



RECOGNITION AND EXPANSION POLICY FOR SOCIAL SORORITIES & FRATERNITIES

Last Updated: 10-19-2023

The Recognition and Expansion Policy for Social Sororities and Fraternities outlines the guidelines and procedures for maintaining recognition for existing chapters and the application and review for recognition of a new or returning social sorority and/or fraternity at Florida International University (FIU).

Each recognized social sorority and fraternity at FIU must maintain its recognition annually by meeting all established guidelines created by Fraternity & Sorority Life (FSL). To maintain recognition with the university, social sororities and fraternities must follow all university policies including the requirements outlined in this document. A *new* fraternity or sorority, defined as never holding a charter at FIU, may receive recognition by the university once there has been a formal invitation offered by FSL and the organization's governing council. 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, the respective governing council(s) and the review committees will convene to review all documentation and certification requirements to make a recommendation to extend a formal invitation for university recognition. The recommendation shall be presented to the Director for Fraternity and Sorority Life or designee, for final review and approval.

The governance structure for social sororities and fraternities at FIU includes student governed 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 recognition as a social sorority or fraternity. For specific information about the councils, please refer to the following website: <http://greeks.fiu.edu>.

This document is divided into three sections:

- Section I outlines FIU's definition of a social sorority and fraternity, general rules, and requirements for recognition for social sororities and fraternities;
- Section II outlines the procedure that a new petitioning social sorority or fraternity must follow to request and obtain recognition; and
- Section III outlines the benefits and expectations of a recognized social sorority or fraternity at FIU.

SECTION I

Definition and Recognition of Social Sororities and Fraternities

Social sororities and fraternities are student organizations founded on the principles of brotherhood/sisterhood and the ideals of scholarship, friendship, personal/professional growth, and service to the community. In keeping with the educational mission of the university, social sororities and fraternities promote and are expected to maintain 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, FIU classifies social sororities and fraternities as organizations that:

- Do not limit membership to persons pursuing or having interest in a specific field of study, profession, or academic discipline;
- Do not serve as honorary societies for academic, leadership, or any other endeavor; and
- Do not permit members to hold membership in other social sororities or fraternities.

In addition, these organizations must also:

- Hold tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(7) of the Internal Revenue Code; and
- Limit membership to currently enrolled, degree-seeking students at FIU.

Social sororities and fraternities shall exist at FIU as recognized student organizations with FSL. Social sororities and fraternities shall be classified and governed by policies established by the Division of Academic and Student Affairs, specifically, Fraternity and Sorority Life and their respective governing councils. The governance structure established by FIU includes student input and participation. Student input and participation is accomplished through authority delegated by FSL to designated student governing councils.

Social sororities and fraternities must abide by applicable university policies, regulations, and procedures governing student organizations (e.g., Student Conduct and Honor Code), as well as policies, guidelines, and procedures established by FSL and the designated governing councils. The University reserves the right to withhold, revoke, or suspend the recognition of any social sorority or fraternity that fails to adhere to university and community regulations, rules, and/or policies.

Recognition

As a part of the recognition process, social sororities and fraternities provide required information, paperwork, and agreements as outlined by FSL.

All recognized social sororities and fraternities must also maintain active membership within one of the four governing councils at FIU: Interfraternity Council (IFC), Multicultural Greek Council (MGC), National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC), or College Panhellenic Council (CPH). Chapters are also expected to remain in good standing and engaged in community standards and activities, including but not limited to sending representatives to:

- Week of Welcome events;
- Hazing Prevention programming;
- Alcohol Awareness programming;
- Sexual Assault Education and Prevention programming;
- Greek Unity Week;
- Leadership development and training programs; and

- Greek Service Day(s).

Failure to follow university and community rules, policies, and/or guidelines may lead to a fraternity's or sorority's recognition as an organization to 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 FSL;
- The chapter fails to participate in required training programs from the university or FSL;
- The chapter is found to be accepting or recruiting members that are not currently enrolled, degree-seeking FIU students; or
- A chapter is found responsible for violations of the Student Conduct and Honor Code; or
- A chapter fails to maintain active membership within its respective governing council.

SECTION II

Procedure for New or Returning Fraternities and Sororities Seeking Recognition

Definition of Sorority or Fraternity Status

FSL defines a *new* sorority or fraternity as a national organization that has never held a charter at FIU. Organizations with a charter at FIU will be called a returning organization. An organization who has been suspended or is dormant – meaning no active members – and has not had its charter revoked by their national organization will be considered returning with a *reactivation of the chapter charter*. A *returning* organization that had their chapter charter revoked by their national organization will be defined as a *re-colonization*.

