

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT BUFFALO  
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

POLICY AND OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR  
SOCIAL FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS

The University at Buffalo recognizes that organized student life programs are a valuable part of the student educational environment. Recognized student organizations further the University's educational mission. The organizations must encourage academic excellence, self-governance, university, community service, and offer opportunities for leadership and service with mutual respect for others. Social fraternal organizations are a recognized component of student life. These groups are responsible for making positive contributions to the primary educational mission of the University and are expected to encourage intellectual and social development of members. In addition, these groups are expected to complement the University's mission and to comply with campus policies, rules and regulations, as well as federal, state, and local laws.

POLICES AND GUIDELINES

I. Social Fraternal Organizations

Social fraternal organizations are defined as student groups whose primary concern is the personal, intellectual, and social development of members. This can be developed through planned social, educational, and service programs. These groups may be fraternities, sororities, or co-educational, and may be local, regional, or national in nature.

II. Governance of Social Fraternal Organizations

A. Associate Vice President for Student Life

The Associate Vice President for Student Life, or designee, is responsible for all matters related to the establishment and functioning of social fraternal organizations, including the implementation of these guidelines. The Associate Vice President for Student Life shall designate a member of the University staff to serve as a liaison between fraternal social organizations and the University.

B. Greek Life Advisory Committee

A Greek Life Advisory Committee may be appointed by the Associate Vice President for Student Life. This advisory committee consists of at least four members (one of which is Assistant Director for Fraternity & Sorority Life (University's liaison) and at least one fraternity/sorority member student) and has the following charges:

1. Assist with the promotion of Greek Life at the University at Buffalo.
2. Oversee the activities of social fraternal organizations, the Inter-Greek Council (IGC), related organizations, and make recommendations to the Associate Vice President for Student Life.
3. Adjudicate appeals of IGC decisions and make recommendations to the Associate Vice President for Student Life as requested.
4. Recommend to the Associate Vice President for Student Life appropriate responses to alleged rules and regulations violations by social fraternal organizations and members.
5. Recommend to the Associate Vice President for Student Life the

granting of term, temporary or interest group recognition status for social fraternal organizations in accordance with these guidelines.

C. Inter-Greek Council (IGC)

There shall be an Inter-Greek Council composed of representatives of all term recognized social fraternal organizations. The Associate Vice President for Student Life, or designee, shall be an ex-officio member of the council. Representatives to the council and other officers shall be determined in accordance with its own constitution and by-laws. The council may not operate until its constitution and by-laws have been accepted by the Associate Vice President for Student Life. Proposed amendments to the IGC Constitution and By-laws must be approved by the Associate Vice President for Student Life before becoming effective. IGC actions may be appealed to the Associate Vice President for Student Life, or designee or Greek Life Advisory Committee (GLAC). Additional governance councils may also be recognized by the Associate Vice President for Student Life, including both national councils and campus sub-councils. National councils include, but are not limited to the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC), National Panhellenic Conference (NPC), North-American Interfraternity Conference (NIC), National Association of Latino Fraternal Organizations (NALFO), National Multicultural Greek Council (NMGC) and the National APIA Panhellenic Association (NAPA). Institutional sub-councils include the Inter-Fraternity Council (IFC), Panhel (UB Panhellenic Council), United Council of Cultural Fraternities and Sororities (UCCFS), and others as deemed appropriate.

