

Continuing Excellence – Enhancing the *Standards of Excellence*



Academic Standard

vision statement*: We envision organizations that support and encourage individuals to achieve their personal academic best while collectively achieving an overall Greek grade point average that consistently exceeds the all-undergraduate average.

definition: The Academic standard reinforces the scholastic principles of sororities and fraternities and connects organizations' purposes to the academic mission of the University. The sorority and fraternity community at The Ohio State University is committed to promoting high academic standards in the selection and development of its members.

Chapter Responsibilities:

1. To be a new member (pledge) or participate in intake, students at The Ohio State University must have a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.50 in at least 12 earned college or university credit hours. Proficiency or examination (EM) credits do not qualify. Students already initiated into a national/international organization may immediately affiliate with that group.
2. Requests for exceptions to the minimum academic requirements for new members must be made, in writing, to Sorority and Fraternity Life before new members are selected. Exceptions may be made for organizations who recruit their members in manners different from the traditional fraternity/ sorority recruitment models.
3. The University supports organizations that may have more stringent academic standards for membership and will assist in maintaining their standards.
4. The semester GPA for each chapter (new members and initiated members) must meet or exceed the Columbus Campus all-undergraduate average of the same academic semester. Chapters below the all-undergraduate average must improve their semester average by any amount over the previous semester until they reach that standard.
5. Chapters failing to meet or exceed the semester all-undergraduate GPA will be given two academic semesters (excluding summer) to meet that goal. Those failing to meet the goal or to show steady, significant progress toward that goal within the two-semester grace period will be referred to the Greek Progress Review Board.

6. Chapters failing to achieve a 2.50 GPA for the previous semester must arrange a meeting with a staff representative of Sorority and Fraternity Life. The chapter must present a plan assessing current practices and a plan for improvement.

University Responsibilities:

1. A staff representative of Sorority and Fraternity Life will (ensure Alumni Advisors/ Chapter Advocates) meet each semester with officers of each chapter that failed to achieve a 2.50 semester chapter GPA for the previous semester to review the officers' plan to improve chapter grades.
2. The University will share the Plan for Academic Improvement with chapters prior to chapters falling below the standard. The improvement document will contain academic success tips, resources on campus, best practices from the Greek community and a model for the improvement plan to be submitted when meeting with a staff representative of Sorority and Fraternity Life.
3. The Greek Progress Review Board may request a meeting with chapter leadership if a chapter's semester GPA decreases in any two consecutive semesters.
4. Sorority and Fraternity Life will provide training at an annual officer training conference each year and upon request provide specific academic training and resources for chapter academic chairs, officers and advisors. Sorority and Fraternity Life will provide resources of various offices on campus to assist with academic development.

Individual Responsibilities:

1. Members should maintain a 2.50 cumulative GPA. If a member falls below 2.50 GPA, the student should meet with a chapter advisor and discuss a plan to improve. If a member falls below a cumulative 2.25 GPA, the student should meet a defined list of required items (whether inactive or not). Items may include but are not limited to:
 - Meeting with academic support services at the Younkin Success Center
 - Study skills courses
 - Mid term report or bi-weekly progress reports back to chapter advisor
 - Meeting with academic advisor
 - Active participation in study tables
 - Members should show consistent improvement to remain members within chapter.
2. Chapter Officers should maintain a 2.50 cumulative GPA. If an officer cannot raise their GPA to the needed level in one semester, the officer shall be removed from the position.

Advisors and Alumni Standard

vision statement*: We envision advisors (alumni and university faculty/staff) who are recruited from a broad base; who are experienced and involved; and who are educated, supported, and recognized for their service.

definition: Advisors and alumni play a key role in the growth and prosperity of the sorority and fraternity community at The Ohio State University. Advisors guide chapter operations, advocate for mature and responsible behavior, and foster leadership development for chapter members. Through advisors and alumni, sorority and fraternity members understand their lifetime commitment to their organization.

Chapter Responsibilities:

1. Each chapter must select at least two advisors. At least one of the two must be a member of the university staff or faculty (Chapter Advocate), though that person need not be a member of the organization he/she advises. Unaffiliated advisors need not be a part of private/ritual events.
2. Advisors and Chapter Advocates must be at least three years removed from their undergraduate graduation, and they must live within one hour of the Columbus campus. Sorority and Fraternity Life must approve exceptions.
3. The Chapter Advisor and Chapter Advocate must review and approve the Annual Chapter Plan and Annual Chapter Report.
4. A minimum of two advisors from each group are encouraged to complete the University's Chapter Advisor's Certification Program. It is mandatory that at least one advisor or Chapter Advocate completes the training.
5. All advisors and Chapter Advocates are encouraged to obtain and regularly check an e-mail account to which the majority of university correspondence may be sent.

