



STUDENT INVOLVEMENT
Fraternity and Sorority Life

**STATEMENT OF RELATIONSHIP
and
POLICIES and GUIDELINES
for
SOCIAL FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES**

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San José State University fraternities and sororities have a rich history and have been an integral part of the institution's total educational experience since 1896. Fraternities and sororities share responsibility with the university for strengthening and enhancing the quality of campus life by embracing SJSU's *Shared Values* and by making a positive contribution to the educational and personal development of its members.

This *Statement of Relationship and Policies and Guidelines* sets out the expectations, responsibilities, and standards that affirm that the SJSU Greek community continually strives for excellence and is committed to supporting the mission of the university by enhancing the quality of the undergraduate college experience.

I. STATEMENT OF RELATIONSHIP

The university recognizes that a special relationship exists between the institution and its fraternity and sorority chapters, their national and regional organizations, and the SJSU Greek Councils. This document serves as a commitment by the university to support the Greek community and likewise sets out the conditions by which a fraternity or sorority and Greek Councils may function on campus. In addition, San José State University and the campus Greek community understand that not only does a relationship exist between them, but also with their neighbors and the greater San José State community.

A. Definition of Social Fraternities and Sororities

Purpose

Social fraternities and sororities and/or women's fraternities are student organizations whose primary purpose is the personal development of their members, as distinguished from honorary, professional, departmental and service Greek letter organizations. Through their shared ideals and goals, fraternities and sororities provide opportunities for the development of leadership skills, civic involvement, social and personal growth, lasting bonds of friendship, community service, and association with alumni.

Social fraternities and sororities typically have rituals and creeds that also promote values such as loyalty, academic achievement and intellectual development, honor and integrity, personal responsibility, and commitment. Some social fraternities and sororities are culturally based and strive to further the ideals of their heritage and community. Traditionally, most social fraternities and sororities are designated by Greek letters; hence, the organizations and their members are often referred to as "Greek organizations" "the Greek community," or simply "Greeks."

Membership

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 under Title IX of the U.S. Education Act of 1972.

Unlike most other student organizations, membership in a social fraternity or sorority is usually a lifetime affiliation, and generally students are not permitted to be initiated into more than one social fraternity or sorority. Many social fraternities and sororities have an education and orientation period prior to initiation, and pre-initiated members are commonly referred to as pledges, associates or associate members, candidates, intakes, or new members.

Greek Councils

The following councils are currently recognized by San José State University as coordinating/governing bodies for social fraternities and sororities:

1. Interfraternity Council (IFC) – Governing/coordinating council for general national fraternities affiliated with the North-American Interfraternity Conference (NIC)
2. Panhellenic Association (PHC) – Governing/coordinating council for general sororities that are members of the National Panhellenic Conference
3. United Sorority and Fraternity Council (USFC) – Governing/coordinating council for cultural-interest 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.

B. Principles

The underlying principles which provide the foundation for the relationship between San José State University and social fraternities and sororities are:

1. The co-curricular activities of a fraternity or sorority supplement and give balance to a total educational experience and should not detract from a student's academic relationship with the university.
2. A chapter is recognized by SJSU on the premise that its goals are compatible with those of the university and that the organization demonstrates consistent effort towards achieving those goals.
3. Each chapter is expected to observe all university regulations relating to the social and personal conduct of students and organizations.
4. Fraternities and sororities and the university share the common value of nurturing personal growth. Individual chapters and the Greek community shall contribute to the development of the "whole" person by:
 - a. emphasizing the intellectual, cultural, and social aspects of membership and promoting effective leadership, responsible decision making, and consideration and respect for others
 - b. encouraging active participation in university events and activities through effective organization and coordination
 - c. role modeling, mentoring, and holding members accountable
 - d. creating a chapter climate conducive to learning and the development of responsible chapter and university citizenship
 - e. providing structured opportunities for the development of social and leadership skills
 - f. complying with university, city, state, federal, and national fraternity/sorority regulations, laws and guidelines
5. Self-governance is an essential aspect of the Greek life community and fosters the development of personal and group responsibility and maturity.
6. Members will serve as role models of leadership within chapters and throughout the campus.
7. Chapters with housing are expected to maintain comfortable, safe, and sanitary facilities that are conducive to a living-learning environment.
8. Social and community building activities inherent in a small group setting can make significant contributions to students' education and can provide for a more positive college experience

9. Fraternities and sororities have a unique opportunity to foster future loyal alumni not only with their respective organizations but also the University
10. Chapters are to demonstrate a strong service ethic through contributions to the campus and the local community.
11. Fraternities and sororities should be a source of pride for the University and the surrounding community.

