation regarding whether to extend a formal invitation for registration. The recommendation shall be presented to the Director of Student Activities and Involvement for review and approval.

The governance structure for social sororities and fraternities at the University of Florida includes student governing councils that are delegated authority by the University to participate in a shared governance model. A petitioning social sorority or fraternity needs to be aware of the policies and procedures of each council, as the organization must affiliate with one of the four councils upon registering as a social sorority or fraternity. For specific information about the councils, please refer to the following website: www.greeks.ufl.edu.

This document is divided into three sections: Section I outlines the University of Florida's definition and general guidelines for social sororities and fraternities pursuant to the relevant Rules of the University of Florida; Section II outlines the procedure that a petitioning social sorority or fraternity must follow to request and obtain registration; and Section III outlines the benefits and expectations of a registered social sorority or fraternity at the University of Florida.

SECTION I

**RULES OF UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
6C1-4.004 Student Affairs: Social Sororities and Fraternities**

Social sororities and fraternities are student organizations that are founded on the principles of brotherhood/sisterhood and are based on the ideals of friendship, personal growth and service to the community. In partnership with the University, social sororities and fraternities promote the highest standards of scholarship, leadership, and service for their members.

The United States Department of Education has established guidelines and criteria necessary to be classified as a social sorority or fraternity (which includes a provision that allows an organization to operate as a single-sex organization). In keeping with the criteria established by the Department of Education, the University of Florida classifies social sororities and fraternities as organizations that:

- Do not limit membership to persons pursuing or having interest in a particular field of study, profession or academic discipline

- Do not serve as honorary societies for academic, leadership, or any other endeavor
- Do not permit members to hold membership in other social sororities or fraternities.

In addition these organizations must also:

- Have tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(7) of the Internal Revenue Code
- Limit membership to currently enrolled students at the University of Florida.

Social sororities and fraternities shall exist at the University of Florida as registered student organizations and shall be classified as social sororities and fraternities, governed by policies established by the Division of Student Affairs and administered through the Department of Student Activities and Involvement/Sorority and Fraternity Affairs (SFA) .

The governance structure established by the University of Florida includes student input and participation. Student input and participation is accomplished through authority delegated by SFA to designated student governing councils. Social sororities and fraternities must abide by applicable university policies, regulations, and procedures governing student organizations, as well as policies, guidelines, and procedures established by SFA and the designated governing councils.

A new social sorority or fraternity seeking registration at the University of Florida must complete the expansion process as outlined in the Policy on Expansion for Social Sororities and Fraternities. No social sorority or fraternity shall be registered at the University of Florida without approval by SFA and affiliation with a designated governing council.

A social sorority or fraternity that operates a residential unit and provides opportunities for housing to university students, must abide by facility management policies and standards as established by the University, including but not limited to the following: (1) Organizations must have a live-in House Director and be in compliance with related policies; (2) Organizations must be in compliance with fire safety standards and must pass Fire Safety Inspections; (3) Organizations must comply with building inspection and related policies and must take corrective measures as needed or required.

The University reserves the right to withhold, revoke, or suspend the registration of any social sorority or fraternity when University rules, policies, and/or guidelines are not adhered to.

SECTION II

Procedure

Any social sorority or fraternity seeking registration at the University of Florida must file a letter of intent and submit the required documentation as described below to Sorority and Fraternity Affairs (SFA) before November 1st to be considered for expansion for the upcoming fall semester or before July 1st to be considered for expansion for the upcoming spring semester. In the letter of intent, the chapter must articulate which governing council it wishes to affiliate with. For expansions of National Panhellenic Conference sororities, the university will work in concert with the process as outlined in the *NPC Manual of Information* as adopted by the National Panhellenic Conference; however, all University of Florida requirements must be met.