University Responsibilities:

1. A Chapter Advisor's Certification Program will be provided through the university that will inform advisors and University Chapter Advocates of common issues and concerns and identify available resources.
2. The university will assist chapters in identifying advisors, particularly among the faculty and staff. A list will be available with Sorority and Fraternity Life to identify faculty and staff members who are affiliated with Greek-letter organizations.

3. The university will facilitate a temporary name dot number to log on to Sorority and Fraternity Life's back end system of the website to review all reports and pertinent information of chapters, thereby improving timely communication. This temporary name dot number must be renewed annually for Student Life Information Technology Department.

Citizenship

This standard was formerly known as the "Community Service" standard.

The committee recommended "Citizenship" as it more accurately reflects a person's active role and responsibility in serving their surrounding community. The name also more closely aligns with the University motto, "Educating for Citizenship."

vision statement*:We envision a Greek community that recognizes the value and significance of connecting to the larger community, that develops a strong sense of community through service and philanthropic efforts to serve the needs of others, and that instills a spirit of citizenship and responsibility among members.

definition: The Ohio State University is committed to fostering a sense of citizenship for the common good. One of the hallmarks of citizenship is community service. The sorority and fraternity community at The Ohio State University exemplifies the highest principles of our University by committing ourselves to hands-on community service and encouraging an environment where each chapter can give its members the opportunity to serve the greater community.

In addition to hands-on community service, chapters are encouraged to participate in philanthropic activities and report donations to the Ohio Union. It is highly recommended that chapters complete hands-on community service related to philanthropic efforts.

Chapter Responsibilities:

1. Chapters must sponsor or participate in at least one hands-on community service event per year. At least 75% of chapter membership must participate in chapter planned/promoted hands-on service throughout the course of the year. Chapters can complete this requirement in multiple experiences if necessary. A summary of the activity/activities, including objectives, statistics, and outcomes must be provided on an annual basis, including contact information for the coordinating service agency. A letter of documentation from the volunteering agency is highly recommended.

2. Individual members of sororities and fraternities are expected to participate in at least five (5) hours of hands-on community service each year in a project of their choice in addition to the chapter group service requirements. A list of individual members' service will be provided to Sorority and Fraternity Life on an annual basis.

3. Each chapter is expected to elect or appoint at least one person as the service chair. Chapters will provide contact information for this individual on a semester basis. The service chair is encouraged to attend a service training session during the annual officer training conference.

University Responsibilities:

1. Student Life will maintain a database of opportunities and contact information to assist chapters in finding community service projects through the Pay It Forward website payitforward.osu.edu.
2. Sorority and Fraternity Life will offer at least annually a training session for all officers and community service chairs, including strategies for successful completion and processing of service projects.
3. Sorority and Fraternity Life will encourage chapter reflection, chapter generated service events, and participation in other chapters', campus-based and community service events through marketing support, technological support, and leadership training.

Diversity Commitment

*The Diversity Committee proposed changing the name of the "Diversity Education Standard" to the "Diversity Commitment Standard." The committee's intent is that members not only become educated on issues of diversity, but commit to act and change behavior based on what that member has learned.

vision statement*:We envision a sorority and fraternity community that recognizes that all individuals and ideas have value.

definition: The Diversity Commitment Standard at The Ohio State University promotes opportunities for sororities and fraternities to fulfill the institutional mission and core value to "celebrate and learn from our diversity." Addressing issues of diversity and learning about one's own personal and group identity provides a unique opportunity for sororities and fraternities on the campus of The Ohio State University to prepare chapter members to lead in an increasingly diverse world. Through mutual promotion of diversity by students, faculty and staff in conjunction with the Diversity Commitment standard, The Ohio State University community can truly learn about and from one another.

Chapter Responsibilities:

1. Each chapter will educate its members on issues related to diverse populations identified by ethnicity, race, religious preference, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.

2. During the *Standards of Excellence* year, 75% of the membership of each chapter, as a group, must participate in at least one diversity-oriented program or event per semester. Chapters can complete this requirement in multiple experiences if necessary. Qualifying programs will focus on a diversity topic other than one central to the organization (e.g. A sorority attending a women's program would not necessarily meet the diversity requirement). Clarifications should be sought from Sorority and Fraternity Life. A summary of the event and explanation of outcomes must be included in the Chapter Report.

