



Fraternity & Sorority Life
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

Policy and Guidelines

These guidelines describe the relationship between the Sam Houston State University and the fraternities and sororities which are members of affiliated councils (i.e., National Panhellenic Conference (NPC), North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC), National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) and/or the Multicultural Greek Council (MGC)). These guidelines also govern organizations during the affiliation process as permitted through expansion policy. These guidelines describe the policies, procedures, standards, and expectations governing fraternities and sororities at Sam Houston State University.

I. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY AND SHSU GENERAL FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES.

1. RATIONALE

Affiliated chapters of Fraternity and Sorority Life (FSL) at Sam Houston State University operate in a mutually beneficial relationship with the University. Fraternity and Sorority Life was developed to serve as a liaison between FSL affiliated students, faculty, alumni advisers, inter/national offices, and parents focused on enhancing communication and public relations. Through values-driven practices, we aim to develop student leaders of social organizations and foster a holistic collegiate experience rooted in excellence and community. FSL policy and guidelines provide structure to the community with a focus on student success, access, and a culture of excellence.

2. POLICIES

Although all recognized student organizations must comply with SHSU's *Student Code of Conduct and Student Organization Policy*, the unique nature of fraternities and sororities requires additional consideration. University regulations and procedures affecting fraternity and sorority members also play an important role in maintaining the standards of the FSL community.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SHSU FRATERNITY AND SORORITY LIFE STAFF:

1. To act as liaison, through advising, between fraternities and sororities and the University to enhance communication and public relations.
2. To provide information to the fraternities and sororities regarding university policies, procedures, and regulations, and federal, state, and local laws affecting fraternities and sororities.
3. To act as a source of information and as a liaison between new students and the

fraternities and sororities. This may include providing information in university publications and distributing brochures to new students.

4. To collect information on officers, members, advisors, grade point average standings, activities, policies, council minutes, updated constitutions and bylaws, and affiliated council representatives.
 5. To act as a consultant to councils and chapters for their organizational development including officer training, advising, attending meetings, and reviewing constitutions, bylaws, contracts, activity, and other proposals.
 6. To refer leaders of philanthropic projects and others to recognized organizations.
 7. To assist all councils in investigating allegations of misconduct by fraternities or sororities and to facilitate due process in discipline matters (including attendance at discipline hearings and notification of chapter leaders and advisors).
 8. To organize leadership, educational, and developmental programs including workshops, seminars, classes, and retreats.
 9. To publish newsletters and other materials for chapter officers, SHSU FSL and the University.
 10. To maintain cooperative relationships with alumni, community groups, the professional staffs and volunteer officers of affiliated fraternity and sorority councils, professional and fraternity- related organizations, campus organizations, public and private agencies and other University offices and departments. This can include regular meetings with the alumni chapter advisors, providing correspondence, meeting minutes, etc.
 11. To review and approve University policies, procedures and regulations relating to the SHSU FSL community.
 12. To grant permission to colonize a chapter on campus and to revoke and/or suspend registration for cause.
 13. To assist chapters and councils in the promotion of their events.
 14. To regularly recognize the positive endeavors of the SHSU FSL community and encourage recipients (individuals and chapters) to notify the University of awards, achievements, and community relations events.
4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES:
In addition to the Student Code of Conduct and Student Organization Policy, affiliated chapters are responsible for the following:
1. To maintain objectives and activities of chapters which are consistent with and supportive of the mission of Sam Houston State University.