Documentation

The sorority or fraternity shall provide SFA with the following information along with its letter of intent:

1. Documentation of a 501(c)(7) tax status by the Internal Revenue Service
2. Contact information for alumni residing in the immediate area (100 mile radius of Gainesville)
3. Contact information and UF ID numbers for any University of Florida students currently interested in affiliating with the organization

4. Letter of commitment from a person or group of individuals willing to serve as chapter advisor(s)
5. Documentation of support from (inter)national office for the person(s) serving as chapter advisor(s)
6. List of undergraduate collegiate chapters nationwide including total membership size for each chapter
7. National risk management policies related to alcohol, drugs, hazing and facility management (if applicable)
8. Copy of the new member education/intake curriculum including the length of time the new member education/intake program spans before initiation
9. Information about leadership development programs provided at the local, state, regional, and/or national level(s)
10. List of other institutions where the organization expanded within the past three years and permission to contact those campuses to inquire about the experience
11. Plan of action and timeline for the expansion including support for the organization by the headquarters and alumni; identification of, length of time to be present, and functions to be performed by national, regional, and/or state staff in support of the process; and the level of support and plan for ongoing consultations and supervision for the colony/chapter
12. Financial support available to the chapter from the headquarters and alumni, to include a statement concerning how the headquarters will address any outstanding liabilities or other legal responsibilities incurred by the organization in the event that the expansion is not successful
13. A copy of the (inter)national constitution and by-laws containing language that demonstrates compliance with the University and US Department of Education's definition of and criteria for a social sorority or fraternity
14. Rules, regulations, policies, and related information pertaining to the colony/chapter and its operations
15. Plans related to colony/chapter housing (if applicable)
16. Explanation of how the organization fulfills the needs of the university community and will be able to differentiate itself from other chapters that currently are registered
17. Further clarification and explanation on the reasons why the organization will be a good fit in the selected governing council as stated in the letter of intent
18. Any additional information requested by the University of Florida

Statement of commitment to University policies and guidelines

The petitioning sorority or fraternity must also submit a letter that specifically articulates agreement to the following items:

1. Adherence to the Florida Greek Standards (FGS) program and requirements outlined in the document (refer to www.greeks.ufl.edu for more information about the FGS)
2. Compliance with all University of Florida policies and guidelines including but not limited to those related to alcohol, hazing, and facility operations (if applicable)
3. Compliance with the University's eight week initiation requirement
4. General support for and compliance with the constitution and any other rules of the respective governing council with which the organization will affiliate
5. Any additional information requested by the University of Florida

Petitioning organizations shall provide three copies of information and materials listed above under section headings "Documentation" and "Statement of commitment to University policies and guidelines". The information shall be submitted in hardcopy format and must be tabbed to correspond with the requirements as listed. Failure to provide information as requested may delay the process or may be grounds for termination of consideration for expansion.

The SFA shall respond in writing to each organization's letter of intent to confirm receipt. Information will be included in the SFA letter to provide an overview of the University of Florida, the Florida Greek

Community, and policies and procedures governing social sororities and fraternities. Petitioning organizations are encouraged to use this information to evaluate and determine the organization's continued desire to affiliate and the potential for success at the University of Florida.

Initial Review Committee

The purpose of the Initial Review Committee is to assess the need, evaluate timing and feasibility, and make a recommendation regarding the advisability for growth of the social sorority and fraternity system at the University of Florida. The committee will review the status of the social sorority and fraternity community relative to size, recruitment/intake numbers, membership retention, general interests and needs of the UF student body, as well as any other relevant information. Based on all information considered, the committee shall prioritize which type of organization would best benefit the campus community and the social sorority and fraternity system. A recommendation shall be presented to the Director of Student Activities and Involvement for review and approval.

The Initial Review Committee shall convene in September and January (or at such other time as needed as determined by the Director of Sorority and Fraternity Affairs) to conduct the review process.

Membership

The Initial Review Committee shall consist of the president (or her/his designated executive officer) from each of the four governing councils; one chapter president from each of the governing councils (appointed by the respective council's voting membership); one staff member from the Division of Student Affairs (appointed by the Director of Student Activities and Involvement); one chapter advisor (appointed by Sorority and Fraternity Affairs); and the Director of Sorority and Fraternity Affairs who shall serve as the chair of the committee. All students on the committee shall be currently enrolled at UF.

Expansion Committee

The purpose of the Expansion Committee is to conduct the review and evaluation process for the organization(s) petitioning for consideration for new registration. The Expansion Committee shall be convened upon the recommendation of the Initial Review Committee and approval by the Vice President for Student Affairs. The committee shall extend an invitation to up to three organizations to visit campus during the fall or spring semester to make a formal presentation for further consideration.