University Responsibilities:

1. The University will provide lectures, programs and events open to all chapters that satisfy the requirement for educational sessions.
2. The University will provide additional opportunities to promote the discussion of topics on diversity.

Housing Standard

*The Housing Standard is a new standard, but the idea is not new to the community. The previous recommendation in 2001 provided recommendations for housing and a University commitment statement. In a time when many facilities are reaching critical safety points and competing with off-campus housing, it was deemed necessary to have minimum requirements to ensure that sorority and fraternity living environments stay competitive within the off-campus community and promote the health and safety of members.

vision statement*: We envision clean, safe, and adequate housing that would be acceptable to family or guests 24 hours a day and that would support the academic mission of the University. We envision that each chapter with a facility will have a trained live-in advisor.

definition: The Housing Standard was established to create a collaborative relationship between the sorority and fraternity community and The Ohio State University to promote a positive living, learning environment.

Chapter Responsibilities:

1. Sororities and fraternities who own or manage a chapter facility should provide a copy of an up-to-date rooming license and inspection notice annually.
2. Each chapter must attend or sponsor at least one program on potential risks related to their living environment. This session should be attended by at least 75% of the chapter's total membership once an academic year. Chapters can complete this requirement in multiple experiences if necessary. Potential topics include, but are not limited to fire safety, crime prevention, food safety, roommate relations, and personal safety (including internet safety).

3. Additional standards exist for chapters choosing to allow sophomores to live in the chapter facility. Please refer to the Greek Housing Standard document for additional clarification, it is not a requirement, but all chapters are encouraged to explore this option to allow second year students to meet the second year live on requirement.

University Responsibilities:

1. The University should host bi-annually an educational session on food licensure, fire, and rooming house codes to be attended by a representative from individual house corporations and chapter leadership (e.g. president, house manager, etc.).
2. The University will provide additional information and programming as it relates to crime to:
 - a. Encourage students to report crimes to Columbus and University Police
 - b. Establish a formal communication network to report crimes to organizations
 - c. Encourage chapters to participate in the neighborhood watch such as the Buckeye Block Watch with Student Life's Off-Campus and Commuter Student Engagement and Neighborhood Services and Collaboration.
 - d. Establish a reporting structure for Student Life to monitor crime trends.
3. The University is committed to assisting chapters who are at risk of losing their chapter facility.
4. The University shall sponsor annually an opportunity to share information with the Fraternity Managers Association, sorority and fraternity members, alumni, and The Ohio State University members.

Recruitment Standard

vision statement*: We envision recruitment based on quality while maintaining retention through involvement.

definition: The Recruitment Standard provides guidelines to promote the growth of the sorority and fraternity community through values-based recruitment. Through thoughtful planning, promoting positive benefits of membership, and regular reflection of recruitment activities, sororities and fraternities are better able to recruit quality members that add to the reputation of The Ohio State University sorority and fraternity community.

Chapter Responsibilities:

1. As part of its comprehensive chapter plan each chapter, in consultation with its advisors, will set a realistic goal for the ideal size of its membership by the end of the year as acknowledged by the advisor. NPC affiliated groups may continue to follow total guidelines.
2. A uniform membership size would be unrealistic to apply to all groups, particularly the NPHC and MCGC groups.

3. To help meet chapter goals, chapters must submit a yearly recruitment plan, new member intake guidelines and new member education plans and calendar as part of the Chapter Plan and semester progress reports to Sorority and Fraternity Life.

4. Chapter goals must be consistent with the chapter's national/international policies.

University Responsibilities:

1. The staff of Sorority and Fraternity Life will help facilitate communication with unaffiliated students, develop public relations and informational programs through inter-Greek organizations, register interested students, articulate expectations of membership, and coordinate recruitment activities.

2. The Office of Student Life staff, especially Sorority and Fraternity Life staff, will assist chapters in understanding their role within the University community and in forming relationships with the rest of the University. As sorority and fraternity communities across the country struggle to prove relevancy on today's college campus, the committee feels strongly that the University should help sorority and fraternity members understand their role in supplementing the institutional goals and mission.

3. Sorority and Fraternity Life staff will aid in achieving chapter goals through consultation and evaluation of submitted recruitment reports. The committee felt that an evaluation process of each chapter's recruitment report by a University official will provide accountability to the University and help chapters identify resources that assist fulfilling chapter recruitment goals.

