

## Chapter 8: Policies for Social Fraternities and Sororities

### Definition of Social Fraternities and Sororities

Social fraternities and sororities (women's fraternities) are student organizations whose primary purpose is the personal development of their members, as distinguished from honorary, professional, departmental and service fraternities. Some social fraternities and sororities are culturally and/or community based. Social fraternities and sororities may select members according to subjective criteria consistent with the University's nondiscrimination policies. Social fraternities and sororities are entitled to single-gender membership, provided they qualify under the provision of Section 86.14 of the regulations promulgated under Title IX of the U.S. Education Act of 1972.

### Greek Governing/Coordinating Council

All social fraternities and sororities must affiliate with a Greek governing/coordinating council recognized by Fraternity and Sorority Life. Current councils are:

1. **Interfraternity Council (IFC)** – Governing/coordinating council for general national fraternities
2. **Panhellenic Association** – Governing/coordinating council for sororities that are members of the National Panhellenic Conference
3. **United Sorority and Fraternity Council (USFC)** – Governing/coordinating council for culturally-based fraternities and sororities

4. **National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC)** –Governing/coordinating council for the historically African-American fraternities and sororities that are affiliated nationally with the NPHC.

### Membership Requirements, Rosters and Auxiliary Organizations

No social fraternity or sorority may pledge (associate) or initiate any individual who is not matriculated and regularly enrolled for credit in at least three units at San Diego State University or any student who is not in good academic standing (academic probation at SDSU). A student who is taking only Extended Studies or Open University classes is not considered to be a regularly enrolled SDSU student.

All active initiates must be regularly enrolled in three or more units at San Diego State University. A chapter may, however, grant local affiliation privileges to qualified individuals. To qualify for local affiliation, an individual must be an initiated member of the fraternity/sorority and be attending San Diego State University or another college or university in the San Diego area. Students who have been suspended or expelled from San Diego State University for disciplinary reasons are not eligible. Local affiliates may participate in chapter functions, but they shall not be eligible to hold office. The Greek governing/coordinating councils may restrict the participation of local affiliates in official council functions. Local affiliates shall not participate in the SDSU intramural sports program.

As provided by federal law, a social fraternity or sorority may elect to restrict its membership to one gender or may offer membership to either gender. A fraternity or sorority that restricts membership to a single gender may not, however, sponsor an auxiliary organization or activity for members of the opposite gender which

connotes membership of any kind in their organization (e.g., “little sisters,” “sweethearts,” etc.) other than full membership as ascribed by their local and/or (inter)national constitution and bylaws. Fraternity/sorority activities which shall be considered evidence that a group of students who are members of the opposite gender are operating as an auxiliary organization include, but are not limited to, membership recruitment/rush, group meetings, collection of dues, group officers, inclusion on chapter composites, etc. Mentorship programs which do not include any type of membership privileges are not included in this prohibition.

Chapters shall update their official rosters maintained by Fraternity and Sorority Life by the end of the fourth week of each semester and changes as they occur. The roster shall include the names of any local affiliates.

### **National Charters**

Prior to chartering, each chapter with a national/ international affiliation must submit a copy of the national/international organization’s governing documents or make them available for inspection by Centers for Fraternity and Sorority Life staff upon request and shall promptly submit any changes to the national/international organization’s membership requirements as they occur.

Each chartered organization must remain in good standing with the national/international fraternity/sorority. If a chapter’s official recognition is revoked, the University will request that the national/international organization withdraw the charter from the local chapter.

### **Chapter Advisors**

Each social fraternity and sorority shall have a primary chapter advisor or advisory board. The chapter advisor may be their required faculty/staff advisor (refer to Student Organization Advisors section) or an appointed alumni/graduate advisor.

The chapter advisor or advisory board, or faculty/staff advisor shall:

1. Meet regularly with chapter officers.
2. Be familiar with University policies governing social fraternities and sororities and ensure that the chapter complies with such policies.
3. Regularly review chapter finances.
4. Review the chapter’s new member development program and ensure that no chapter activities involve hazing in any form.
5. Assist University officials in dealing with problems or other situations involving the chapter.
6. Attend periodic chapter advisor meetings.

### **Standards of Excellence**

Chapters shall submit a Standards of Excellence annual evaluation by June 15 of each year and must attain the required score specified in the program guidelines in order to maintain official recognition. The guidelines are available on the SDSU Fraternity and Sorority Life Web site ([www.greeklife.sdsu.edu](http://www.greeklife.sdsu.edu)). The guidelines specify minimum standards that newly-formed chapters must meet prior to being granted provisional recognition and minimum standards that provisional chapters must comply with during their first semester or first sixteen weeks.