C. Mutual Interests, Support, and Obligations

A well developed and defined relationship between San José State University and its fraternities and sororities presents mutually beneficial opportunities. The University acknowledges that fraternities and sororities can add substantially to creating a more vibrant campus life and more meaningful student experience, and fraternities and sororities acknowledge that their reason for existence is to help students reach their college and academic goals.

From the University Perspective:

By this statement, the University publicly acknowledges the educational value of fraternities and sororities. The University is committed to assisting groups in clearly identifying how each can make its distinctive contribution to the University's educational program. As is the case with all of its programs, the University will, in concert with each group, periodically and systematically assess the group's education contributions, including their intellectual, social, and interpersonal benefit to each new generation of students at SJSU.

Within the guidelines set out in this document as well as Council constitutions and SJSU policies, the University expects and encourages fraternities and sororities to operate with as much independence as their performance warrants. Because it recognizes that self-governance fosters development of personal and group responsibilities and maturity, the University allows substantial independence for its fraternities and sororities. In conjunction with its belief that fraternities and sororities have the capability to self govern, the University also believes that they will be more successful if the University and the Greek community work closely together. With this commitment to enhancing chapter success and the development of fraternity and sorority members, the University established a Fraternity and Sorority Life (FASL) program in the Office of Student Involvement.

From the Fraternity/Sorority Perspective:

By this statement, the Greek community publicly acknowledges its responsibilities to the University and surrounding community. Individual chapters and the Greek community as a whole are committed to contributing in a positive way to the educational mission of the University. It also recognizes that the Greek community including the Greek Councils and individual chapters will be more likely to achieve their goals with the support, encouragement, and guidance from the University.

The University should strive to meet the standards set out by the *Council on the Advancement of Standards* as it develops and delivers the Fraternity and Sorority Life Program at SJSU. This includes but is not limited to providing:

1. Advisors and support staff to meet system needs
2. Educational and leadership development programs
3. Assistance with chapter operations and Greek Council officer development and transition
4. Facilitation of communication between the campus and advisors/alumni/national offices
5. Education and information on issues and trends that affect today's students and Greek organizations
6. Assistance with administering membership recruitment programs

7. Space for Council officers to meet and maintain records
8. Assistance with public relations, publications, and Greek Life visibility on campus
9. Means for building bridges among chapters and Councils
10. Showcasing fraternity and sorority contributions to the campus and the community
11. Communication and cooperation from faculty and staff as the Greek organizations work to meet standards and expectations

From the Community Perspective:

San José State University and the Greek community are an integral part of the downtown community. The SJSU/Downtown community is made up of not just students, but working professionals, SJSU faculty members and alumni, families, children, as well as many types of group-home communities. Neighbors can be impacted positively or negatively by the behavior and activities of fraternities and sororities and their members and guests. For the past several years, the Greek Life program and student leaders and alumni have participated in neighborhood organizations and have formed on-going relationships and partnerships. Everyone has benefited from the bridges that have been built because they have opened up dialogue and mutual problem solving.

In turn, the surrounding community acknowledges its commitment to working with the university and the fraternity/sorority community. The surrounding community recognizes that fraternity and sorority members share mutual interest and responsibility in the issues that affect all who live and work in the university neighborhoods, including maintaining a safe and vibrant community. The community acknowledges that the university and the Greek community are an integral part of the fabric of the university neighborhoods and can be valuable partners.

D. Fraternity and Sorority Life Program Responsibilities

1. Through advising, acts as liaison between fraternities and sororities and the University to promote communication and public relations
2. Provides information to fraternities and sororities regarding University policies, procedures and regulations, and federal, state and local laws affecting them
3. Collects information on officers, members, grade point average standings, activities, policies, Greek governing/coordinating council minutes, and updated constitutions and bylaws
4. Acts as a advisor to Greek governing/coordinating councils and chapters for their organizational development including: officer training, advising, attending meetings, and reviewing constitutions, bylaws, and other governing documents that guide the Greek system
5. Facilitates community relations by encouraging cooperation and involvement with the University and neighbors
6. Facilitates inter-fraternity/sorority relations and communication; organizes all-council interaction through regular roundtables and joint meetings; utilizes mediation, intervention and the use of other University resources when deemed appropriate.
7. Organizes leadership, educational, and developmental programs including workshops, seminars, speakers, and retreats.
8. Coordinates with Student Involvement the production of publications and websites that promote the Greek community and the Greek experience at SJSU.
9. Through correspondence, meetings, conferences, and telephone contacts, maintains cooperative relationships with local alumni, chapter advisors, house directors, community groups, the professional staffs of national fraternity and sorority offices, professional and fraternity-related organizations, campus organizations, public and private agencies, and other University offices and departments.
10. Reviews University policies, procedures, and regulations relating to fraternity and sorority affairs.
11. Provide oversight and implementation of chapter assessment and leadership development programs.

