Department of Fraternity and Sorority
Life Policy on Recognition of Sororities and Fraternities
Sororities and fraternities have a historical association with the University of Maryland. When managed responsibly by inter/national headquarters, graduate, alumni 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. This Policy on Recognition of Sororities and Fraternities explains how sororities and fraternities become recognized student organizations and are thereby eligible to receive support from the University.

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

**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:

- Eligibility to seek membership in the Interfraternity Council, Multicultural Greek Council, National Pan-Hellenic Council, or Panhellenic Association
- Direct advising, coaching, and chapter support from DFSL full-time and graduate student staff
- Chapter wellness training and education on topics such as risk management, hazing prevention, diversity and inclusion, sexual assault/violence prevention
- Ability to apply for residency in sorority and fraternity houses owned by the University.

**RECOGNITION REQUIREMENTS**

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

1. Registered student organization with the University’s Student Organization Resource Center (SORC); and,
2. Has a minimum of five (5) currently enrolled University of Maryland, College Park, undergraduate student members; and,
3. 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 exempt from this requirement at the discretion of the DFSL on a case-by-case basis; and,
4. Holds at least a $1,000,000 insurance policy submitted annually to DFSL; and,
5. 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; and,

6. Has reasonably complied with the University of Maryland Chapter Expectations (new sororities and fraternities must demonstrate a capacity to meet these requirements); and,

7. Maintains a minimum chapter GPA of 2.5, and a minimum new member class GPA of 2.5; and,

8. Adheres to all University policies and regulations, including but not limited to:
   a. Hazing Policy
   b. Code of Student Conduct
   c. Sexual Misconduct Policy
   d. Non-Discrimination Policy
   e. Disability and Accessibility Policy
   f. Intake/New Member Education Policy
   g. Housed Chapter Policy
   h. Alcohol and Social Event Monitoring Policy

RECOGNITION PROCESS

A new sorority or fraternity will be considered for recognition upon application to 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, or an appointee of the Vice President for Student Affairs.

For chapters that were recognized the previous year, the submission of an Annual Report will be considered application for continued recognition. Recognition is not automatically renewed and will generally be granted for a term of one academic year. Once recognized, a chapter is expected to meet the requirements of recognition continually. Probationary Recognition may be granted with conditions designed to assist the sorority or fraternity to comply with University requirements.

RECOGNITION STATUS

At the conclusion of each academic year, the Recognition Review Board will holistically assess each chapter’s progress and performance in meeting all recognition requirements as outlined in Section 2 of this Policy on Recognition. The Recognition Review Board includes the following individuals:

   - Assistant/Associate Director of Advising and Programming (chair)
   - MGC/PHA Advisor
   - IFC/NPHC Advisor
   - Governing Council Presidents (IFC, MGC, NPHC, PHA)
   - Senior Coordinator for Equity and Social Justice

Each chapter will receive a Recognition Letter prior to the start of the academic year that outlines their status as Recognized or Probationary Recognition. Chapters who have met all recognition requirements will be able to fully participate in the community. Chapters who do not meet the recognition requirements will be placed on a probationary status which will include an individualized chapter support program and may include social restrictions.
Maintaining Probationary Recognition status for two consecutive years is grounds for immediate removal. Chapters who do not achieve Recognized status after two consecutive years of Probationary Recognition and wish to maintain recognition will be given the opportunity to demonstrate and prove why the chapter should continue to exist on campus through a Show Cause Hearing.

Show Cause Hearing: During the Show Cause hearing, the chapter will be expected to address efforts and plans related to the unmet requirements listed in their recognition status letter. The chapter should also address any initiatives, programs, or goals that would allow DFSL staff to have a clearer vision for the chapter’s potential success if recognition is continued. Chapters should collaborate with advisors and regional volunteers in developing their presentation. The presentation should be no longer than 30 minutes. The outcome of a Show Cause hearing is either (1) a third and final year of Probationary Recognition or (2) revocation of recognition.

REVOCAUTION 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:

- any officer or member of the sorority or fraternity when representing the organization; or,
- a resident on premises owned leased or licensed by the sorority or fraternity; or,
- an invitee or guest 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:

a. Hazing, Sexual assault, setting fires, and indecent behavior, whether resulting in arrest, criminal prosecution, finding of guilt, or conviction.
b. Alcohol violations, underage drinking, drug or substance abuse.
c. 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.
d. Recurring social or academic probation or a violation of probation.
e. Recommendation of the Office of Student Conduct arising from violations of the Code of Student Conduct or the Code of Academic Integrity.
f. Failure to pay University rents, fees, charges or other obligations to the institution.
g. Failure to exercise appropriate care, if applicable, in using and maintaining University facilities.
h. 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.
i. Withdrawal of the charter or other form of affiliation by the international or national organization.
j. Two consecutive years of Probationary Recognition
k. Failure to maintain membership in good standing with one of the sorority or fraternity governing councils unless exempted by the DFSL.
l. Failure to comply with Section II. of this policy.

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.

**APPEALS**

Chapters wishing to appeal their recognition status or revocation of recognition may submit to the Director a written appeal within 10 business days of receipt of the notice. Appeals will be reviewed by the Recognition Appellate Board which is appointed by the Vice President for Student Affairs or their appointee and includes the following individuals:

- Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, or appointee (chairperson)
- Student Affairs staff member (not a DFSL staff member)
- Faculty Member
- Faculty Advisor representative
- Chapter Advisor representative
- Member of the IFC, MGC, NPHC, and PHA Executive Boards (different from students on the Recognition Review Board)

The Board will conduct a holistic file, review, and decide. 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.

**PERIODIC REVIEW**

This Policy will be evaluated on a periodic basis.

* updated September 2020