## **Chapter-Related Facilities**

### **Definition of Chapter House**

Some social fraternities and sororities operate a chapter house. A facility is considered to be a chapter house if it meets at least two of the criteria below:

1. Organizational functions, meetings, events, and/or offices are located at the chapter house.
2. The house is owned or leased by the organization.
3. Advertisements indicate that the house is the main gathering location for the organization.
4. There are letters or signage indicating that the organization functions in or at the house.

Any event or activity held on chapter property or chapter-related facilities shall be deemed to be chapter-related for the purposes of the policies contained in this handbook. For Fraternity Row, chapter-related facilities include the chapter house, the courtyard, hallways and other common areas, and all apartments leased to members of the fraternity.

### **Zoning Requirements**

Chapters that operate a chapter house are expected to adhere to local zoning ordinances and, where required, must obtain a Conditional Use Permit from the City of San Diego and must adhere to the requirements therein. The City restricts the location of new fraternity and sorority chapter houses to designated areas. The fraternity-designated area includes the western portions of Hardy Avenue and Lindo Paseo Avenue. The sorority designated area includes College Place, College Avenue approximately one block south of Montezuma Road, and the 5700 – 6100 blocks of Montezuma Road.

### **Fire Inspections**

Each chapter that operates a chapter house shall pass an annual fire inspection conducted by the City of San Diego Fire Department. Each chapter house must be equipped with fire/smoke detectors in all living areas.

### **Maintenance of Chapter Facilities**

Social fraternities and sororities that operate a chapter house are required to maintain safe and sanitary physical conditions in the chapter house in accordance with University, state, and local regulations, and provide a comfortable home for the members of the chapter and maintain it in keeping with general standards of good housekeeping and exterior upkeep characteristic of the campus and residential neighborhood environment.

This includes:

1. Front yard kept clean and maintained - grass cut, bushes trimmed, free of litter or debris).
2. Visible backyard neatly maintained.
3. Trash cans and dumpster area keep clean - enclosed or contained, out of the way of general traffic, lids kept down.
4. Sidewalk and parking area clear and clean of debris.
5. No visible furniture or debris on the roof or around the exterior of the house.
6. Structure of house properly maintained - no peeling paint, no broken windows, neat overall

exterior appearance, free of graffiti.

7. General street vicinity of fraternity house kept neat - curb area clean of cups, cans, boxes, clutter, etc.
8. No towels, laundry or other objects hanging out of windows.

Exterior banners and signs shall be in good taste appropriate for a residential neighborhood (e.g., no sexual innuendos) and shall not include any advertisement of alcoholic beverages or liquor stores.

Furniture and gatherings of individuals on chapter house roofs is prohibited.

### **Noise and Neighbor Relations**

All chapters are expected to cooperate with the University administration and the Greek governing councils in building and maintaining constructive community relationships with neighbors in the surrounding residential area. All chapters are required to adhere to City of San Diego noise ordinances and the stipulations of noise permits issued pursuant to noise variances issued by the City to their respective Greek governing councils. The City ordinances specify sound level limits that vary according to zoning and time day and stipulate that amplified sound shall not be audible 50 feet away between 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m.

Social fraternities and sororities with a chapter house are expected to have their functions at their respective chapter house rather than a private residence in the community. Those social fraternities and sororities without a chapter house may hold functions at a private residence in the community, provided they comply with all City ordinances and show respect for neighbors.

Chapters may not have busses load or unload on residential streets or block driveways or parking spaces. Buses may load and unload only on College Place, Montezuma Place, the Cox Arena turnaround, East Campus Drive, or Campanile Drive north of Lindo Paseo Drive.

### **Liability Insurance**

All social fraternity and sorority chapters are required to submit a certificate of liability insurance in the amount of at least \$1 million which states the amounts of coverage and names the University as an additional insured, using the following language in the certificate: "The State of California, The California State University Board of Trustees, and all its other departments, boards, commissions and its officers, employees, and agents are hereby declared to be additional insured under the terms of this policy. This insurance policy will not be canceled without thirty (30) days notice to the Coordinator of Fraternity and Sorority Life, San Diego State University."

### **Social Event Management Policies**

Each Greek governing/coordinating council is required to develop, for approval by Fraternity and Sorority Life, event management policies that are to include attendance/invitation limitations and procedures, security requirements, health, fire and safety requirements, and procedures to prevent underage drinking.

Fraternities and sororities shall clean up the affected area by 10:00 a.m. the morning following a party, except the Faith Presbyterian Church which must be cleaned up by 8:00 a.m. Adequate cleanup includes picking up all plastic or paper cups, beverage cans and bottles, and other debris from the gutters, parking lots, sidewalks, and up to ten feet back of the curb where possible. Broken glass must be swept up.

