



DIVISION OF
STUDENT AFFAIRS
FRATERNITY & SORORITY LIFE

POLICY ON RECOGNITION OF SORORITIES AND FRATERNITIES

Sororities and fraternities have an historical association with the University of Maryland. When managed responsibly by international and local chapters, housing corporations, and officers, they offer students a valuable social and learning experience. It is the policy of the University, therefore, to offer eligible sororities and fraternities an opportunity to fulfill this purpose by extending them certain privileges, services and resources.

Sororities and fraternities are unique organizations. In their relation with the University there exist administrative and financial considerations different from those with other types of student groups. Accordingly, the manner and requirements for them to become an acknowledged part of the campus community are different. This *Policy on Recognition of Sororities and Fraternities* sets forth how sororities and fraternities become recognized student organizations and are thereby eligible to receive support from the University.¹

I. BENEFITS OF RECOGNITION

Sororities and fraternities that have been granted recognition by the Department of Fraternity and Sorority Life (DFSL) are eligible to receive the following University privileges, resources and services:

- a) Access to campus facilities and space at no charge or at a discounted rate.
- b) Ability to apply for residency in sorority and fraternity houses owned by the University. Houses are leased by the University to a sorority's or fraternity's housing corporation on a space available basis and according to documented criteria.
- c) Access through the Student Government Association, the Interfraternity Council, the Multicultural Greek Council, the National Pan-Hellenic Council, or the Panhellenic Association to project funding, access to limited storage space in the Stamp Student Union Student Involvement Suite, and University printing, procurement, motor pool and general stores services.
- d) Access to program planning assistance and training by DFSL.

¹ This Policy is effective September 1, 2015. It supplements the Student Organization Registration Guidelines and establishes special requirements for sororities and fraternities to become bona fide student organizations eligible to receive University support. This Policy is limited to traditional sororities and fraternities and does not apply to other student organizations, groups, clubs or honor societies even if their names include Greek letters.

- e) Discounts at the University Book Center for organizational purchases.
- f) Access to information services tailored to the organization, including a membership roster, mailing addresses, mail reflector, and other similar technological tools when implemented by the University.
- g) Portal on OrgSync which provides access to campus calendars, intra- and intergroup messaging, unlimited file storage as well as a variety of other features; access to space in campus calendars and in other Stamp publications to place information about events and activities.
- h) Verification and participation as groups in intramural sports and recreation.
- i) Access to announcements and information regarding University awards and nomination processes for group and individual members.
- j) Free website hosting, website builder and public URL through OrgSync.

The University reserves the right to discontinue or modify these privileges and services, to specially limit eligibility, and to offer them on a selective basis.

II. ACCESS TO UNIVERSITY-OWNED GREEK HOUSING

To be eligible to be considered for residency in a sorority or fraternity house owned by the University, sororities and fraternities must demonstrate in a manner satisfactory to the Vice President for Student Affairs or his/her designee that they meet all the following requirements at the time they apply and thereafter continuously during the term of any occupancy:

- a) Recognition by the University in accordance with this Policy.
- b) A record of past financial responsibility and present available assets sufficient to assure timely payment of all costs associated with the leasing, operating, routine maintenance and repair of the facility. These costs include a one-time, non-refundable buy-in fee. On request, both the local chapter of the sorority or fraternity and the house corporation must agree to make their respective financial records available to the University as a condition of leasing.
- c) Alumni involvement and support by both a house corporation and an active chapter advisor. The University will lease facilities only to a bona fide house corporation established under the laws of Maryland.
- d) A commitment to contribute positively to the University's goal of a multicultural environment.
- e) A record of cooperation with the University and productive involvement in the community.
- f) A commitment from individual chapter members to reside in the facility. The number must ensure in the University's judgment full occupancy of the premises with a minimum of non-member residents.
- g) A record of substantive community and university service.
- h) A record of no past substantive or recurring violations of University rules by the chapter, its officers, members, residents or guests.

- i) A successful fulfillment of the requirements of the *University of Maryland Chapter Expectations* policy.
- j) An agreement and ability to employ live-in staff in accordance with the staffing program of the DFSL.
- k) An agreement and objectively demonstrated willingness to abide by and enforce all policies, guidelines, and agreements relating to the use of University facilities.

The University reserves the right to decline to lease facilities to the house corporation of an organization that fails to meet these standards or care for University property to the satisfaction of the DFSL.

