

GREEK LIFE

Handbook

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FRATERNITIES & SORORITIES

General Information

As recognized student organizations of ACU, F/S join service groups, academic groups and special interest groups in representing ACU's mission in a variety of unique ways. Leaders and members of F/S should communicate ACU's mission as well as their own F/S mission in all of their activities. This section of the Student Organization Handbook serves as an orientation guide for new members and a leadership guide for officers, sponsors and active members of F/S. The guidelines in this section are intended to state the purpose, philosophy, rules and regulations regarding F/S to:

- 1) help new members understand F/S and their function and,
- 2) clarify and communicate consistent information to all F/S members and sponsors.

Purpose of Fraternities & Sororities

Since 1919, social clubs, now referred to as Greek Life and Fraternities and Sororities, have been a part of the ACU experience. Through Greek Life, many students fulfill the need for close, personal contact and for social interaction. F/S were founded by students who petitioned the University and received approval for their proposed charter. Therefore, F/S exist as entities granted by the University and must maintain the standards of the University. F/S participate in a variety of activities including: intramural sports, Sing Song, Homecoming activities, social events and service projects. The University supports the efforts of Greek Life to stimulate a closer bond of friendship among students and enhance each student's loyalty to ACU.

Coordination of Fraternities and Sororities

ACU Greek Life is under the coordination of the Student Life Office. The Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities is the primary coordinator and serves as the facilitator for Greek Life on campus.

The responsibilities of the office of Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities include:

- Establishing and coordinating regular meetings with Greek Life officers and sponsors.
- Training all Greek Life officers.
- Training sponsors and helping them understand their roles and responsibilities as volunteers apart from any other university responsibilities
- Coordinating communication to the students, sponsors and ACU faculty/staff in regards to Greek Life.
- Educating the campus community, especially prospective new members, about the process of new member orientation.
- Educating the campus community, especially F/S officers and sponsors, about the annual Greek Life calendar and process.
- Supervising and upholding ACU policy and procedures in all Greek Life activities.
- Monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the Greek Life process.

Fraternalities and Sororities as Recognized Student Organizations

In order for a F/S to be active on campus, they must be recognized as an official ACU student organization. F/S must comply with the policies outlined in the Student Organization Handbook for university recognition. This includes submitting annual updates prior to the end of each academic year and attending any mandatory training that is required by the Student Life Office.

In addition to the requirements listed in the Student Organization Handbook, F/S will be required to meet with the Senior Coordinator of Fraternalities and Sororities to ensure adherence to written protocols. If current policies are not met, the organization may be placed on a one year probation to acquire the necessary membership requirement of at least ten members and their status as a recognized organization may be removed. The organization may go through a re-chartering process once it meets the necessary membership requirement.

Responsibilities of Fraternalities and Sororities

It is extremely important that all actions of F/S during the school year, especially induction procedures, reflect a positive impact on the individual participants, other students and/or faculty, citizens of Abilene, Taylor County and surrounding areas. F/S officers and their sponsors must be acutely aware of the community's response to their actions. One or two unseemly incidents can negate a world of good that is performed by most F/S throughout the year.

- The freedom of choice given to individual F/S is possible only when individual

F/S take full responsibility for following approved New Member Orientation plans and University guidelines for the new member orientation activities.

- Each F/S, as a whole, is responsible for the actions of its F/S members, current students and alumni toward potential new F/S members. The F/S's responsibility exists without regard to whether its members are acting alone or as a group, and without regard to whether its members are acting with or without the knowledge of the F/S's officers or sponsors. *Examples: NMO activities that took place outside of the proposed plan; events that did not go through the event approval process; any other activities that take place with a smaller group without the knowledge/understanding of the overall organization...*
- The F/S agree to follow and enforce for their members the guidelines developed by the Office of Student Life as well as the University.

Eligibility Requirements for New Membership in a Fraternity or Sorority

As with any other co-curricular activity at ACU, there are eligibility requirements for joining and remaining active in Greek Life. Any recent conduct probation may impact your ability to participate in Greek Life activities as a new member. The following list includes the guidelines for eligibility to join:

Students must:

1. Have completed one long semester of college which equates to at least 12 college hours. There may be circumstances that could allow a student to be exempt from this requirement with the approval of the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities.
2. Be currently enrolled as a full time ACU student (12 or more hours for undergraduate students).
3. Must NOT be on disciplinary or academic probation with the university. All other policies and requirements must adhere to the academic catalog.

Any student found to be ineligible after registering to join will receive an email from the Office of Student Life explaining the reasons for the ineligibility. F/S will receive a list of eligible students who registered to join from the Office of Student Life after registration has concluded. New Member eligibility is verified at the beginning of the spring semester.

Current membership requirements include the following:

1. Be currently enrolled as a residential student at the ACU Abilene campus (6 or more hours for undergraduate students, who are in their last semester of college, 12 or more hours for all other undergraduate students, and 9 or more hours for graduate students). A student who joins during their undergraduate program, is permitted to continue participation, so long as the F/S allow. Graduate students are not able to rush and join Greek Life. Member requirements will be verified at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters.
2. Must NOT be on disciplinary or academic probation with the university and additional policies and requirements must adhere to the academic catalog.

Any student found ineligible will receive an email giving information and details about the ineligibility. Ineligible students are prohibited from participating in Intramurals, Sing Song, F/S meetings, running for office, voting, socials and formals, and any other F/S sponsored events. F/S will be notified of any member that does not meet eligibility requirements. F/S officers and sponsors are responsible for ensuring that ineligible members do not participate in F/S activities. Organizations admitting new members or allowing current members to participate who do not meet the above requirements may face disciplinary actions, including, but not limited to, loss of its student organization's status.

Disaffiliation from a Fraternity or Sorority:

Any student who decides to remove themselves from a fraternity or sorority after having gone through the initiation phase of becoming an official member; serving in an executive officer position; or paying dues for their partitions, must first have an official meeting with the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities. The student must also meet with the current officer team of their particular organization to address the reason for leaving and to have a formal agreement of removing themselves from the organization. If a student chooses to disaffiliate from the organization, they cannot rush or join another organization for one full school year. Students cannot register to rush and join until one year has passed.

Cost of Joining Fraternities and Sororities

Each F/S charges dues to its members and they may vary some in price. The additional costs of T-shirts, sweatshirts, hats, and other merchandise items, as well as the costs of socials, Sing Song, etc., must also be considered.

Considering dues, participating in a F/S at ACU costs approximately \$500-\$600 per year, depending on the F/S. Expenses during the new member orientation period may be greater than for a typical semester. **F/S are required to allow students to make**

several payments during the semester to ease the financial stress, and cannot penalize a student for choosing to make multiple payments. When a new member pays dues, it is done with the understanding that if that new member chooses to walk away from the joining process, no money will be refunded.