Procedure

Any new or returning social sorority or fraternity seeking recognition at FIU must submit a **written letter of interest** to the Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life and the respective governing council. All communication from the social sorority or fraternity must come from the organization's 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 National Panhellenic Conference (NPC) sorority extensions, the university will work with the process outlined in the ***NPC Manual of Information***; however, all FIU requirements must also be met.

The process for organizations to return or start a new chapter will consist of three committee reviews: (1) Initial Review Committee – will determine eligibility, timeline, and other factors needed for a successful expansion; (2) Council Expansion Committee – will interview the eligible organization(s) to be invited to join the council it is seeking membership into; and (3) Fraternity & Sorority Life Final Review – the department's professional staff will make a final determination on an organization's eligibility for membership to the respective council they are seeking membership to.

Initial Review Committee

*If this applies to the process outlined by the governing council, the following will occur. Please know that governing documents will guide the direction of our growth projects at FIU.

The purpose of the Initial Review Committee is to assess the need, evaluate timing and feasibility, and make a recommendation for growth of the governing council in question. The committee will

review the status of the governing council relative to size, recruitment/intake numbers, membership retention, general interests and needs of the FIU student body, and any other relevant information. Based on all information considered, the committee shall prioritize which type of organization would best benefit the governing council and the social sorority and fraternity community (FIU will follow an open expansion policy and will consider all letters of intent received from a recognized fraternity or sorority headquarters).

Initial Review Committee Membership

The Initial Review Committee shall consist of the president (or a designated executive officer) from the respective governing council the organization is seeking membership into; the council advisor (a professional staff member from FSL); and the Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life who shall serve as the chair of the committee. All students on the committee shall be currently enrolled at FIU.

Council Expansion Committee

The Council Expansion Committee conducts the review and evaluation process for the organization(s) petitioning for consideration for new recognition. The Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life or their designee shall convene the Council Expansion Committee upon the recommendation and approval of the Initial Review Committee. The committee can extend an invitation to multiple organizations per governing council depending on the need, as determined by the Initial Review Committee, to visit campus during the fall or spring semester to make a formal presentation for further consideration.

Council Expansion Committee Membership

The Council Expansion Committee shall consist of one member from the executive board of each member organization of the council considering an expansion project; the council advisor (a professional staff member from FSL); and the Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life or designee who shall serve as chair of the committee. All student committee members must be currently enrolled full time at FIU.

Fraternity & Sorority Life Final Review

The Office of Fraternity & Sorority Life will conduct one final review with all professional staff to include the Director, the Associate Director, the Assistant Director, and the Program Coordinator to determine a petitioning organization's final approval to the respective council they are seeking membership to.

Expansion Packet Documentation Requirements

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

1. Legal Documentation and Policies
 - a. 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;
 - b. Documentation of a 501(c)(7) tax status by the Internal Revenue Service;
 - c. Proof of liability insurance of \$1 million for un-housed chapters. FIU Board of Trustees must be named as additional insured;
 - d. National risk management policies related to alcohol, drugs, hazing and other high-risk chapter behaviors and all other national policies applicable to the operations of the chapter.
2. Organizational Demographics Data
 - a. Number of alumni residing in the immediate area (100-mile radius of Miami, FL);

- Contact information and FIU ID numbers for any FIU students currently interested in affiliating with the organization¹, if applicable;
- b. List of undergraduate collegiate chapters nationwide including total membership size for each chapter.
3. Re-establishment or Colonization Process
 - a. Description of advisor or advisory board plan including set-up, expectations, and roles;
 - b. Colonization process for the group to receive a chapter charter.
 4. General description of the new member education/intake program including the length of time the new member education/intake program spans before initiation.
 5. Information about leadership development programs provided at the local, state, regional, and/or national level(s).
 6. List of other institutions where the organization expanded within the past three years and permission to contact those campuses to inquire about the experience.
 7. 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.
 8. 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, if the expansion is not successful.
 9. 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 recognized.
 10. Clarification and explanation of the reasons why the organization will be a good fit in the selected governing council.
 11. Any additional information requested by FIU at the time of expansion.
 12. Any additional information the requesting organization finds relevant and beneficial to the Committee.

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 FIU Fraternity and Sorority Community Standards (refer to <http://greeks.fiu.edu> for more information);
2. Compliance with all FIU policies, regulations and guidelines including but not limited to those related to:
 - A. [Nondiscrimination, Harassment and Retaliation \(Title VII\)](#)
 - B. [Sexual Harassment \(Title IX\) and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)
 - C. [Student Conduct and Honor Code](#)
3. Compliance with the FSL's new member and initiation program requirements – New Member Symposium and all required hazing modules.
4. Complete 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 FIU at the time of expansion.

Additional Conditions for Returning Organizations

1. Behavioral Suspension of Chapter at FIU

¹ Undergraduate chapter members that were active prior to the chapter re-established cannot serve as active members in the re-establishment process.

