

**UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS**

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

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

Each registered social fraternity and sorority at the University of Florida must renew its registration annually through the process created by Sorority and Fraternity Affairs (SFA). To maintain registration with the University, social fraternities and sororities must follow all University policies including the requirements outlined in this document.

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 Executive Director of Student Engagement 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.studentinvolvement.ufl.edu/sororityfraternityaffairs.

This document is divided into three sections: Section I outlines the University of Florida's definition of a social sorority and fraternity, general rules, and requirements for registration for social sororities and fraternities; Section II outlines the procedure that a new 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

Definition and Registration

University Regulation 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 keeping with the educational mission of 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, degree-seeking 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 [as conducted by the University]; (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 that fails to adhere to University regulations, rules, policies, and/or guidelines.

Registration

All registered social fraternities and sororities must renew their chapter's registration at the beginning of each fall semester by the deadline established by SFA. As a part of the registration renewal certain information, paperwork, and agreements may be required as outlined by SFA.

All registered social fraternities and sororities must also maintain active membership within one of the four governing councils at the University: Interfraternity Council, Multicultural Greek Council, National Pan-Hellenic Council, Panhellenic Council.

In addition to a failure to follow University rules, policies, and/or guidelines, a fraternity's or sorority's registration as an organization may be withheld or revoked when:

- The chapter fails to provide chapter support information, documentation or fails to update information as requested by the University and Sorority and Fraternity Affairs.
- The chapter fails to participate in mandatory training programs from the University or Sorority and Fraternity Affairs.
- The chapter is found to be accepting or recruiting members that are not currently enrolled, degree-seeking University of Florida students.
- A chapter fails to maintain active membership within its respective governing council.

SECTION II

Procedure for New Fraternities and Sororities Seeking Registration

Any new social sorority or fraternity seeking registration at the University of Florida may send a written letter of interest to the Director of Sorority and Fraternity Affairs. The interested organization may also have a phone call or face-to-face meeting with the Director of SFA to discuss interest as well as current trends at the University and the University's open expansion status. All communication from the social fraternity or sorority must come from the headquarters staff or national governing body. In the letter of interest, the fraternity or sorority should articulate for which governing council it is seeking affiliation.

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.

Initial Review Committee

The Initial Review Committee shall convene within the first two months of the spring semester each calendar year (or at such other time as needed as determined by the Director of Sorority and Fraternity Affairs) to conduct the expansion review process.

The purpose of the Initial Review Committee is to assess the need, evaluate timing and feasibility, and make a recommendation regarding the feasibility for growth of the social sorority and fraternity community 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 community (i.e. which governing council should be open for expansion for that year). A recommendation for expansion for that calendar year shall be presented to the Executive Director for Student Engagement for review and approval. All meetings of the Initial Review Committee will be open to the Greek community.

Membership

The Initial Review Committee shall consist of the president (or a 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 Sorority and Fraternity Affairs); one chapter advisor (appointed by the Director of 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.

If it is determined that one or more governing councils will be open for expansion for that calendar year, a notice of expansion will be sent electronically to those social fraternities and sororities that have submitted letters of interest. Other fraternities and sororities or governing national umbrella organizations may also be notified based on the values and type of organization being pursued by the University. The notice of expansion will be sent by end of May. Interested fraternities and sororities will then have until the assigned deadline to submit a full interest packet as described below. Information will be included in the SFA notice of expansion to provide an overview of the University of Florida, the Florida Greek Community, and policies and procedures governing social sororities and fraternities. An Expansion Committee will be convened and the review process will take place the fall semester of that year. Fraternities and sororities considered during that expansion cycle will not be invited to register as social fraternity or sorority earlier than the following spring semester.

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 Executive Director for Student Engagement. The committee shall extend an invitation to up to three organizations per governing council to visit campus during the fall semester to make a formal presentation for further consideration. All meetings of the Expansion Committee will be open to the Greek community.