POLICIES

Officer Expectations

Officers, as well as all ACU students, are expected to uphold the principles of Abilene Christian University as stated in the ACU Student Handbook. These principles include integrity, service, stewardship, involvement and excellence. Officers are at all times expected to represent their F/S and ACU well and should take this responsibility seriously. Students in leadership positions are held to a higher standard. With this in mind, a student's disciplinary file will be considered prior to any F/S elections. Students who find themselves with a recent conduct probation may not be eligible for leadership positions. Students who have been elected to leadership positions and then find themselves facing conduct probation may be required to resign their office immediately after all appeals have been exhausted. Academic probation and/or chapel probation violations may also impact a student's eligibility to run for office. However, the University reserves the right to immediately remove the student leader from his/her position, if the Dean of Student Life determines that serious misconduct has occurred or that the student's continued leadership presents unreasonable risk of danger to himself or herself or the organization. If at any time a F/S officer is known to have broken any portion of the Student Handbook, the Office of Student Life may remove an officer from their position. Any F/S member wishing to run for an office must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- 1) Must meet all eligibility requirements for membership in a F/S.
- 2) Must be active during the semester that elections take place.
- 3) Must NOT be on academic probation with the university and must adhere to policies and requirements set in the academic catalog.
- 4) Must have at least a 2.75 cumulative GPA.
- 5) Must not have a conduct issue with the Office of the Dean of Students (ALL candidates).
- 6) Must be in good standing and have all chapel credits with spiritual formation (ALL candidates).
- 7) Must meet with the organization's sponsor(s) (ONLY for Executive Officer positions).
- 8) Must have a 1:1 meeting with the Senior Coordinator for F/S (ONLY for the position of President).

All F/S officers sign a commitment with the Office of Student Life at the beginning of

their term indicating their understanding of these principles. The commitment also states that if the principles are not followed, they will forfeit their position as an officer. A copy of the commitment follows.

Mandatory Officer Positions

Risk Management Officer - Each Fraternity and Sorority will be required to have one designated officer trained extensively in compliance, safety, hazing, and risk management. This person will receive additional training and should be a strong guiding voice around new member orientation and all social events. This officer may have other duties or a new officer role may be added. The organization's entire liability is NOT this officer's sole responsibility, but this officer will be well-mentored and trained to support the President and the F/S and its membership in remaining compliant.

Community Service Officer - Each Fraternity and Sorority will be required to have one designated officer who will be in charge of maintaining appropriate communication between the non-profit organization that it's organization is paired with and planning and implementing several activities throughout each semester, so that every member has an adequate opportunity to achieve their ten required service hours per year. These hours should be compiled and turned into the Senior Coordinator for Fraternities and Sororities at least one week prior to the F/S's Formal event in the spring semester. This officer may have other duties assigned or a new officer position may be created.

Chaplain - Fraternities and Sororities are required to have one officer serve as chaplain. The chaplain will be mentored by the office of spiritual formation. Weekly fraternity and sorority membership meetings will qualify for spiritual formation credit, after the approval of the Dean of Spiritual Formation. By their nature, participation in ACU's Greek Life MUST be spiritually formative.

Treasurer - Fraternities and Sororities are required to have one officer to serve as the treasurer, to handle all of the financial activities of the organization, throughout the school year. Financial information for each fraternity and sorority are under the oversight of Abilene Christian University. This includes any internal and external banking information. Treasurers must submit financial statements to Karen Gilliland, AVP of Finance and Tax (kmg10b@acu.edu) at the end of each quarter.

Officer Training

Student Life will create an expanded training and mentorship plan for officers. The officers may plan to have training on more than one occasion. The dates will be determined at a later date and communicated in advance by Student Life.

GREEK LIFE
Officer Commitment
Student Life Office
Abilene Christian University

I Corinthians 4:2 says “those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.” As an officer of your organization, it is important to realize that members of your organization

have entrusted you with your position. With that trust comes the responsibility not only to them but also to God. As the Lord said to Ezekiel, “Woe to the shepherds who only take care of themselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock?” (Ezekiel 34:2). As a leader, your own interests are second to those you serve. Jesus gave the ultimate example of this by humbling himself to the position of a servant and washing his disciples’ feet. As a leader of your organization, you should seek to follow Christ’s example of serving those you lead.

I, _____, as the _____
 (Name) (Office)
 of _____ for the _____ academic year,
 (F/S Name) (year)

understand that as an officer of an organization, I make the commitment to abide by all the principles set forth in the ACU Student Handbook and the Student Organization Handbook as stated through the Student Life Office. These principles include, but are not limited to, integrity, service, stewardship, involvement and excellence. I understand that as an officer and leader on campus, I have a greater responsibility and a higher standard because of my decision to serve as an officer. I also understand that I represent my organization, the Greek Life system as a whole, and ACU at all times.

If I make the decision to disregard these principles, I agree to resign my office at a time determined by the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities and the Dean of Student Engagement. If the office is resigned, a new election may be held to fill the vacancy.

Signature of Officer	Date
_____	_____
Printed Name	Banner ID
_____	_____

Inter-Greek Life Council (IGLC)

The IGLC will consist of F/S representatives from each of the active organizations on campus. The council will meet regularly, spending time collectively addressing issues related to the Greek Life process. This council will be advised by the Senior Coordinator. This meeting will coincide with the weekly Officers Chapel.

New Officers

1) The election of new officers for the following school year must occur no later than 3 weeks prior to the end of the semester.

- 2) F/S will be required to submit a list of members running for office at least 2 weeks prior to elections for the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities to check eligibility requirements of candidates..
- 3) Election results must be turned in to the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities on or prior to the 3 weeks prior to dead day..
- 4) Newly elected officers will be expected and required to sign a commitment (on the previous page) with the University regarding their conduct.. This commitment will hold officers accountable to ACU policies and procedures..
- 5) New officers are required to attend leadership training and orientation with the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities.. Meetings will continue throughout the term of office, including Officers Chapel.
- 6) Officers Chapel is a required meeting that will be scheduled during chapel time during one of the days of the week. If one of the Executive Officers is unable to attend, they **MUST** ensure that another officer is able to stand in for them at the meeting. This person will be responsible for sharing information from the meeting with the other officers and members. The Executive Officers are responsible for ensuring that any pertinent information gleaned from Officers Chapel, that pertains to any of the officers or members is communicated in their weekly meetings.

Active Lists

Each F/S must turn in a list of current active members each September and February (after NMO activities to include New Members). The officer who is responsible for the list should make absolutely sure each individual on the list intends to be active and that everyone who wants to be active has made that decision known. F/S are strongly encouraged to collect dues or agree to a payment plan **BEFORE** adding a member's name to the active list. If payment is not made by the deadline set by the F/S, the treasurer must remove the member's name from the **active list**.

Inactive Members

When a F/S member chooses to go inactive, that member forfeits the opportunity to participate in University-sponsored F/S competitions, Rush Activities and New Member Orientation activities. These sponsored events also include intramurals, Sing Song, or any other University-sponsored F/S competition. Policies regarding closed F/S functions such as meetings, socials/formals, and special activities are a matter of individual F/S discretion and are to be set out in the constitution of each F/S; however, **inactive members will not be allowed to participate in any formalized rush events or new member orientation activities.**

Events

Planning ANY F/S Activities

At least one sponsor must be present at all F/S events, regardless of the nature of the F/S activity, ALL activities must be approved by the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities. A designated F/S officer will be required to submit the event into ACU's Event Manager, where the Senior Coordinator of F/S will be able to approve the event. In order to be approved by ACU Events, the activity must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event, to ensure that all of the proper entities have approved the event. It is the responsibility of the organization's officers to make certain that a sponsor has been secured for every event that takes place outside of the work week (M-F from 8 am - 5 pm). If an unsanctioned event takes place, the F/S is subject to disciplinary action and possible fines.