2. To encourage intellectual, personal, spiritual, and social development of their student members. To comply with all applicable University policies and procedures, as well as all applicable laws and regulations, and to be responsible for compliance by chapter members of the same.
3. To be responsible, as a community and as individual chapters for the conduct of the chapter members at chapter sponsored functions, both on and off campus.
4. To promote conduct consistent with high values and ethics, based on the purposes and principles of fraternity and sorority founding.
5. To operate from sound business practices with respect to chapter finances and business relations with the chapter members, the University, and the community.
6. All chapters that wish to colonize or re-colonize must be a member of the NAPA, NIC, NMGC, NPC, NPHC or NALFO national organization to have recognized status on campus.
7. If a fraternity or sorority is seeking to expand or reaffiliate and does not belong to the NAPA, NIC, NMGC, NPC, NPHC or NALFO, the national organization must receive an exemption from the Assistant Dean of FSL or his or her designee.
8. The chapter president agrees to accept full responsibility for the chapter's adherence to the Constitutions, Bylaws, rules and discipline procedures of their Greek council, the Dean of Students Office, University policies and directives by authorized University officials, the SHSU Student Guidelines, and local, state, and federal laws. Accordingly, the chapter president must become familiar with such policies, laws, regulations, directives, and procedures and must educate the chapter membership.
9. Each chapter must maintain a good standing status in their respective council and inter/national fraternity or sorority to remain in good standing with SHSU FSL. Poor standing or suspension by their local or national council will result in the same status from SHSU FSL.
10. No chapter shall sponsor an auxiliary organization or activity which connotes membership of any kind in their group (e.g., "little sisters," "little brothers," etc.) other than that full membership as ascribed by the inter/national constitution.
11. It is the right of the undergraduates in each chapter to select their own members within the context of allowing no discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, gender identity, gender expression, affectional or sexual orientation, or disability. The university recognizes chapters and organizations have single sex status under federal and state law and therefore maintain certain protections.

5. SCHOLARSHIP STANDARDS

The fundamental reason for enrolling in a university is to acquire the educational foundation necessary to function effectively as a citizen. The range of academic programs offered by Sam Houston State University provides the opportunity for all students to prepare themselves for professional careers. The academic progress of all members considered collectively indicates the relative strength and vitality of the organization. The standards in this section reflect the central importance academic achievement should occupy in the life of each organization at Sam Houston State University.

1. Organizations nurture academic excellence within the campus community by providing continuing and new members appropriate incentives and resources to facilitate scholastic achievement.
2. Organizations create an environment conducive to academic success by offering education programs to members maintaining acceptable academic standing and to members confronting academic distress.
3. No fraternity or sorority may accept (associate) or initiate any individual who does not have a minimum 2.5 overall grade point average, which includes any college credits a student may have transferred to SHSU with from a previous college/university. Considerations will be given to first time freshmen who recently graduated from high school and have no more than 12 dual credit hours. All high school GPA's must convert to a 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale in accordance with SHSU admissions office. Individual councils or associations may set higher required minimum grade point averages for members, and each fraternity and sorority will be subject to the applicable required minimum grade point average of its council or association. *Exceptions considered with national organization approval and creation of academic development plan.*
4. Organizations maintain a minimum semester organization grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.00 scale to maintain active status/eligibility required to represent or be considered (individually or part of the chapter) for SHSU FSL, campus or community activities or awards.
 - a. Final versions of rosters for grade reports are due by the last class day of the fall and spring semesters. No grade reports are produced during the summer sessions.
 - b. Any organizations that fail to obtain a 2.5 semester grade point average for two consecutive semesters will be placed on conditional status and be required to meet with an assigned SHSU FSL professional staff member for a

consulting/coaching session. As a part of the meeting, the chapter will create and implement an “Academic Recovery Plan” monitored by SHSU FSL and sent to the chapter advisor and affiliated council representatives. The Academic Recovery Plan will be evaluated to determine significant improvement in the chapter’s academic progress. Chapters’ social activities (i.e., parties, mixer) may be limited if progress is not obtained after two semesters.

- c. Any organization whose GPA remains below 2.5 after three consecutive semesters, chapters will receive additional sanctions outlined in Section 6.5c. Chapters will be required to implement an Academic Recovery Plan that has been created and approved by SHSU FSL staff and the respective national organization.
- d. Any organization whose GPA remains below 2.5 after four consecutive semesters will lose all privileges (socials, intramurals, FSL marketing etc.), including recruitment for one semester. At the end of this fourth semester, chapters (including at least one chapter advisor and one national organization representative) must meet with the SHSU FSL staff to discuss future chapter viability before reinstatement of any privileges.

- 5. Organizations are to have five or more members to be recognized as an SHSU registered organization. Those that do not meet this requirement will be placed on conditional status for one year. During the conditional period, chapters will be required to meet with a SHSU FSL professional staff member to create and implement a “Recruitment and Chapter Sustainability Plan”. Should they fail to have five or more members by the end of the conditional period, chapters must meet with the SHSU FSL staff to discuss future chapter viability before reinstatement of any privileges.