III. Statement of General Policy

- A. The University seeks to promote maximum flexibility and autonomy for social fraternal organizations as important student groups. Compliance by these organizations with University policies, rules, regulations, and guidelines will allow each group to remain in good standing with the University at Buffalo. Failure to comply may result in the loss of privileges until matters are properly adjudicated. The University may take appropriate administrative or disciplinary legal action against offending group(s) and individual(s). The Associate Vice President for Student Life may establish judicial procedures and bodies to adjudicate cases involving councils, organizations, or member misconduct. Judicial decisions may be appealed to the Associate Vice President for Student Life or designee.
- B. Social fraternal organizations are responsible for conduct consistent with the University's "Student Conduct Rules, University Standards, and Administrative Regulations" and other university regulations. Allegations of violations by a fraternal organization shall be referred to the Associate Vice President for Student Life, designee, or designated body for review and adjudication.
- C. No Social fraternal organization shall be recognized or permitted to remain on campus if its constitution, rules, regulations, or practices deny membership to any person on the basis of race, creed, national origin, age, disability, or sexual orientation.
- D. In order to function with University facilities and services, a social fraternal organization must be recognized by the University. Recognition is granted by the Associate Vice President for Student Life, or designee.
- E. All recognized social fraternal organizations must re-register annually with the office of the Assistant Director for Fraternity & Sorority Life. Annual registration must include a fully executed "Statement of Compliance" and

rosters of names, addresses, and student personal identification (eight digit) number of members and officers. Rosters will be used to verify academic eligibility. Officer information may be used for directory information purposes. In addition, a brief statement signed by a University at Buffalo faculty or staff member serving as an advisor, indicating a willingness to serve for the year and a statement from an affiliated national organization, if appropriate, indicating that the campus chapter is in “good standing” must be included as well. A review of the previous year’s activities and plans for the current year must also be provided.

- F. Social fraternal organizations shall open their membership to regularly enrolled full-time University at Buffalo students. Invitations for membership may be extended to students who have a minimum GPA of 2.5 and at least 12 earned college credits. Members and prospective members who have completed a semester or more at UB or transferred to UB with credits must have and maintain good academic standing.
- G. Social fraternal organizations and governance councils shall have uniform terms of office for leaders as designated by the Assistant Director for Fraternity & Sorority Life to promote orderly transitions and improved program effectiveness. Exceptions based on national organization requirements may be requested from the Associate Vice President for Student Life or designee.
- H. Social fraternal organizations shall conduct annual educational programs on such topics as substance abuse, hazing, non-discrimination, and sexual harassment. Governance council and organization leaders will participate in other training programs as well.
- I. Rules and new member education periods will be designated by the Assistant Director for Fraternity & Sorority Life. No more than three (3) weeks of recruitment activities will be authorized (one week planning and promotion and two (2) weeks of activities), unless an extended period is approved by the Associate Vice President for Student Life, or designee, based on a request from the governance leadership. Such a request for extension will be considered for organizations that, after making a good faith effort, fail to meet reasonable new member levels. Extended recruitment periods will be limited in duration. No more than six (6) weeks of new member education program activities; will be permitted unless an exception, based on a national organization requirement, is granted by the Associate Vice President for Student Life, or designee. In addition, all new members must attend a University-sponsored information session before pledging.
- J. Organizations with “city” or regional charters and memberships may be recognized, but must meet UB guidelines.

#### IV. Responsibilities of Social Fraternal Organizations

- A. Recognition of social fraternal organizations shall not be construed as agreement, support, or approval by the University, but only as recognition of the rights of the organization to exist at the University, subject to established conditions. Recognized fraternal organizations may only use the name of the University to indicate location, not endorsement. Use of the University name and symbols is subject to conditions established by the University.
- B. Each fraternal organization is required to exercise responsible management and financial integrity. Each organization will be solely responsible for its own financial, legal, and contractual obligations. The University assumes no responsibility for such actions. Organizations exercising selective membership

are not eligible to apply for use of mandatory student activities fees.

- C. New York State law and University policy prohibits student organizations from hazing, pre-initiation activities, or other pseudo-initiation practices that may cause mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule. It is the responsibility of each member to understand the law and policy and to adopt and implement healthy and constructive new member education programs in compliance with these regulations.