Planning F/S Socials/Grubs/Formals

As mentioned above, at least one sponsor must be present at all socials/grubs/formals, as this is a student organization special event. It is the responsibility of the officer to ask sponsors about availability on chosen dates to assure that someone is available before any plans are made. The sponsor must be a person who is associated with the individual F/S and has gone through training, a background check, and signed a contract with ACU and turned in to the Student Life Office. A person who is not affiliated with the F/S, cannot serve as a chaperone for any social/grub/formal. This includes the hiring of police officers and/or any other positions that serve as a replacement for a sponsor not being able to attend. It is the priority of the organization to ensure that a sponsor is present at the event.

Arrangements must be made for sponsors to be present for the event before it is submitted to the Office of Student Life for final approval. Once the event is submitted into EVM, it will then be approved by the Senior Coordinator of F/S. When planning a social/grub/formal, it is suggested that a contract for services be used in arranging locations, photographers, T-shirt orders, venues etc., for the social/grub/formal. Most vendors will have a contract for events. (See student organization policy regarding contracts.) These contracts must first be approved by the Senior Coordinator of Greek Life prior to being signed by the Vice President of Student Life. Once the Senior receives the contract, it will then be forwarded to the Vice President of Student Life for final approval. The signed contract will then be sent to the Senior Coordinator who then communicates approval to the organization.

Out of Town Travel (Retreats, Formals, etc.)

In the case that an event is taking place outside of the Abilene area (approximately 20 minutes from the city limits), then an ACU Sponsored Travel form must be filled out by each traveler before the event takes place. Organizations must also be sure to have a spreadsheet with all the emergency contact information listed for every traveler attending the event. Pursuant to the ACU Student Handbook, ACU student organizations cannot have alcohol or illegal drugs present at any student organization event or special event. Each organization **MUST** fill out a Formal Approval Form to be approved by the Student Life office.

In addition to the Travel form, out of town travel and events must be submitted to EVM. This includes officer retreats, business meetings, formals and any other events associated with the organization. In an instance where there is difficulty understanding what needs to be submitted or not, please contact the Senior Coordinator of Greek Life.

This rule applies to before and after the event. If the event is scheduled to be out of the Abilene area, it is imperative that the organization plan for students who need assistance with transportation and lodging surrounding the time of the event. This is to be handled by each individual organization and should be discussed well in advance of the event to plan for help with transportation and lodging. Academic events such as classes, tests and/or assignments should not be missed in order to be able to attend/host an out of town event.

Sponsors

F/S sponsors are critical to the success of their organizations. The nature of the activities in which F/S engage, there are requirements to be approved as a F/S sponsor. Prospective sponsors must complete an online application to serve as a sponsor. Once a prospective sponsor applies, a background check is completed by ACU (unless the sponsor is already an employee of ACU, whereas a background check should already have been completed). Prospective sponsors are considered by the Student Life Vice President, Associate Vice President for Student Life, Associate Dean of Student Engagement, Senior Coordinator for F/S, and current F/S Officer President and Vice President. Candidates are notified of approval or denial to serve by the Senior Coordinator.

- Approved sponsors must attend training be hosted by the Office of Greek Life. Communications regarding dates and times will be communicated by the Senior Coordinator of Greek Life.
- Each F/S must have one sponsor for every event.

- All sponsors who are not employed by ACU, must go through a background check every three years.

F/S Responsibility to Sponsors

The following are additional responsibilities that F/S have toward sponsors:

- 1) The officers of the F/S, and ultimately the president, are responsible for scheduling and confirming that a sponsor will be present at every activity, including F/S meetings. Sponsors should be made aware of activities ahead of time and their attendance confirmed in advance. Failure to have a sponsor present will result in cancellation of the activity, meeting or event.
- 2) **If an event takes place without a sponsor present, the F/S will be immediately subject to disciplinary action and possible fines through the Office of Student Life. (Outside of the work week M-F from 8 am - 5 pm)**
- 3) Though many sponsors may not have the time to attend intramural games, members should provide a schedule so that sponsors could attend if desired.

RUSHING AND JOINING

Registering to Join a Fraternity or Sorority

Prior to rushing, the Office of Student Life will hold more than one informational meeting for all potential new members. Attending at least one of these meetings will be **mandatory** to be eligible to rush and join a F/S. This meeting gives details of eligibility, the rushing process, the cost of joining, and the orientation period. Anyone interested in joining **must complete the online registration.**

The Realities of Joining

Each F/S will be choosing the cap size of the New Member Class they will take for each school year. This cap size number will be published information prior to the Rush Season, and it will be available to all potential new members. We strongly encourage all PNMs to take the time to get to know more than one organization, because we cannot guarantee that you will receive a bid from your first choice. When an organization is voting, there will be no “ties” allowed. If an organization chooses to add or delete numbers from their reported cap size, communications regarding this will be sent to all other organizations, as well as the PNMs to make sure everyone is aware of the change. It is pertinent that the officers of the organization, if they choose to make a change in their numbers, are certain to communicate this change to the Senior

Coordinator for Greek Life.

A good faith effort will be made to match every student with a F/S, however, it may not be your first choice. You will be allowed more than once to submit your ranking of each of the F/S. The members will be voting more than once to decide who they are interested in as potential new members of their organization.

The intention of rushing is to provide an opportunity for potential new members to spend time getting to know the different F/S and their members.

Each F/S has unique attributes and something to offer. It is during the rushing period that potential new members are able to learn about those attributes and find the F/S that best suits their own personalities and preferences.

It is important to keep an open mind during this process and actively engage in learning about all of the different F/S. It is also important to consider the number of bids that each F/S will be offering each school year, as well as paying close attention to the dates and times of the rushes that the PNMs will need to attend.

Rushing

The fall/spring rush process lasts approximately two to three weeks.

Types of Rushes

* All-F/S Rush - This is an all-access rush promoted by the Office of Student Life, All F/S and students wishing to rush are invited. (Commonly referred to as Coffees for men and Teas for women.) There will be a rotation process used during this rush in order to give each group an opportunity to share what they have to offer to the PNM.

*Open F/S rushes - This is a time for members and potential new members to meet and get to know each other. These may be on or off campus and may have a specific theme. All PNMs may participate in these rushes and are encouraged to attend as many as you can. The themes and dates/times will be provided in advance, so that each PNM will have ample time to plan to attend the rushes.

*Invitational Rushes - These rushes take place after the Open Rush Process and are more intentional. Prior to the invitations, PNMs would have provided their ranking of all the organizations, and the organizations would have also voted to extend invitations to those PNMs that they feel would make a good member for their organization.

Prohibited Rushing

*What is **Dirty Rushing**? - Dirty rushing is when an organization hosts events and/or activities that are prohibited by the university. This means that it is hosted without the knowledge and consent of ACU, the organization's sponsors, and the Student Life Office. Dirty rushing occurs when an organization attempts to influence PNMs by buying them gifts, offering them a bid prior to bid day, speaking negatively or spreading rumors about other organizations, using social media as a form of influence, etc. Dirty rushing can also constitute as members trying to pull PNMs away from another organization's rush and into their own unsanctioned activity. Dirty rushing could take place on or off campus and is not allowed under any circumstances. Anyone that knows about dirty rushing taking place, should anonymously report the event as soon as possible to ACU authorities and/or the Student Life office.

- Consequences for hosting or participating in dirty rushing could lead to your inability to join any F/S and an F/S's removal from campus.

Ranking of F/S

During the rushing process, there will be three different designated times for PNMs to rank the organizations, as to who they have interest in and would like to attend another rush.