12. Consults with chapters and alumni in their efforts to secure chapter housing and the necessary approval from the City of San José.
13. Consults with the Director of Student Involvement, the Director of Student Conduct and Ethical Development, and the Vice President for Student Affairs when a chapter's on-campus status is in question including probation, suspension, removal of recognition, and expulsion.

E. Standards and Requirements for Social Fraternities and Sororities

1. Conduct

Every student and every organization is to comply with federal, state and local laws, and the *San José State University Student Code of Conduct* and *Student Organization Code of Conduct*. In addition, every chapter is expected to comply with its national/regional conduct and risk management policies, as well as the governing documents of their respective Greek Council. Every chapter with a national/regional affiliation must remain in good standing with the national/regional fraternity or sorority. Chapters and their members must also adhere to Section II of this document, *Policies and Guidelines for Fraternity and Sorority Programs and Activities*.

2. Scholarship

The university expects all chapters to contribute positively to the academic community at San José State University. Each chapter is expected to be at or above a 2.5 minimum GPA each semester. Chapters failing to meet this expectation will be required to complete academic progress reports outlining how their chapter will achieve this expectation. Additionally:

- a. Every chapter must maintain a 2.5 minimum semester average to maintain recognition at SJSU.
- b. Any chapter and/or new member class who falls below a 2.5 will be under review and placed on a scholarship progress plan (please see Appendix A). Councils may set higher standards for their member chapters.
- c. Any chapter on academic probation more than once in any 2-year period (4 semesters) is subject to additional sanctions including suspension and review of recognition.
- d. Every chapter will see that all of its members are in good academic standing with the University and with their respective national/regional organizations. No member should earn below a 2.0 in any given semester. Members failing to meet this requirement will be held accountable through their chapter judicial process. This process must be discussed with Assistant Director and/or Coordinator no later than three weeks into the next semester.
- e. All chapter and council officers (i.e. President, Vice President, Treasurer, New Member Educator) shall maintain a 2.5 minimum semester GPA and a 2.0 overall GPA, and shall not be on probation of any kind.

3. Membership

- a. Each chapter must maintain an active membership of eight or more members.
- b. The university expects all students to make progress toward graduation. Students are expected to take an adequate class load to meet degree objectives (9 or more units per semester), and no active initiate may be enrolled in less than 3 units at San José State University.
- c. All chapter officers must be regularly enrolled in 6 or more units at San José State University.
- d. Social fraternities and sororities shall not restrict membership on the basis of race, religion, national origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or physical disability.
- e. No fraternity or sorority may pledge or initiate any student who is on academic probation or any individual who is not matriculated and regularly enrolled for credit in at least six units at San José State University. (Note: A student who is taking only Open University classes is not considered a regularly enrolled SJSU student.)

4. Council Affiliation

Each social fraternity and sorority shall belong to the appropriate governing/coordinating council. General interest groups affiliated with National Interfraternity Council (NIC) will belong to the Interfraternity Council, general interest sororities affiliated with National Panhellenic Council (NPC) will belong to the Panhellenic Council, cultural-interest organizations shall belong to the United Sorority and Fraternity Council (USFC), and historically African American organizations associated with National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) shall belong to the NPHC at San José State University.

5. Expectations of Presidents

The chapter presidents agrees to accept full responsibility for the chapter's adherence to the Constitution, Bylaws, rules and judicial procedures of the Interfraternity Council, Panhellenic Council, United Sorority and Fraternity Council, or National Pan-Hellenic Council, University policies and directives by authorized University officials, the *Student Organization Code of Conduct*, *Student Involvement Policies and Procedures for Student Organizations*, and local, state, and federal laws. Accordingly, the chapter president must become familiar with such policies, laws, regulations, directives, and procedures and must educate the chapter membership.

Chapter and Council presidents and other designated officers may be required to attend meetings called by the Assistant Director or Coordinator of Fraternity and Sorority Life, the Director of Student Involvement, or the Vice President for Student Affairs to educate them on University policies, procedures, and resources, or to address issues that require their immediate attention.