Chapters shall not use plants, palm fronds, tree branches, etc. for use as party decorations.

Tarped fencing used for parties and other events cannot be put up more than 24 hours prior to a function and must be taken down within 24 hours after a function. Exterior party decorations must be properly disposed of within 24 hours after a function.

## **Yard Shows**

The following is a listing of policies and procedures governing Yard Shows (public step shows on campus). These regulations govern all organizations and guests of sponsoring organizations that participate in Yard Shows at the university. It is the responsibility of the sponsoring group to inform guest performers and audience members of these policies. Guests include visitors or performers who are not registered students at San Diego State University.

1. Requests for all Yard Shows held must be approved by Student Activities and Campus Life. The guidelines governing open space reservations and amplified sound must be followed.
2. All Yard Show performers must submit a Yard Show Registration Form with Fraternity and Sorority Life in advance of the performance. Organizations without official campus recognition must receive permission from Student Activities and Campus Life to perform in a Yard Show. This also applies to persons from other chapters.
3. No profanity is to be used at any time by the performing group and/or other members and visitors from other

chapters. This also applies to times before and after the performance;

4. No obscene gestures are to be made at any time nor are any gestures to be made that suggest anything other than decency;
5. No objects are to be propelled from or onto the performing area by performers or members from their hands, other parts of the body, and/or dressing areas;
6. Props used in performances must be approved by Fraternity and Sorority Life.
7. Performances may not include the singling out of individuals or chapters, the imitating of other organization's traditional step routines, the use of other organization's colors or Greek letters in a means that can be interpreted as blatant disrespect as determined by the respective Greek governing/ coordinating council.

Advisors are required to screen all Yard Show performances to ensure that the aforementioned policies and procedures are followed. Advisors are also requested to screen inappropriate verbal or nonverbal slurs, degrading and/or derogatory remarks made concerning other persons, institutions, and/or organizations during Yard Shows.

## **Other Policies Applicable to Fraternities and Sororities**

**“Raids”** - “Raiding” of fraternity and sorority houses is prohibited. This includes: entering through other than an unlocked ground floor door; bringing alcoholic beverages into a sorority house; unauthorized

removal of any items; going unescorted into a chapter house between midnight and 7:00 a.m.; causing any type of fright, injury, harassment, or property damage; tampering with fire protection equipment; and refusing to leave when told to do so by a chapter official.

**Banners** - No fraternity or sorority shall steal, attempt to steal, or otherwise tamper with the banners or flags of other organizations.

**Property Defacement** - Fraternities and sororities shall not paint their symbols or Greek letters upon, or otherwise deface public streets or alleys, parking lots, road signs, or other public or private property.

**Property Damage** - If a fraternity or sorority causes property damage, they shall, at the discretion of the property owner, either repair the damage within a reasonable time (normally five days) or provide financial restitution, including a fair charge for labor, to the owner.

**Church Parking Lot** - The Faith Presbyterian Church parking lot (across from McDonald's) may never be used without permission. If permission is granted, cars must be removed from the lot by 8:00 a.m. the following morning. Busses and recreational vehicles are not permitted in the parking lot. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted in the parking lot. The fraternities in the Greek Circle and Campanile Drive areas need to notify the church whenever they are planning anything other than a private event (a form is given to you with your noise permit for the Church Secretary to sign). If the church is planning an activity, they need to post someone at the lot to keep guests from parking in the lot during the church activity. All trash and debris must be removed from the lot by 8:00 a.m. the following morning.

**Alcohol at Greek Philanthropies** - Alcoholic beverages cannot be present at any Greek philanthropy event, unless the event is

at a licensed establishment and has been approved by Fraternity and Sorority Life.

**Fireworks and Projectiles** - Possession or discharge of fireworks is strictly prohibited. Throwing bottles or solid objects that could result in injury is prohibited. Water balloons shall never be thrown across or into roadways or in a manner that could cause injury or property damage.

**Group Violence** - The University maintains a zero-tolerance policy regarding "group violence." Group violence is defined as an incident involving three or more members of a chapter who, in a chapter-related incident, initiate a fight; taunt others to fight, physical retaliate, or use clearly excessive force.

When a fight erupts or appears imminent, the best course of action is to have your members immediately move inside or leave the scene and call the police. To the degree possible, fraternity members should leave it to the security guards and police to handle fight situations. Although it may sometimes be necessary for fraternity members to intervene in violent situations to restrain and/or escort someone from the premises, use of clearly excessive force may lead to individual and/or group disciplinary action and possibly expensive litigation, especially if anyone is seriously hurt in the process.