Ranking will take place prior to invitational rushes and bid day. PNMs will be notified of the actual dates on when to rank the organizations, as well as the deadline to do so.

Please remember that if you miss a ranking deadline, you will not be allowed to give your rank at a later date or time, and therefore may not be considered by the F/S of your choice.

By having the PNMs provide their ranking, the Office of Student Life is able to attempt to give everyone a bid who is still interested in the process, even when a F/S is not the PNMs first choice. As mentioned above, you must rank ALL of the organizations in numerical order as you would consider being a member. Once again, keep in mind that not everyone will receive a bid from their preferred organization, which is why the ranking process is so important. Because men's and women's F/S have unique differences, the rushing process has been adjusted to accommodate the needs of each group.

Voting

Voting may take place up to three times during the Rushing and Joining process at specified times. There must be at least one sponsor in attendance when voting is taking place at a meeting. ALL cell phones must be checked in at the door and not allowed to be in the room where the voting process takes place. Confidentiality is one of the most important things during the voting process and none of the information shared during voting should be made public to the ACU community. Organizations that are found not to be in compliance with this procedure, are in danger of possible fines or other disciplinary procedures. The only people who are able to view the list of names submitted for invitations or bids are the President, Vice President, New Member Officer, and sponsor(s).

Bid Distribution

Bids will be distributed on the day before Bid Day. The process for delivering bids will be managed by the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities. PNMs, as well as, officers of the F/S will be provided information as to the time and location on campus that they will be allowed to extend and accept their bids.

- PNMs will be sent an email on the afternoon of Bid Distribution Day as to where and when they should go to receive their bids on that day.
- There will be office staff available in the Campus Center to direct anyone with questions about a bid, or when and where they should go to accept their bid.
- Once PNMs show up and accept their bids, they will be given further instructions about what will take place the rest of Bid Distribution Day, as well as, their Bid Day the following day.

New Member Orientation

The mission of Abilene Christian University is to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world. Central to this mission is the desire to love and honor God by the way we call all members of the ACU community to love and honor others. The F/S joining period should honor God by honoring others - both current and potential new members - at all times. The ACU mission challenges each member of the ACU community to treat others with the utmost respect and honor. Commitment to these principles has helped the members of the ACU community create a legacy of excellence of which we can all be proud. Since 1919 members of social clubs, now F/S, have played an unmistakable role in this tradition of excellence at Abilene Christian University. Thus, we can be confident that increased efforts to make the joining process at ACU even more positive will further enhance the contribution of F/S to achieving the

ACU mission.

A successful New Member Orientation program should include education about the history and values of the organization, foster academic achievement, include spiritual formation and mentoring activities, provide opportunities to socialize with other students in the group, and promote positive experiences that are free from hazing.

New Member Orientation activities are NOT allowed to take place during any academic class time as well as 15 minutes before the class begins as well as 15 minutes after. As soon as a PNM walks into a professor's classroom, their duties and activities as a PNM within their Greek Life organization must cease. If any of the NMO activities do take place inside a classroom, during academic class time, the organization is in danger of sanctions and/or fines.

ACU desires to incorporate new members into F/S with a feeling of pride in the group and with a sense of belonging. This needs to be done in such a way as not to interfere with the student's academic responsibilities. As a college student aiming towards graduation, grades, attendance and academic success are of the utmost importance. Joining an organization should be considered a co-curricular activity and should be exciting and not an added stress to join. The faculty, administration and Student Life staff hope to achieve a positive, memorable joining experience for each student participating while upholding the scriptures of Romans 14:19, "Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification," and Romans 15:1-2, "We who are strong ought to bear the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please his neighbor for his good to build him up."

New Member Orientation Requirements

Student Life has set the baseline of new membership requirements/traditions, and each F/S can expand requirements by seeking approval from the Senior Coordinator for **New Member Orientation Contract**.

A new member orientation contract must be signed by each F/S member and each PNM to be filed in the Office of Student Life. The F/S president will ensure that member contracts are signed and submitted to the office of Student Life, at the designated time to the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities. Contracts will be submitted to their officers and turned into the Office of Student Life, by the PNMs at their first meeting after Bid Day. With the signing of these contracts, members and PNMs are stating that they have read and understand all the expectations and rules for joining a F/S. Failure to sign a contract and submit on time, makes both F/S members and PNMs ineligible to participate in the new member orientation process. This contract

emphasizes the goals and objectives of joining and must therefore be signed by each member of every F/S. A copy of the new member orientation contract follows.

New Member Orientation Contract for Prospective and Current F/S Members
(MUST BE SIGNED AND TURNED IN AT THE FIRST MEETING OF EACH SPRING SEMESTER, AND THE FIRST MEETING WITH NEW MEMBERS)

I, the undersigned, understand that in order to participate in the joining process, all provisional and current F/S members are required to sign this contract with ACU. By signing below, I am stating that I have read the following documents, understand what they require of me, and will fully comply with the responsibilities and requirements set out in them:

1. The Texas hazing law; Specifically, I understand that hazing is illegal in Texas. (Under the Texas statute, hazing is defined as "any intentional knowing, or reckless act, occurring on or off the campus of an educational institution, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are students at an educational institution".) **I also understand that anyone who witnesses or experiences hazing activities and does not report them and the individuals committing the activities is in violation of the statute;**

2. The ACU Student Organization Handbook; and

3. The ACU Student Handbook.

4. The Greek Life Handbook.

Specifically, I understand that all F/S activities, including new member orientation, will conform to the community standards of ACU as underscored by its mission statement and set forth in the current Student Organization Handbook and Student Handbook. I realize that any violation of this contract may result in a disciplinary response and my removal from joining activities.

In consideration of ACU's recognition of F/S and for being permitted to participate in those F/S and in the

joining process, I do hereby release, hold harmless and indemnify Abilene Christian University, its officers, trustees, agents, and employees from any and all claims, demand, suits, costs, and charges, in connection with or arising out of the joining process or travel and transportation to and from new member orientation activities including, but not limited to, serious bodily injury to myself or others or property damage, except for loss, harm, or injury occasioned by gross negligence or intentional misconduct by Abilene Christian University, its officers, trustees, agents, or employees. I further state that I have signed voluntarily under my own free will, and I am of legal age and legally competent to execute this agreement.

Your signature _____

Printed name _____

Date _____

New Member Requirements

(MUST BE SIGNED AND TURNED IN AFTER THE FIRST MEETING WITH NEW MEMBERS)

- ❖ Weekly Meeting Participation - Student Life requirement is to attend **at least 80%** of meetings.
- ❖ Service Project Participation - Student Life requirement is for New Members to achieve **at least 3 hours of service with the organization's partnered non-profit organization by April 1, in order to attend the organization's Formal Event. A spreadsheet with the hours must be turned in at least 2 weeks prior to each organization's Formal Event in the spring semester. Starting in the fall, New members will be required to achieve at least 8 hours by April 1.** Your hours should be documented with the Service Project Officer of your organization and turned in prior to the formal event in the spring semester. Any member that does not attain the necessary number of hours prior to the Formal event, will NOT be allowed to attend the event.
- ❖ Homecoming Participation - New members will be involved with the current members in helping with float and parade preparation, as well as, new members marching in the parade with their float.
 - Homecoming float is the responsibility of the new membership.
 - Homecoming parade is the responsibility of new members.
 - Current members are encouraged to participate in the parade.
 - Any new members choosing NOT to participate in Homecoming floats or parade will be removed and made inactive members (unless they are involved in Homecoming with a different group ie. band, Homecoming committee.)
- ❖ Tailgating Home Football Games - New members are expected to participate in the tailgating of home football games at ACU in the fall semester.