Membership

The Expansion Committee shall consist of one member from each executive board of the four governing councils (selected by the respective council president); four members (current chapter presidents, former chapter presidents, or chapter advisors designated by the council president and approved by the voting membership for the respective council) from the governing council as indicated by the Initial Review Committee decision(s); one staff member from the Division of Student Affairs (appointed by the Director of Student Activities and Involvement); one chapter advisor (appointed by Sorority and Fraternity Affairs); and the Director of Sorority and Fraternity Affairs. The chair of the committee shall be a student member selected from the expanding council. All students on the committee shall be currently enrolled at UF.

Formal Presentation

Each invited organization shall make a formal presentation to the Expansion Committee and a separate formal presentation to the governing council to which it seeks affiliation. Topics shall include:

1. Interest and rationale in expanding at the University of Florida
2. Alumni support committed to the expansion project and ongoing support for the organization
3. Resources that will be assigned by the (inter)national office during the first six to eight weeks of the expansion process

4. Ongoing resources and support from the (inter)national office provided to the colony/chapter
5. Colonization process for the group to receive a charter
6. Risk management policies and educational initiatives related to hazing, alcohol, drugs and facility management (if applicable)
7. Leadership development opportunities and an overview of the new member/intake curriculum
8. Support provided to assist colony/chapter in meeting or exceeding the Florida Greek Standards
9. How the chapter will offer an experience to students that is not currently afforded by existing social sororities and fraternities

Immediately following the formal presentation to the governing council, the council's presidents or voting delegates must vote on the probability for success of the presenting social sorority or fraternity at the University of Florida. The Expansion Committee shall review and consider the outcome of the council's vote as part of its final deliberations. Upon review and consideration of all relevant information, the Expansion Committee shall make a recommendation to the Director of Student Activities and Involvement for review and approval as to whether an invitation for registration should be extended. The organization(s) shall be notified in writing of the decision and if approved, shall be invited to register as a social sorority or fraternity at the University of Florida.

Organizations not selected must reapply for future consideration by the Expansion Committee as outlined in Section II.

A new organization that registers at the University of Florida through the expansion process, hereafter referred to as a colony, must complete a one year probationary period in the respective governing council to establish its success based on performance levels using the Florida Greek Standards. During the probationary period, the sorority or fraternity will have voting privileges in and will be assessed dues by the respective governing council. After successful completion of the Florida Greek Standards during the one year probationary period, the social sorority or fraternity will become a full or regular member of the respective governing council. If the organization does not meet the Florida Greek Standards, it will remain in probationary status for an additional year. If the organization fails to meet the Florida Greek Standards for its first two years, its ability to maintain registration may be revoked.

Each colony shall become a fully chartered chapter by its headquarters within two years of registering. Failure to do so may result in the loss of registration as a social sorority or fraternity. If an organization has not become a fully chartered chapter within two years, the organization must petition SFA in writing to explain any mitigating circumstances and to request an extension. If registration as a social sorority or fraternity is revoked, the ability to re-register may require completing the expansion process as outlined in this document.

Section III

Benefits (list is not all inclusive)

A registered social sorority or fraternity at the University of Florida will be afforded the following:

1. University support through SFA, including access to training, advisement, statistical reports, and related services
2. The ability to participate in University, SFA, and Sorority/Fraternity Governing Council activities
3. Priority use of designated University facilities for meetings and other approved functions such as recruitment events
4. The property on which a chapter house (must be in compliance with the Facility Policy) exists shall be included on the University's annual list to the local tax appraiser certifying eligibility for a property tax exemption as permitted by law

Expectations (list is not all inclusive)

A registered social sorority or fraternity at the University of Florida must adhere to:

1. Student Conduct Code
2. The constitution and bylaws of the respective governing council
3. Student Organization Handbook
4. Florida Greek Standards related to scholarship, service, leadership, community, risk management, administrative affairs, and facility management
5. Hazing Policy
6. Alcohol Policy and Event Guidelines
7. Facility and House Director Policies (when applicable)
8. All other applicable university, local, state, and federal policies, regulations and laws

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