Safety, Health, Wellness

*The Safety, Health, & Wellness Standard replaces the former Risk Management Standard. The committee felt that chapters should address holistic aspects of risk assessment that were overlooked in the previous standard.

vision statement*:We envision a safe organizational environment in which individuals exhibit responsible behavior while maintaining healthy surroundings.

definition: The Safety, Health & Wellness Standard provides support to the sorority and fraternity community at The Ohio State University to empower individual chapters to assess potential risks within the chapter, to plan proactively to educate members on their holistic development, and establish responsibility and accountability for the success of our community. Through mutual support of students, faculty, staff, and alumni, the Safety, Health & Wellness Standard will establish a sense of pride within the community to ensure that individual members will have a positive, developmental and safe sorority and fraternity experience.

Chapter Responsibilities:

1. At least once per semester, chapters must participate in and/or coordinate for their chapter an educational session addressing the safety, health, or wellness of their chapter and its members where at least 75% of the chapter is present. Chapters can complete this requirement in multiple experiences if necessary. Chapters can complete this requirement in multiple experiences if desired. A summary of the program should be completed each semester and be included in the Chapter's Annual Report.

2. Chapters must report all new members to Sorority and Fraternity Life within 3-10 days of the new member accepting an invitation to join. Updates to new member classes should be reported to Sorority and Fraternity Life within 24 hours of changes made. All new members must agree to all of the membership expectations including anti-hazing policies via the on-line registration system.

3. Chapters must initiate new members in the same semester in which their bid to membership was offered. Chapter new member/membership intake processes may not exceed 8 weeks unless required by (inter)national organization.

4. In the risk management portion of the Chapter Plan, chapters will be encouraged to identify potential risks within the chapter and address the larger issues of risk management. Potential educational programs should be discussed in relation to how they can help educate members and reduce potential risks within the chapter.

5. All social functions must be registered regardless of council affiliation with the Sorority and Fraternity Life with a copy sent to the chapter advisor at least five business days prior to the event. This does not supersede the need to register social functions with other entities (e.g. headquarters or governing bodies).

6. Chapters must submit an annual Anti-Hazing form that verifies that the chapter has discussed the anti-hazing policies with its membership.

University Responsibilities:

1. Letters from Sorority and Fraternity Life detailing the benefits of sorority and fraternity membership as well as legal information about hazing and alcohol policies will be sent to parents/guardians of new members within one month of the beginning of a new member process.

2. Sorority and Fraternity Life will regularly provide or co-sponsor lectures and presentations for chapters to satisfy the requirement for quarterly educational sessions. These presentations will be made on the major risk management issues of sexual abuse, alcohol and other drug abuse, and hazing. Sorority and Fraternity Life will help organizations identify resources and offices on campus to help fulfill the requirement.

Fiscal Responsibility Standard

vision statement*: We envision chapters that responsibly self-manage the chapter's fiscal operations, while receiving guidance and support from advisors and the university where necessary.

definition: The goal of the Fiscal Responsibility Standard is to ensure that sororities and fraternities maintain good financial standing with its partners, balance expenditures with income, and hold members accountable to the financial responsibility of sorority and fraternity membership. It is not the intention of the standard to control the financial operations of individual chapters, rather to offer assistance to and promote accountability of chapter finances.

Chapter Responsibilities:

1. The treasurer and executive officers are to prepare a balanced chapter budget each semester, to be approved by the chapter or financial advisor and the chapter executive board.
2. Chapters will submit financial information within the Chapter Plan, the Annual Chapter Report, and semester fiscal reports. This information is to be provided to the chapter advisor as well. Unless University money has been allocated to the chapter (Council on Student Affairs, for example), no audit will be required.
3. The chapter must strictly enforce financial discipline as prescribed by the chapter's constitution & bylaws, or as mandated by their national/ international organization.
4. The chapter must pay its bills due to the respective Greek council (IFC/ PHA/NPHC/MCGC), the University, and all other agencies on time. Failure to pay the respective Greek council will result in a hearing with the Joint Council Judicial Board.

University Responsibilities:

1. If a chapter's executive officers and advisors cannot attest to the chapter's financial well being, the Greek Progress Review Board will request a meeting with the chapter in order to help resolve the issue.
2. At the request of the chapter, Sorority and Fraternity Life may serve as a resource for the resolution of the chapter's financial issues. Chapters will be provided treasurer and budget training at the annual officer training conference.
3. When asked, the university will provide chapters with financial consulting advice. Sorority and Fraternity Life will facilitate this process.