V. Recognition Procedures

A. Interest Group Status

- 1. Upon completion and submission of the required paperwork, an eligible group will be designated as an Interest Group and begin the recognition process. The group must consist of at least ten (10) students and each member must have at least a 2.5 GPA and have at least 12 earned college credits.
- 2. The group will make arrangements with their prospective sub-council to do their presentation for acceptance. This presentation will consist of a ten (10) minute presentation about the organization, membership and past activities. This presentation will be followed by up to ten (10) minutes of Questions and Answers from the Term-Recognized and Temporarily-Recognized organizations present. After the completion of Q&A, the group will be excused and the Term-Recognized organizations will vote on acceptance. An affirmative majority vote is needed for acceptance into the council and Temporary-Recognition status. (UB Panhellenic note: only the NPC organizations are permitted to vote on expansion.)

B. Temporary Recognition

- 1. Recognition procedures shall be essentially the same for a local organization or a chapter of a national organization.
- 2. Student groups desiring University Recognition must submit to the Assistant Director for Fraternity & Sorority Life an application for Temporary Recognition as a Fraternal Organization. This application shall include a:
  - a. Letter from national office stating the group's goals and purposes or a statement by the local group on its purposes and goals.
  - b. Statement explaining why the group is needed and desirable.
  - c. List of the names and local addresses, telephone numbers, and student 8-digit UB person numbers of all UB members and officers (a valid roster of ten (10) students is required).
  - d. Statement of Compliance signed by the group president indicating understanding and intent to abide by University rules, policies, and regulations, and these guidelines.
- 3. After appropriate consideration, the Assistant Director for Fraternity & Sorority Life may approve or reject the application of temporary recognition providing appropriate reasoning to applicant. If approved,

temporary recognition shall be for a maximum of one calendar year. If denied, a group may reapply in subsequent semesters, or appeal the decision to the Director of Student Life or appropriate designee.

4. Social fraternal organizations with temporary recognition may operate on campus and recruitment, educate and initiate new members. Attendance at Inter-Greek Council meetings is encouraged, although a temporarily recognized organization does not have a governance council vote. Participation in Inter-Greek activities shall be by IGC invitation.
5. The Assistant Director for Fraternity & Sorority Life, or designee, shall notify the Inter-Greek Council when a group is given temporary recognition.

C. Term Recognition

1. A temporarily recognized social fraternal organization may submit an Application for Term Recognition to the office of the Associate Vice President for Student Life.
2. The application for Term Recognition shall include:
  - a. A statement of purposes, goals, and membership requirements.
  - b. A list of names, addresses, telephone and student 8-digit UB person numbers of the group and officers (valid roster of ten (10) UB students is required).
  - c. A UB faculty or staff member statement indicating willingness to serve as an advisor.
  - d. An outline of community service, scholarship, and social programs undertaken during the period of temporary recognition, as well as plans for the future.
  - e. The proposed constitution, by-laws, and other articles of governance.
3. The Associate Vice President for Student Life, or designee, shall notify the petitioning group of term recognition approval or denial. If granted, the new social fraternal organization will immediately become a voting member of the Inter-Greek Council. If denied term recognition, the petitioning group may request a continuation of temporary recognition status for a maximum of four months, during which they may reapply for term status. If their application is denied again, the group's recognition is terminated. One calendar year must elapse before reapplying for temporary recognition.
4. Term recognition shall be granted for a four-year period subject to compliance with policies, procedures, rules, and re-registration. Term recognition is renewable, subject to procedures established by the Associate Vice President for Student Life or designee.

D. Affiliate Group Status

Local chapters with national affiliation that no longer have or have not reached the minimum number of members for Interest Group status, shall be identified as affiliate organizations signifying their legitimate

relationship with the University but indicating that their size restricts them from progression to Interest Group, temporary or term recognition status. It is in the best interest of the University to maintain a relationship with these organizations, rather than to sever the tie and allow them to go underground until sufficient size is reached.

E. Local fraternities and sororities

In 2008, the University ceased recognizing new local fraternities and sororities. Those with recognition at that time were permitted to remain as long as they are in good standing.

*Revised: January 2016*