Your Signature

Date

Printed Name

New Member Orientation Proposals

New member orientation proposals will be submitted by a specific due date by the F/S officers to the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities. New member orientation proposals will include detailed accounts of each activity to occur. These proposals must be signed by F/S officers and F/S sponsors (digital signatures are acceptable). After review, the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities will meet with and return proposals with any necessary revisions. F/S officers are responsible for ensuring that all F/S members and sponsors present at any given activity are aware of and have been educated as to what has been approved. Failure to gain approval for any activities during this process, first by the Senior Coordinator and then submitted into EVM, may result in disciplinary actions and possible fines. Officers are responsible to make sure that all members are trained and know exactly what was proposed and how each activity will be executed and not stray from what is written on paper in any way.

Student Life has adopted the following template that will be used as we consider new member orientation proposals:

- Did you start with your core value and intended purpose in developing an activity which demonstrates this value?
- The activity should be designed to help new members grow into membership.
- Members themselves should be demonstrating core values through the activity.
- The activity should be consistent with discipleship to Jesus. There is no room for humiliation, disrespect, unkindness, or intimidation.
- It needs to be a joyful and meaningful experience for new and existing members.
- The activity proposal needs to be honest and transparent in all that is done.

New Member Orientation Hours and Curfews

Joining a F/S is a significant time commitment. To honor the time and commitment

made by each PNM, limits have been set as to the number of hours spent on new member orientation activities during any given week. For new member orientation, 12 hours per week is the maximum number of hours to be spent on joining activities, for a total of 24 hours per the 2 weeks allotted. In planning for new member orientation, keep in mind that weekend activities are allowed if approved. The allowed hours for activities on Monday through Friday will be during the times of 6:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m., 3 hour limit. On weekends, the allowed hours for activities will be as follows: Saturday - from 12:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., 3 hour limit and Sunday - from 2:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., 3 hour limit. Activities that do not count towards new member orientation hours include, F/S meetings, intramurals, Homecoming float preparation, Homecoming Breakfast preparation, or study hall hours. Once Homecoming is over, new members become known as first-year members. First-year members are responsible for having one on one meetings with existing members, known as visits. Any student that does not complete their visits will not be eligible to participate in F/S activities for the following semester.

Residence Life and New Member Orientation

We desire that every PNM has time to study, to sleep and to connect with friends in the residence hall. For this reason, Residence Halls are not available for any new member orientation activities. Events and activities should not take place within Residence Halls. At ACU, all first year students have a dedicated curfew. This curfew is also in effect during the joining process. For freshmen, the curfew is midnight, Sunday through Thursday. There is not a curfew on weekends. There should be no new member activities that take place between 12:00 a.m. - 6:00 a.m., Sunday through Thursday, and 1:00 a.m. - 6:00 a.m., Friday and Saturday. This curfew will remain in place during the entirety of new member orientation, which includes Call Night. F/S cannot have any activities during the hours of the curfew, regardless of whether a PNM lives on or off campus, or their classification.

The consequences for being late for curfew by an **individual PNM** during New Member Orientation activities are:

- 1) The first time a PNM is late for curfew, he/she will receive a formal warning from the Dean of Student and the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities.
- 2) The second time a PNM is late for curfew, he/she will be required to meet with the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities and his or her F/S president.
- 3) If a PNM misses curfew a third time, he/she will have an 11 pm curfew for one week (including weekends)
- 4) If a potential new member misses curfew a fourth time, he/she will be suspended from the new member orientation process and may go through the rushing process again the following year.

All of these incidents will be communicated and acted upon by the Dean of Students, Residence Life and the Office of Student Engagement.

The consequences for a **new member orientation class** being late for curfew due to orientation activities are:

- 1) The first time a new member orientation class is late for curfew, the entire class will have an 11:00 pm curfew for the remainder of the joining process - including weekends. The F/S president, New Member Officer and a sponsor will be required to meet with the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities.
- 2) If a new member class misses curfew a second time, the joining process will cease for the entire F/S.

At no time should any F/S member or officer be in the residence halls during new member orientation. The residence halls should be a "sanctuary" for all residents. Any F/S member wishing to visit a residence hall for a reason not pertaining to F/S business may do so only after they receive verbal or written consent from the residence director.

The following are consequences if a member and/or F/S is in the residence halls w/o permission:

- 1) The first time a F/S member transgresses the boundaries of a residence hall, that F/S member will be suspended from joining activities.
- 2) On a second offense, the F/S member will become ineligible to participate in F/S for the remainder of the semester and will become inactive.
- 3) On a third offense, new member orientation will cease for the entire F/S.

All of these incidents will be communicated and acted upon by the Dean of Students, Residence Life and the Office of Student Engagement.

GUIDELINES FOR NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION ACTIVITIES

ACU desires to incorporate new members into F/S in ways that create a sense of community and belonging among all F/S members. Therefore, any action or communication by the F/S as a whole or by any individual member that humiliates, intimidates, embarrasses, degrades, threatens or abuses is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. BECAUSE THE CHARGE TO BUILD CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY AND PROTECT EACH OTHER FROM INAPPROPRIATE TREATMENT IS **GREATER** THAN THE CHARGE TO PROTECT A PERSON WHO IS MISTREATING OTHERS, ALL MEMBERS ARE RESPONSIBLE TO REPORT SUSPECTED HAZING TO A SPONSOR IMMEDIATELY. If disciplinary action taken against a F/S requires that

joining activities cease, all new members will be inducted into the F/S as full members at that time. The offending person(s) would face disciplinary action.

Each F/S is required to assign a Risk Management officer to ensure the safety of members and adherence to university hazing policies. These officers will be trained in hazing prevention protocols and member safety compliance.

- Prior to the New Member Orientation all PNMs and current members will be required to take an online hazing prevention course. If a PNM does not complete the course, the individual cannot participate in the New Member Orientation process. For current members, 100% of the F/S must complete the online hazing prevention course. If 100% is not completed before the first day of New Member Orientation, then the F/S forfeits their opportunity to take in a new member class. An email will be sent to all members and PNMs that will prompt them to complete the online training course. At the end of the course, members will receive a certificate of completion that they may present to their officers. **ALL members must complete the online course every year, regardless of having completed it in prior years.**

New Member Orientation

New member orientation is conducted over a period of time that lasts two weeks. PNMs will at all times be treated with respect, both publicly and privately. During the joining process, F/S should create experiences that focus on building unity within the new member class, learning F/S history and traditions, overall F/S unity and community building and getting to know existing members and alumni. Members should model F/S life and core values for potential new members.