6. REQUIREMENTS FOR CHAPTERS IN GOOD STANDING/EXPECTATIONS FOR RECOGNITION

- 1. It is the goal of the SHSU FSL to create and hold clear requirements, standards, expectations of recognized fraternities and sororities on campus. Therefore, the following requirements for chapters in good standing/expectations for recognition have been created and distributed to communicate those minimum requirements of all SHSU FSL fraternities and sororities. These expectations are meant to be reviewed and reaffirmed by SHSU FSL and each undergraduate chapter every two years in accordance with the SHSU Student Code of Conduct. When all expectations are upheld, the organization is to be fully recognized as *good standing*. When a chapter fails to meet the expectations outlined in this policy, it is subject to disciplinary action ranging from educational sanctions (i.e., workshops or presentations) to removal of recognition.

- 2. Benefits of being a chapter in good standing:

- a. All benefits of any SHSU registered student organization (use of campus facilities, tabling, designated intermural teams, etc.).
 - b. Eligibility for Campus Life Development Funds and FSL Funding Program.
 - c. Recognition on SHSU FSL website, social media, and other marketing avenues.
 - d. Eligible for SHSU FSL Awards.
 - e. A copy of a current good standing letter sent to your organization's national office or your affiliated council.
3. Every Fall and Spring semester, each chapter must:
 - a. Submit chapter roster information and provide timely updates. Initial Rosters are due on September 15th in the Fall and February 15th in the Spring.
 - b. Submit Notice of Intake documents (MGC and NPHC only).
 - c. Attend All Greek Town Hall (Chapter President and at least one other chapter representative).
 - d. Attend any mandatory training hosted by SHSU FSL (Chapter Operations/ LSC Reservations (EMS), Risk Management, Hazing, etc.).
 - e. Meet Chapter GPA requirement as listed in Section 5 of this policy.
 - f. Meet Chapter size requirement as listed in Section 5 of this policy.
 - g. Sponsor/Co-sponsor one educational event or workshop of the chapter's choosing (can be internal).
 - h. Maintain good standing with your affiliated council (i.e., current on payment of council dues, attendance at meetings, engagement in events if applicable).
 - i. Chapter president meets with assigned SHSU FSL professional staff member for consultation/coaching session.
 - j. Provide timely submission of materials to the SHSU FSL (maximum two late submissions).
4. Every calendar year (Fall semester), each chapter must:
 - a. Submit a copy of their inter/national and/or chapter Risk Management Policy on file with the SHSU FSL before the first social function of the academic year.
 - b. Submit a copy of their inter/national and/or chapter New Member Education program or member intake process on file with SHSU FSL before starting any recruitment/rush/intake activities or processes.
 - c. Sponsor at least one community service or philanthropy event.
 - d. Remain in compliance with any University and/or Governing Council policy, rules, and regulations.
5. Accountability
 - a. When a chapter does not meet the expectations outlined in this policy, they will be considered a "Chapter with Conditional Status." Conditional Chapters must meet with a SHSU FSL professional staff member at least twice per semester until chapter receives "good standing" recognition.

- b. Chapters with Conditional Status will be required to work in conjunction with an assigned SHSU FSL staff member to create and implement a "Chapter Performance Improvement Plan".
- c. Chapters failing to attend coaching sessions, create/implement an improvement plan, or chapters who do not achieve good standing status for two consecutive years will be subject to disciplinary action including but not limited to:
 - i. Educational sanctions (i.e., workshops, presentations).
 - ii. Loss of privileges.
 - iii. Deferred suspension.
 - iv. Suspension.
 - v. Loss of chapter recognition.