III. RECOGNITION REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to receive consideration for University privileges, services and resources, a sorority or fraternity must be recognized. Recognition is granted by the DFSL upon demonstrating that the sorority or fraternity is responsibly managed, fiscally reliable, a responsible steward of University property, a constructive member of the campus community and its members willing to observe the rules and laws of the community. These expectations must be continuously met to maintain recognition.

In keeping with the expectation that sororities and fraternities be responsibly managed and participate as constructive members of the community, as a general rule, recognition will be granted to the sorority or fraternity chapter under the following conditions:

- (a) Is a registered student organization with the University's Student Organization Resource Center (SORC); and,
- (b) Has a minimum of eight (8) currently enrolled University of Maryland, College Park, undergraduate student members; and,
- (c) Is in good standing with its International or National Headquarters. Newly chartered chapters (i.e., Alpha or founding chapters) without an inter/national infrastructure may be exempted from this requirement at the discretion of the DFSL on a case-by-case basis and,
- (d) Holds at least a \$1,000,000 insurance policy submitted annually to DFSL; and,
- (e) Is accepted by and considered an active participant in one of the four sorority and fraternity governing councils: the Interfraternity Council, the Multicultural Greek Council, the National Pan-Hellenic Council, or the Panhellenic Association unless exempted from this requirement at the discretion of the DFSL on a case-by-case basis; and,
- (f) Has reasonably complied with the *University of Maryland Chapter Expectations*. New sororities and fraternities must demonstrate a capacity to meet these requirements; and,
- (g) Adheres to all University policies and regulations, including but not limited to:
 1. Alcohol Management and Social Event Monitoring Policy;

2. Code of Student Conduct;
3. Intake/New Member Education Policy;
4. New Member Qualifications: students must have 12 or more credits and a 2.5 cumulative grade point average or higher to be offered a bid to join;
5. New Member Education/Intake Program: new member education / intake programs can last no more than six weeks from the date of the bid acceptance program or ceremony;
6. Housed Chapter Policy: all chapters with 15 or more residents living together in a chapter facility must employ either a resident director or house director and be managed by a Housing Corporation Board; and,
7. Chapter GPA: chapters must achieve an average GPA of 2.5 or higher each semester.
8. New member GPA: The new member class must achieve a GPA of 2.5 or higher during the semester they are initiated.

IV. RECOGNITION PROCESS

A new sorority or fraternity will be considered for recognition upon application to the DFSL. The organization will provide information as described in the *Recognition Application Guidelines* document. DFSL will provide a determination on the application to grant recognition. Denial of recognition may be appealed to the Recognition Appellate Board, whose decision will be considered final upon approval by the Vice President for Student Affairs.

For chapters that were recognized the previous year, the submission of an Annual Report will constitute application for continued recognition. Recognition is not automatically renewed and, if renewal is granted, it may or may not be for a similar length of time. Recognition is granted for a limited term; it is not permanent. Recognition will generally be granted for a term of one academic year. Once recognized, a chapter is expected to remain in compliance with the terms of recognition. Recognition may be granted with one or more conditions designed to assist the fraternity or sorority to comply with University requirements.²

V. RECOGNITION COMPLIANCE

At the end of each academic year, chapters will be designated in one of the following categories: (1) Recognized with Distinction, (2) Recognized, or (3) Probationary Recognition. Placement into categories will be the responsibility of the DFSL. The Recognition Review Board will

² For example, a group with less than the required membership of eight members might be granted a renewal with a condition that a plan of action approved by the DFSL is in place to increase the membership to meet this requirement.

review placement into categories and related sanctions and conditions to ensure fairness and consistency.

The Recognition Review Board is appointed by the Director and is made up of the professional staff in the Department of Fraternity and Sorority Life who regularly work with the fraternities and sororities and the president of each of the four Greek Governing Councils. The Board includes the following people:

- Associate Director of Advising and Programming (chair)
- IFC Advisor
- MGC/NPHC Advisor
- PHA Advisor
- President of the IFC
- President of the MGC
- President of NPHC
- President of the PHA

Recognition compliance will be based on the collective assessment of the progress each chapter has made over the course of the year in meeting each of the expectations outlined in Section 3 of this Policy on Recognition. In all cases, the annual or periodic record of each chapter's accomplishments will be documented and communicated to the chapter officers, chapter advisors and inter/national offices.