- a. The chapter must have abided by all stated and inferred community standards congruent with the university and their fraternal values, including not holding any events – social, philanthropic, or academic – during a suspension period.
- b. The chapter must submit proof that they have successfully met all sanctions outlined in the outcome correspondence from the university and/or the national organization.
- c. The chapter cannot be considered for recognition until after the date outlined in official university and/or national organization correspondence that suspension is lifted.
- d. Establishment timeline will be determined via majority vote of the respective council to ensure successful membership intake, chapter sustainability, and community values congruence.
- e. The respective governing council’s executive board will work with FSL and the national organization to determine the most sustainable and healthy timeline for chapter reactivation or re-colonization, pending the chapter status.
- f. Will not include any individuals who served as chapter advisors or were active undergraduate members during the chapter’s suspension or closure to be involved in the re-establishment process.
- g. Prior to re-establishment the organization must provide evidence to:
 - i. Identify and establish an alumni network that will work collaboratively with and be active in the FIU Greek community;
 - ii. Create and sponsor a program for the Greek community that addresses the issues affecting the Greek community that is related to their offense and how to prevent it in the future.
 - iii. Present a chapter advisory board whose membership is at least 60% of its members from other chapters outside the home chapter. The chair of the chapter advisory board cannot be an alumni member of the FIU chapter;
 - iv. Attend a meeting to set expectations with the Fraternity and Sorority Life staff.
- h. Once re-established, there will be a trial period of 4 semesters (i.e., 2 academic years from re-establishment), where the chapter is expected to:
 - i. Meet all Community Standards and requirements of recognized social sororities and fraternities;
 - ii. Meet a minimum of a 3.0 chapter GPA during the trial period;
 - iii. Work with their respective council and FSL staff to sponsor one community wide program to address a high-risk behavior issue currently affecting fraternity and sorority life, during the rest of their trial period;
 - iv. Have a member run/apply for leadership positions in their respective council.
- i. Should the organization fail to meet the set expectations previously mentioned above or be involved in a behavioral Student Conduct or Greek Community Standards case, the organization’s recognition will be reviewed by Fraternity & Sorority Life for status re-evaluation. FSL will review the organization’s status within the semester of the offense.

2. Other Chapter Closures

- a. The national organization can petition for the return of the chapter after a minimum of four academic semesters, excluding summers (i.e., 2 calendar years), after chapter closure/dormancy.
- b. Chapters that are approved for recognition can be stacked for return with a minimum of two academic semesters, excluding summers (i.e., 1 calendar year), in between re-

- establishments to ensure successful membership intake, chapter sustainability, and community values congruence.
- c. The respective council's executive board will work with Fraternity and Sorority Life and the national organization to determine the most sustainable and healthy timeline for local chapter re-establishment.
 - d. Once recognized, the chapter is expected to remain in good standing and engaged in community standards and activities.

Petitioning organizations shall provide an electronic copy of all information and materials listed above. A new organization (not returning) that is recognized at FIU through the expansion process, hereafter referred to as a colony, must complete a one-year trial period (exclusive of summer) in the respective governing council to establish its success based on performance levels using the Road Map assessment. During the probationary period, the sorority or fraternity *may* have voting privileges and will be assessed dues by the respective governing council *pending council governing documents*. After successful completion of all national and local requirements established by the respective HQ and FSL, the social sorority or fraternity *may* become eligible for full membership in the respective governing council. Receiving full membership into the respective governing council will be determined by the council's executive board, all organization delegates, and FSL.

Each colony is expected to become a fully chartered chapter by its headquarters within two full calendar years of recognition (i.e., established September 2023, chapter charter by September 2025). Failure to do so may result in the loss of recognition as a social sorority or fraternity. If an organization has not become a fully chartered chapter within a maximum of two years, the organization must petition FSL in writing to explain any mitigating circumstances and to request an extension. If recognition as a social sorority or fraternity is revoked, FSL may require the organization to follow the expansion process again as established in this document.

Section III

Benefits

A recognized social sorority or fraternity at FIU will be afforded the following:

1. University support through FSL, including access to training, advisement, statistical reports, and related services;
2. The ability to participate in university, FSL, and sorority/fraternity governing council activities; and
3. Priority use of designated university facilities for meetings and other approved functions such as recruitment events.

Expectations

A recognized social sorority or fraternity at FIU must adhere to:

1. [FIU Fraternity & Sorority Life General Policies & Procedures](#)
2. [Student Conduct and Honor Code](#)
3. The constitution and bylaws of the respective governing council
4. All other applicable university, local, state, and federal policies, regulations, and laws

Inquiries

For inquiries or clarification about this policy, please contact our office. Our contact information can be found at <http://greeks.fiu.edu>.