- i. Expectations/values for New Member Orientation Process. Every activity must:
 1. Demonstrate Christian values and commitments.
 2. Create a sense of unity both within the new member class and within the F/S as a whole.
 3. Provide a sense of the history, tradition and values of the F/S.
 4. Create a sense of the personal well-being of every member, including provisional members. This includes activities that purposefully provide opportunities for spiritual growth including love of God and neighbors, emotional health, and personal integrity both of members and prospective members.
 5. Honor the current Student Handbook and always have a sponsor present.
- ii. Prohibited Behaviors for New Member Orientation Process. The University will not

tolerate activities that are counter to our Christian values. Under the Texas statute, hazing means *"any intentional, knowing, or reckless act, occurring on or off the campus of an educational institution, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization."*

As Christians our accountability is to a higher power than that of only the law. With this in mind, all activities should reflect a spirit of love and respect for all of God's children. Behaviors prohibited by Abilene Christian University include, but are not limited to:

- Any type of personal servitude or requirement to purchase goods for members.
- Any activity that creates an environment that endangers provisional members through restriction of the senses, including the use of blindfolds.
- Any activity that requires excessive sleep deprivation.
- Any activity that requires provisional members to partially or fully disrobe.
- Any activity involving physical touching intended to inflict pain such as paddling, striking, whipping, shoving, electric shock, branding, or burning of provisional members.
- Any activity that requires one to eat or drink anything or place any foreign object in any orifice of the body.
- Any activity that requires provisional members to endure environments that create physical or emotional discomfort or that endanger one's physical safety.
- Any activity that involves abandoning, binding, shaving or confining of provisional members.
- Any activity that occurs without the presence of an approved sponsor.
- Any failure to comply with the directives of a F/S sponsor or any other University official, including interns from the Student Life Office.
- Any activity that involves placing substances on a new member or placing a provisional member in substances.
- Any activity that involves new members to be tested orally. (Accountability for learning F/S history and traditions may only be checked by asking provisional members to take written examinations without distraction).
- Any activity that involves physical exertion for the sake of physical exertion.
- Any repetitive physical activity that could be considered calisthenic in nature.
- Any activity that constitutes a negative form of group discipline or punishment.
- Any activity that constitutes correction of an individual provisional member unless conducted only in the presence of the officers and sponsors and is constructive and incremental.
- Any activity that involves water unless in a swimming pool with appropriate supervision.
- Any yelling of derogatory, insulting or threatening language.

*What is “**subtle hazing**”? - This type of hazing tends to fly under the radar and is usually more emotionally based than physical. This type of hazing includes degrading someone by yelling at them, calling them names, making fun of them, requiring them to wear outrageous clothing and other forms of degradation by making them look different from their peers. This type of hazing is just as serious as some of the other more obvious types of hazing.

In order to become a member of a F/S, each potential new member must complete a list of requirements set forth by each F/S. These requirements will include things such as attendance at activities, float prep hours, etc. A list of the requirements must be submitted by the F/S officers, with their new member orientation proposal, to the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities and be approved *before* new member orientation begins. Each PNM must be given a list of these requirements at the beginning of the joining period so they know what is expected of them. Many organizations offer a notebook with information pertaining to their NMO activities. If a PNM fails to meet the requirements set forth by the F/S, they may not be invited to achieve member status. In such a case, the president of the F/S should give these names to the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities with appropriate documentation before the conclusion of new member orientation. After review, the F/S president will give the PNMs who did not complete their requirements the same documentation.

PNM Publication Link (coming soon)

Bid Day

Bid Day will be determined by the Student Life Office. The end time for Bid Day has the potential to vary from group to group. Each group will be allowed a total of seven hours to complete their Bid Day activities.

Spiritual Formation

During chapel it is important for all F/S members and new members to maintain a level of anonymity and decorum so as not to distract others in the ACU community during this public time of worship. The joining process or NMO activities should not be part of the chapel atmosphere, as this is a special time for community, fellowship and worship on the ACU campus. New member classes are allowed to sit together during chapel; however, F/S members or potential new members cannot reserve a section for the entire new member class to sit together. PNMs should be encouraged to attend chapel as normal during the school year. Should a new member or a new member class exhibit

any form of disruptive or disrespectful behavior as determined by the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities in chapel, that new member class will not be allowed to sit together for the remainder of the joining process, and other sanctions and/or fines may be applied. It has been the tradition of many F/S to have a brief meeting with potential new members immediately following chapel. These meetings must take place outside of Moody Coliseum so as not to disrupt registration of chapel attendance by both PNMs, and other members of the ACU community.

- ❖ Spiritual formation credit will be given for Wednesday F/S meetings.
- ❖ Chaplain mentorship and training will be given by the office of spiritual formation.
- ❖ Small group chapel should continue and be promoted.

Integrated Spiritual Formation Plan

ACU has committed to the implementation of a robust Integrated Spiritual Formation Plan in an effort to further emphasize the university's mission to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world. The purpose of the plan was to articulate a structure that reflects the current experience of ACU students, to bring coherence to the many efforts at student spiritual formation that take place across the various parts of the university, and to both inspire and orient new initiatives. This will be accomplished through the creation of programming directed toward one of four theological themes assigned to each year of the student experience.

The first-year experience, as articulated in the plan, will include opportunities for students to “engage in relationships with God and with others, being formed through community.” The primary purpose of this goal is to enhance personal connections to others during the students' first year. Allowing first-year students the opportunity to join Greek Life will not only enhance retention through increased levels of institutional ownership and psychological well-being, but will also be instrumental in our cumulative effort to increase spiritually formative experiences for our first-year students.

Visits

Visits may occur in small group settings on campus (at least 2-4 people). Visits can only take place off-campus in a group of 4 or more new members per current member and not at a residence. Visits with current members may take place during the two week NMO and after that timeframe as well. We feel that these visits are important to the process, so we do not want to force PNMs or members to crowd them into a two week timeframe.

Community Service

ACU's Greek Life has always committed to serving others through various donations and service projects. This will serve as a more detailed description of what is expected in the way of philanthropic activities and number of hours required. Student Life will require that each Fraternity and Sorority choose one local (Abilene area) non-profit organization to partner with on a long term basis. Each organization will be given the autonomy to evolve the relationship and service for non-profit organizations as they see fit. This is a great opportunity for Fraternities and Sororities to get involved with our local community, be able to bond between members and the organization, and spread Christ's love with others, which is part of ACU's mission. The following points below are expectations from Student Life, but your particular organization may go above the expectations from Student Life.

1. The Service Officer and the President must attend a brief meeting of what is expected of each Fraternity and Sorority as it pertains to the relationship with the non-profit organization at the beginning of the fall semester.
2. No two F/S may be associated with the same non-profit organization. Each F/S partnership must be approved by the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities.
3. Hours of service committed to the partnered non-profit organization per member which must be logged per member and organization. [Service Project Roll Sheet](#) (**Minimum of 8 hours per year/per member and hours are due before Formal event**, but may be more than that if F/S chooses).
4. If a member does not achieve their 8 service hours in the school year and prior to the organization's Formal Event in the spring semester, they will NOT be allowed to attend the Formal Event. New members will only be required to complete 3 service hours their first semester, as they only have approximately two months before the Formal event in April.
5. Members and New members may be required to do more as part of their member expectations, according to your organization's guidelines.
6. Each F/S must provide a description of how SPECIFICALLY this non-profit will be partnered with the organization in a service outline. (Ex: types of service, donations that would be organized to benefit the non-profit, like a "sock drive" at a social).
7. You may choose to partner with a non-profit organization that you have worked with in the past and want to continue to work with in the future.
8. You may choose to partner with more than one non-profit organization. Please get a contract signed with each organization and turn it into the Office of Student Life.
9. Your F/S will sign a contract and return it to the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities

and Sororities. The contract will be created for a one-year or multiyear, or until either party chooses to separate affiliation.