Recognition Categories will be as follows:

Recognized with Distinction - In order to achieve Recognized With Distinction classification, the chapter must have received EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS in the Chapter Expectations component of recognition and have complied with all expectations contained in Section 3 of this Policy on Recognition. Chapters in the Recognized with Distinction category will be:

- eligible to apply for and receive any University awards
- recognized without conditions
- considered "in good standing"

Recognized – To be Recognized, the chapter must have received Meets Expectations in the Chapter Expectations component of recognition and have complied with all expectations contained in Section 3 of this Policy on Recognition. Chapters in the Recognized category will be:

- eligible to apply for and receive any University awards
- recognized without conditions
- considered "in good standing"

Probationary Recognition - Any chapter that received Below Expectations in the Chapter

Expectations component of recognition and/or failed to comply with any of the other expectations contained in Section 3 of this Policy on Recognition will be placed on Probationary Recognition. Chapters in the Probationary Recognition category will be:

- ineligible to apply for President's Cup
- recognized with conditions
- considered "not in good standing"

In addition, Probationary Recognition may include restrictions such as:

- required educational programs
- no social events for one semester or one academic year (on or off campus)
- cannot participate in Homecoming/Greek Week on any level
- cannot participate in intramurals for one semester or one academic year
- cannot participate in some or all Step Shows
- other conditions will be determined on a case by case basis

Chapters that are on Probationary Recognition for three years in a row will be required to attend a Show Cause hearing to explain why they should continue to exist on campus. Guidelines for the Show Cause Hearing can be obtained from the Department of Fraternity and Sorority Life.

VI. REVOCATION OF RECOGNITION

Recognition status may be changed or revoked at any time by DFSL for a pattern or incident of misconduct, criminal activity, fiscal default, or neglect by:

- (a) any officer or member of the sorority or fraternity when representing the organization; or,
- (b) the housing corporation of the sorority or fraternity; or,
- (c) a resident on premises owned leased or licensed by the sorority or fraternity; or,
- (d) an invitee of the sorority or fraternity,

which in the judgment of the Director poses an unacceptable risk of harm to persons or property, including liability or financial loss to the University or community. Circumstances and conduct which are cause for revocation, especially when occurring in connection with chapter activities, include but not limited to:

- Hazing, infliction of bodily injury, sexual assault, setting fires, and indecent behavior, whether or not resulting in arrest, criminal prosecution, finding of guilt, or conviction.
- Alcohol violations, underage drinking, drug or substance abuse.
- Willful or negligent damage to public or private property, including University property; theft of public or private property, including University property. If housed in University facilities, failure to exercise appropriate care for the property.

- Recurring social or academic probation or a violation of probation.
- Recommendation of the Office of Student Conduct arising from violations of the *Code of Student Conduct* or the *Code of Academic Integrity*.
- Failure to pay University rents, fees, charges or other obligations to the institution.
- Failure to exercise appropriate care, if applicable, in using and maintaining University facilities.
- Default on lease or contract obligations to the University, including failure to promptly vacate a sorority or fraternity house owned by the University at the end of a housing corporation's lease.
- Withdrawal of the charter or other form of affiliation by the international or national organization.
- Failure to maintain membership in good standing with one of the sorority or fraternity governing councils unless exempted by the DFSL.
- Failure to comply with Section 3 (a) – 3 (f).

The unqualified cooperation and assistance of the chapter, alumni, house corporation, and international and national organizations when informed by the University of the possibility of such behavior and the adequacy of their response will be evaluated when revocation is being considered.

Normally, a sorority or fraternity whose recognition is revoked will not be eligible to reapply for Recognition for a minimum of four (4) years.

VII. APPEALS

Chapters wishing to appeal their recognition status, corresponding conditions, or revocation of recognition may submit to the Director a written appeal within 10 business days of receipt of the notice. All appeals will be reviewed by the Recognition Appellate Board. The Board will consider the chapter's appeal, Recognition compliance file, records of any policy infractions, and any response to the appeal by the Department of Fraternity and Sorority Life. Determinations of the Board regarding recognition status and corresponding conditions are considered final. Determinations of the Board regarding revocation of recognition will be final upon approval by the Vice President for Student Affairs.

The Recognition Appellate Board is appointed by the Vice President for Student Affairs or his/her appointee and includes the following people:

- Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs (chairperson)
- Student Affairs staff member (not a member of the Fraternity and Sorority Life staff)
- Faculty Member

- Faculty Advisor representative
- Chapter Advisor representative
- Member of the Interfraternity Council Executive Board (different from student on the Recognition Review Board)
- Member of the Panhellenic Association Executive Board (different from student on the Recognition Review Board)
- Member of the National Pan-Hellenic Council Executive Board (different from student on the Recognition Review Board)
- Member of the Multicultural Greek Council Executive Board (different from student on the Recognition Review Board)

VIII. PERIODIC REVIEW: This Policy will be evaluated on a periodic basis.

updated August, 2016