Membership

The Expansion Committee shall consist of one member from each executive board of the four governing councils (selected by the respective council president); one additional member (current chapter presidents, former chapter presidents, or chapter executive board member designated by the council president and approved by the voting membership for the respective council) from each governing council that is exploring expansion that year; one staff member from the Division of Student Affairs (appointed by the Executive Director of Student Engagement); one chapter advisor (appointed by Sorority and Fraternity Affairs); and the Director of Sorority and Fraternity Affairs who shall serve as chair of the committee. All students on the committee shall be currently enrolled at UF. The additional governing council member will only vote in matters relating to that governing council.

Documentation

Following the notice of expansion, interested organizations shall provide SFA with the following information which must come from the (inter)national headquarters or (inter)national governing body of the organization:

1. Proof that the fraternity or sorority is affiliated with a (inter)national parent organization of the same name that has sustained 10 consecutive years of business.
2. Documentation of a 501(c)(7) tax status by the Internal Revenue Service
3. Proof of liability insurance in the amount of \$1 million for un-housed chapters and \$2 million for housed chapters. The University of Florida Board of Trustees must be named as additional insured.
4. Number of alumni residing in the immediate area (100 mile radius of Gainesville)
5. Contact information and UF ID numbers for any University of Florida students currently interested in affiliating with the organization (if applicable)
6. Description of advisor or advisory board plan including set-up and expectations and roles
7. Colonization process for the group to receive a charter
8. List of undergraduate collegiate chapters nationwide including total membership size for each chapter
9. National risk management policies related to alcohol, drugs, hazing and facility management (if applicable)

10. General description of the new member education/intake program including the length of time the new member education/intake program spans before initiation
11. Information about leadership development programs provided at the local, state, regional, and/or national level(s)
12. List of other institutions where the organization expanded within the past three years and permission to contact those campuses to inquire about the experience
13. 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
14. 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
15. 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
16. Plans related to colony/chapter housing (if applicable)
17. 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
18. Further clarification and explanation on the reasons why the organization will be a good fit in the selected governing council to which the organization would belong
19. 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) Accreditation Program and requirements outlined in the document (refer to www.studentinvolvement.ufl.edu/sororityfraternityaffairs for more information about the FGS)
2. Compliance with all University of Florida policies and guidelines including but not limited to those related to:
 - A. Non-discrimination (sex excluded): <http://regulations.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/1006.pdf>
 - B. Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code: <http://regulations.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/4041.pdf>
 - C. Student Leader Eligibility: <http://regulations.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/4003.pdf>
 - D. Commercial Activity: <http://regulations.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/4006.pdf>
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 bound (or placed in a binder) and tabbed to correspond with the requirements as listed. The petitioning organization may provide additional information or materials as part of their expansion packet. Failure to provide information as requested may delay the process or may be grounds for termination of consideration for expansion.

Formal Presentation

Each invited organization shall visit campus to make a formal presentation to the University and Greek community. During that time, additional meetings may be conducted with the Expansion Committee, Greek leaders, and University Administration. These meetings will be coordinated by Sorority and Fraternity Affairs.

Topics for the formal presentation 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. Risk management policies and educational initiatives related to hazing, alcohol, drugs and facility management (if applicable)
6. Leadership development opportunities and an overview of the new member/intake curriculum
7. Support provided to assist colony/chapter in meeting or exceeding the Florida Greek Standards
8. 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 and visit, the respective 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 consider the outcome of the council's vote as one vote on the Expansion Committee for expansion related to that council only. The council's vote for the affirmative will require a simple majority vote. Upon review and consideration of all relevant information, the Expansion Committee shall make a recommendation to the Executive Director of Student Engagement for review and approval as to whether an invitation for registration should be extended for each presenting organization. A simple majority for the affirmative is required (a tie is not a recommendation for the affirmative). 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 for the upcoming spring semester or later as agreed upon with the organization.

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 accreditation program. During the probationary period, the sorority or fraternity may 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 may become a full or regular member of the respective governing council. If the organization fails to meet Accredited Chapter or higher status by the Florida Greek Standards program, it will remain in probationary status for an additional year. If the organization fails to meet Accredited Chapter by 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. All Greek specific policies (i.e. Event Guideline Policy, Florida Greek Standards Accreditation Program, Chapter Facility Policy, House Director Policy, Registration and Expansion Policy). All other applicable university, local, state, and federal policies, regulations and laws

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