COMMUNITY SERVICE [CONTRACT](#)

10. There will need to be an officer that will be the designated representative for all Community Service relations and to keep track of logging hours.
11. Members are required to volunteer and partner with the non-profit organization's needs and this will be determined by each F/S (ie. new members could have specific projects, volunteer hours are required and must be logged and turned into the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities prior to the Formal Event in the spring semester, members must be involved in service as well as new members)
12. Establishment meetings are required between each F/S and the non-profit organization's contact person. (This should happen one time per school year.) The officer in charge of community service relations will meet in person or zoom meetings with the organization's contact person to discuss service plans. Contracts may be signed by both parties at this meeting in the fall of the school year. Involving a F/S sponsor in this meeting is highly recommended.
13. First year members, who gain membership status in the spring semester, are ONLY required to complete 3 service project hours before their organization's Formal Event in the spring semester, in order to qualify to attend. (This ONLY applies to their first semester in the F/S.)

The Wearing of Colors During the New Member Orientation Period

1. All student organizations participating in a new member orientation process to welcome PNMs will comply with the stated policy regarding the wearing of colors. Failure to comply with established guidelines may result in loss of privileges such as wearing colors.
2. The wearing of colors by PNMs during the joining period is considered a privilege. As such, PNMs may not be "required" to wear colors, but may be "asked" or "allowed" to wear colors. PNMs will not be asked to wear colors to church, work, or during any other activity at which such attire might be deemed inappropriate.
3. All F/S will submit their proposed plans within the NMO plan, for the wearing of colors during any joining activities to the Senior Coordinator for Fraternities and Sororities for approval.
4. Men and women have the option of formal attire Mondays through Thursdays with parameters to wear various attire that is approved by the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities.

F/S may decide how this would best be incorporated into their new member orientation process, but the rationale behind colors should meet the expectations and requirements for all joining activities. Through this process, when new members are wearing F/S colors or t-shirts, current members should also wear F/S memorabilia to show solidarity in promoting F/S spirit. F/S should take special care in recognizing wearing colors as a privilege and not a punishment.

Locations for Rushes and NMO Activities

As plans are made for activities, especially during the new member orientation period, safety is of greatest concern. Therefore, the University has established the following criteria for acceptable activity locations:

1) Area must be well lit. Car headlights **are not** appropriate forms of lighting. 2) Running water and closed-in restrooms must be readily available. 3) Sponsors must be comfortable with the location. 4) All activities may not be more than 20 minutes of driving time away from the ACU campus.

The final decision on any location will be made by the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities. Failure by F/S officers to provide accurate details or locations for any F/S activity may result in cancellation of the activity or other disciplinary action and/or a possible fine. Maps for all off-campus locations, with accurate physical addresses, must be submitted to the Student Life Office with the activity proposals.

HAZING

ACU will not tolerate hazing as defined by Texas law. Moreover, ACU strongly discourages any action that degrades, intimidates, humiliates, or endangers any individual. The University reserves the right, for its private administrative purposes, to define conduct as "hazing" whether or not it would constitute hazing under the Texas law. All acts of hazing and any act that transgresses ACU's Student Handbook will receive the full range of discipline set forth by the current Student Handbook. Ignorance of Christian principles, cultural meanings, and Texas law will not constitute immunity from appropriate University discipline, including dismissal from the University. As hazing activities have become public across the United States, many universities and national fraternities and sororities are working hard to eliminate any activity that could be considered hazing. ACU has created policies and procedures that are intended to protect and preserve students, group traditions, and the ACU community.

Reporting Hazing Violations

Because the charge to build Christian community and protect each other from

inappropriate treatment is greater than the charge to protect a person who is mistreating others, ALL members are responsible to report suspected hazing to one or all of the following: 1) a F/S student organization sponsor, 2) the Senior Coordinator of Fraternities and Sororities, 3) the Dean of Student Life, and/or 4) an anonymous reporting form on the hazing website: www.acu.edu/hazing. (You are not required to provide your name or contact information. If you wish to remain anonymous, begin filling in the form in the "Date of Incident" space provided.)

Failing to Report: Under Texas Law, the offense of failing to report is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed \$1,000, confinement in county jail for not more than 180 days, or both such fine and confinement. If you are a student at Abilene Christian University and fail to report a hazing violation, you may be subject to disciplinary action.

Administrative immunity: Any person reporting a specific hazing incident involving a student in an educational institution to the Dean of Students or other appropriate official of the institution is immune from liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed as a result of the report.

Immunity extends to participation in any judicial proceeding resulting from the report. A person reporting in bad faith or with malice is not protected. AÇU provides such immunity under the Non-Disciplinary Process/Administrative Agreements Policy.

Texas Hazing Law Defined

Below is an abbreviated summary of the Texas Education Code, Section 51.936 and Subchapter F, Chapter 37, Sections 37.151-158. The following Hazing Law was passed by the Texas State Legislature relating to offenses related to hazing at or in connection with an educational institution. To view the law in its entirety, please visit: www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us

Definition of Terms (Sec 37.151):

- "Pledge" means any person who has been accepted by, is considering an offer of membership from, or is in the process of qualifying for membership in any organization.
- "Pledging" means any action or activity related to becoming a member of an organization.
- "Organization" means a fraternity, sorority, association, corporation, order, society, corps, cooperative, club, or service, social, or a similar group, whose members are primarily students at an educational institution.
- "Hazing" means any intentional knowing, or reckless act, occurring on or off the

campus of an educational institution, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are students at an educational institution, if the act:

- Is any type of physical brutality, such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on the body, or similar activity;
- Involves sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, calisthenics, or other similar activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student;
- Involves consumption of a food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug, or other substance, other than as described by Paragraph (E), that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student;
- Is any activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to perform a duty or task that involves a violation of the Penal Code; or
- Involves coercing, as defined by Section 1.07, Penal Code, the student to consume:
 - A drug; or
 - An alcoholic beverage or liquor in an amount that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student is intoxicated, as defined by Section 49.01, Penal Code.

Personal Hazing Offense (Sec. 37.152):

- A person commits an offense if the person:
 - engages in hazing;
 - solicits, encourages, directs, aids or attempts to aid another in engaging in hazing;
 - recklessly permits hazing to occur; or
 - has firsthand knowledge of the planning of a specific hazing incident involving a student in an educational institution or firsthand knowledge that a specific hazing incident has occurred, and knowingly fails to report said knowledge in writing to the Dean of Students or other appropriate officials of the institution.
 - The offense of failing to report is a Class B misdemeanor.
 - Any other offense under this section that does not cause serious bodily injury to another is a Class B misdemeanor.
 - Any other offense under this section that causes serious bodily

injury to another is a Class A misdemeanor.

- Any other offense under this section that causes the death of another is a state jail felony.
- Except if an offense causes the death of a student, in sentencing a person convicted of an offense under this section, the court may require the person to perform community service, subject to the same conditions imposed on a person placed on community supervision under Chapter 42A, Cod of Criminal Procedure, for an appropriate period of time in lieu of confinement in county jail or in lieu of a part of the time the person is sentenced to confinement in county jail.

Organization Hazing Offense (Sec. 37.153):

- An organization commits an offense if the organization condones or encourages hazing or if an officer or any combination of members, pledges, or alumni of the organization commits or assists in the commission of hazing.
- An offense under this section is a misdemeanor punishable by:
 - a fine of not less than \$5,000 nor more than \$10,000; or
 - if a court finds that the offense caused personal injury, property damage, or other loss. The court may sentence the organization to pay a fine of not less than \$5,000 nor more than double the amount of loss or expenses incurred because of the injury, damage, or loss.