II. GUIDELINES FOR FRATERNITY/SORORITY ACTIVITIES:

1. APPROVAL, REVIEW, AND SPONSORSHIP OF ACTIVITIES

1. Definition of Chapter Sponsored Activity: An event will be considered a chapter-sponsored activity under one or more of the following conditions:
 - a. The event is advertised, and the advertisement makes any mention of the fraternity or sorority.
 - b. The activity is discussed during a chapter meeting; information about the activity is distributed during a chapter meeting; and/or the activity is mentioned in the minutes of a chapter meeting.
 - c. Transportation to the activity is provided by the chapter.
 - d. The chapter creates or causes to be created any promotional materials for the activity, including t- shirts, cups, etc.
 - e. The chapter is involved in any fashion with the sale of tickets for the activity or the sale of promotional items which mention the activity.
 - f. The chapter provides maps, information, or tickets to the activity for its members and/or guests.
 - g. The activity is listed on the chapter calendar or through any social media channel.
 - h. FSL sponsored events such as Greek Week and chapter sponsored events such as fraternity philanthropy weeks are considered sponsored by all chapters who participate.
 - i. Participants consider, refer to or classify the event as a chapter event.
2. Chapters are responsible for events they sponsor. When an event is sponsored by more than one organization, each sponsor is responsible for all activities arising out of or relating to the event, including but not limited to adequate planning, actual event behavior, and post-event accountability for all in attendance.
3. Chapters are responsible for following all University policies and procedures regarding risk management which includes but are not limited to submission of appropriate paperwork, security, and guest lists.

2. ADVERTISING AND PUBLICITY

1. Chapters or Councils may not co-sponsor any of their activities or display advertising on or off campus for an alcohol distributor or tavern (tavern is defined as an establishment generating more than half of annual gross sales from alcohol).
2. Alcoholic beverages may not be implied, stated, or pictured in chapter advertisements.
3. All publicity is expected to be in good taste and in compliance with university posting policies.

3. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

FSL participants are required to adhere to all prohibited conduct as outlined by the Student Code of Conduct.

4. HAZING

FSL participants are required to adhere to all prohibited conduct as outlined by the Student Code of Conduct.

5. ENFORCEMENT

See SHSU Student Code of Conduct disciplinary procedures for enforcement of Hazing and other violations of the Code of Conduct.

6. GOVERNANCE

1. The University recognizes that the governing bodies for the FSL community are the National Panhellenic Conference, National Pan-Hellenic Council, Multicultural Greek Council, and the Interfraternity Council.
2. Each sorority and fraternity also have an executive board, a constitution, and bylaws which govern the chapter. In addition, each chapter must abide by its inter/national organization's constitution and bylaws.
3. When a complaint is received by the Dean of Students' Office regarding a fraternity or sorority, the president of the accused fraternity/sorority will be notified, and a copy of the notice will be sent to the chapter advisor/advisory board chair of the accused fraternity/sorority.
4. Chapters in violation of the Student Code of Conduct including risk management, hazing, or other student organization conduct violations will be

referred to the Dean of Students' Office. Violations of affiliated council rules will be referred to the related council's judicial board.

5. All disciplinary action is subject to the review and approval of the Dean of Students' Office.

III. ADVISORS

Advisors are critical to the success of the individual chapters and the Fraternity and Sorority Life. They provide continuity from year to year, wisdom from experience, and a perspective broader than that of the undergraduate members. It is the responsibility of the undergraduate members to regularly seek out the advice of their respective chapter advisors. Each chapter must have a chapter advisor and/or alumni advisory board. At a minimum, the University expects the following of the chapter advisor/alumni advisory board:

- a. Meet regularly with chapter officers.
- b. Be familiar with university policies governing fraternities and sororities and ensure that the chapter complies with such policies.
- c. Regularly review chapter finances.
- d. Review the chapter's new member development (pledging) program and ensure that no chapter activities involve hazing in any form.
- e. Assist University officials in dealing with problems or other situations involving the chapter.
- f. Be represented at meetings of chapter FSL advisors.
- g. To attend and support chapter activities.
- h. As advisors are critical to the success of the organization, it is required as a part of the annual registration that each organization recruits a faculty or staff advisor in addition to their alumni advisors. These advisor names should be reported to Student Involvement at the beginning of each academic year.

IV. REVISION AND REVIEW

1. All four Councils may initiate a proposal for revision of this document by a joint recommendation. The FSL chapter advisors may initiate a proposal for revision of this document by joint resolution. All recommendations and resolutions must be submitted by May 31st.
2. This document shall be reviewed on an annual basis by the Dean of Students and SHSU FSL staff.

Last Annual Review: July 2023

Revised: September 2023

Next Annual Review: March 2024