Consent Not a Defense (Sec. 37.154):

It is not a defense to prosecution for the offense under this subchapter that the person against whom the hazing was directed consented to or acquiesced in the hazing activity.

Immunity From Prosecution Available (Sec. 37.155):

- In the prosecution of an offense under this subchapter, the court may grant immunity from prosecution for the offense to each person who is subpoenaed to testify for the prosecution and does testify for the prosecution.
- Any person who voluntarily reports a specific hazing incident involving a student in an educational institution to the Dean of Students or other appropriate official of the institution is immune from civil or criminal liability that might otherwise be incurred or imposed as a result of the reported hazing incident if the person:
 - Reports the incident before being contacted by the institution concerning

the incident or otherwise being included in the institution's investigation of the incident; and

- As determined by the Dean of Students or other appropriate official of the institution designated by the institution, cooperates in good faith throughout any institutional process regarding the incident.

Offenses in Addition to Other Penal Provisions (Sec. 37.156):

- This subchapter does not affect or repeal any penal law of this state. This subchapter does not limit or affect the right of an educational institution to enforce its own penalties against hazing.

Reporting by Medical Authorities (Sec. 37.157):

- A doctor or other medical practitioner who treats a student who may have been subjected to hazing activities:
 - (1) may report the suspected hazing activities to police or other law enforcement officials; **and**
 - (2) is immune from civil or other liability that might otherwise be imposed or incurred as a result of the report, unless the report is made in bad faith or with malice.

Publication of Subchapter (Sec. 37.158):

- In this section, "prosecuting attorney" means a county attorney, district attorney, or criminal district attorney.
 - (b) An offense under this subchapter may be prosecuted:
 - (1) in any county in which the offense may be prosecuted under other law; **or**
 - (2) if the consent required by Subsection (c) is provided, in a county, other than a county described by Subdivision (1), in which is located the educational institution campus at which a victim of the offense is enrolled.
 - (c) An offense under this subchapter may be prosecuted in a county described by Subsection (b)(2) only with the written consent of a prosecuting attorney of a county described by Subsection (b)(1) who has authority to prosecute an offense under this subchapter.

Categories Of Student Conduct Violations (Related To Hazing)

(ADAPTED FROM THE STUDENT HANDBOOK)

Consequences for acts of hazing include, but are not limited to, suspension of F/S activities or suspension of F/S from campus, suspension from the University. Listed below are levels of student conduct violations along with possible sanctions for each level.

Category ONE: These actions against the Christian standards of conduct set forth in the Student Handbook may result in disciplinary warnings with or without additional conditions or alternative requirements, such as counseling, community service, or mentoring. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Any ridicule and discipline for not remembering or learning F/S traditions or members' names.
- Any type of verbal abuse or intimidation.
- Any type of personal servitude or requirement to purchase goods for members.
- Any activity which degrades, humiliates, or intimidates.

Category TWO: These actions may result in a minimum disciplinary response of sanctions from Category One as well as conduct probation with additional conditions or alternative requirements. This level of violation can result in suspension from any F/S activities and a potential monetary fine from the Office of Student Life. An entire organization may be placed on probation and have its current new member orientation period terminated. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Any environment which endangers provisional/new members through restricting their senses, including the use of blindfolds.
- Any type of humiliation based on the physical or personal characteristics or personal convictions of provisional/new members.
- Any activity requiring provisional/new members to place themselves in any foreign substance or shaving or otherwise marking their bodies.
- Any excessive sleep deprivation of provisional/new members.

- Any activity that requires provisional/new members to partially or fully disrobe.
- Any activity that occurs without the presence of an approved sponsor.

Category THREE: These actions may result in any sanctions from Category one or two, as well as an individual's suspension or dismissal from the University for one or more semesters, including indefinitely, and the suspension of an entire organization for one or more years. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Any activity which creates significant emotional trauma.
- Any physical abuse such as paddling, striking, whipping, shoving, electric shock, branding, or burning.
- Any physical abuse that forces provisional/new members into eating or drinking anything or placing any foreign object in any orifice of the body.
- Any requirement to endure environments that create extreme physical or emotional discomfort or endanger physical safety.
- Any "dogging", abandoning, binding, or confining.
- Any failure to comply with the directives of a sponsor or any university official.
- *Any activity which involves members hinting, suggesting, urging, etc. that a potential new member(s) perform some type of action that is a violation of law and/or university Code of Conduct.

For additional information regarding hazing, please visit www.stophazing.org.

Fine List:

- **Due dates** - Any items that are required to be turned into Student Life and they have a due date assigned to them, **MUST** be turned in by the due date or the organization may be assessed a fine of.....\$25 per day late.
- **Unsanctioned events** - If it is deemed that an event was not approved by the Senior Coordinator for Fraternities and Sororities AND submitted and approved into EVM the organization may be assessed a fine of.....\$100/event.
- **Lack of sponsor attendance** - If an organization fails to have at least one sponsor present at their events they may be assessed a fine of.....\$100/event.

- **Category 2 and 3** - If an organization has an offense against their organization that fits into the Categories of Student Conduct Violations that is in the Category of 2 or 3, the organization may be assessed a fine of.....\$100/offense.
- **Curfew Violations during NMO Activities** - If a group does not abide by the number of hours allowed or breaks a curfew during the NMO period, the group may be assessed a fine of.....\$50/offense.
- **NMO Activities during Academics** - If a group is requiring the PNMs to participate in NMO activities during academic class time, the group may be assessed a fine of.....\$100/offense.
- **NMO activities during Spiritual Formation** - If a group is requiring their PNMs to participate in NMO activities during Chapel, the group may be assessed a fine of.....\$100/offense.
- **Student Life Meetings/Officers Chapel** - If a group does not have at least one representative from their organization in attendance at all Student Life meetings or Officers Chapel, they may be assessed a fine of.....\$50/meeting.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Any questions or clarifications may be directed to the Student Engagement Office.
 McGlothlin Campus Center - Robin McPherson, M.S.
 Office # 27 ACU Box 27867 325-674-6818 (office)

GLOSSARY OF NEW TERMS:

PNM - This stands for Potential New Member. This status applies to the student from the time they register to rush and join online, until they are inducted into their organization at the end of the New Member Orientation period.

New Member - This is a student that HAS completed the New Member Orientation and has been inducted into the organization. (has been inducted)

Member - This is a student that HAS completed all the necessary first year requirements to become a full member of their particular organization. (has completed all requirements)

Rushee - This is a student that is going through the process of rushing, by attending at least two different organization's rushes.

Joining - This is the verb form of "going through" or "completing" the New Member Orientation process. (This term takes the place of "pledging")

New Member Orientation - This is the two week process of going through the activities that each individual organization has gotten approved by Student Life, to complete with the provisional members.

Rushes - also called recruitment in order to meet with all organizations on campus.

Bid - This is what you receive in order to become a member of an organization.

Snap Bid - If you do not receive a bid from your preferred organization, this gives you a chance to join a different organization.

Ranking - This is what you will do when you put ALL the organizations in a numerical rank order, the way you would accept a bid from them. ie. 1 - 6 or 1 - 7.

Informational Meetings - PNMs MUST attend one of the four Informational Meetings in October in order to be eligible to participate.

Socials/Grubs/Formals - Dress up social events where you eat and have awards ceremonies, photo opps, and meet with your organization and bring a friend or date.