Refer to Section II of this document, *Policies and Guidelines for Fraternity and Sorority Programs and Activities*.

6. Advisors

Advisors should meet regularly with chapter officers. Each chapter will maintain a minimum of at least two chapter alumni advisors who will be responsible for guiding chapter officers and maintaining a relationship with the University and the regional/national organization. An alumni advisory board of five advisors who advise in the five basic areas of chapter operations is strongly recommended (Scholarship, Finances, Standards, Recruitment, and New Member Development). Each chapter is also required to create a relationship with University faculty and obtain a faculty advisor. Advisors are expected to attend a meeting each semester set by the Assistant Director and Coordinator of Fraternity and Sorority Life. Advisors are expected to meet all of the requirements set forth by the national/regional organization.

7. Chapter Information

The chapter's national/regional and local constitution and bylaws must be on file in the Office of Student Involvement as well as the paperwork required every year as part of the Student Organization Registration process. (Refer to *Student Organization Registration Renewal Packet*.)

The following information is required by Fraternity and Sorority Life staff:

- a. Officer Directory and changes as they occur
- b. Chapter Information Sheet
- c. Certificate of Liability Insurance (for those applicable)
- d. Roster of initiates and new members by the end of the third week of each semester and changes as they occur
- e. Copies of chapter constitutions and bylaws and changes as they occur
- f. Copies of Morris Dailey, Student Union, or other large event reservations
- g. Party Reservation Forms for parties planned at chapter houses

- h. Notification Form for Off-campus Events (Pledge Dances, Formals, Retreats, Step-Shows, and any third party vendor event/party)
- i. Student Affairs, Student Involvement, or other SJSU informational questionnaires, if requested.

8. Chapter and Member Development

Each chapter will affirm its commitment to the personal and leadership development of its members. By the third week of each semester, the chapter must submit a "Chapter Development and Programming Plan" to Fraternity and Sorority Life. An outline for the "Chapter Development and Programming Plan" is provided in Section II of this document, *Policies and Guidelines for Fraternity and Sorority Programs and Activities* and requests chapter plans regarding pledge/new member intake and education, chapter educational programming, officer training and development, scholarship enhancement, philanthropic involvement, and complete chapter calendar.

All members of fraternity and sorority life will be required to attend two educationally developmental programs per semester. The Greek educational programming will cover subjects such as hazing, responsible alcohol use, sexual assault prevention, wellness issues, academic excellence, and time management. Attendance by 80% of each chapter membership is required for chapter education, and 80% attendance of each chapter's new member class is required for new member education. Councils may set additional standards.

All council and chapter executive officers will be required to attend additional programming, developed by the FASL staff, each semester (i.e. PACE meetings, and PRIDE retreat).

Each chapter will adopt an alcohol-free new member education process. Organizations may not have alcohol at new member/pledge events.

9. Hazing

California Senate Bill 1454 and Section 245.6 of the California State Penal Code

To close the legal loopholes and deter students from participating in hazing, California Senate Bill 1454 was passed, and the California Penal Code was amended in 2006, by adding Section 245.6, "Matt's Law," which repealed the Education Code hazing provisions and instead codified the definition of hazing within the Penal Code. "Hazing" covers any student in attendance at any public, private, parochial, or military school, community college, or other educational institution. Section 245.6 proscribes misdemeanor penalties for people or organizations who haze and felony penalties for hazing that results in death, great bodily injury or great psychological injury. It also prohibits prosecution for hazing against the person hazed and allows him/her to bring a civil action against the hazing perpetrators. Prosecutors now have the authority to bring charges against any person or organization (e.g., fraternity officials/chapters, non-enrolled students) involved in hazing.

Section 245.6 of the California Penal Code, which went into effect on January 1, 2007, reads:

- a. It shall be unlawful to engage in hazing, as defined in this section.
- b. "Hazing" means any method of initiation or pre-initiation into a student organization or student body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury to any former, current, or prospective student of any school, community college, college, university, or other educational institution in this state. The term "hazing" does not include customary athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
- c. A violation of this section that does not result in serious bodily injury is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of not less than one hundred dollars (\$100), nor more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000), or imprisonment in the county jail for not more than one year, or both.

- d. Any person who personally engages in hazing that results in death or serious bodily injury as defined in paragraph (4) of subdivision (f) of Section 243 of the Penal Code, is guilty of either a misdemeanor or a felony, and shall be punished by imprisonment in county jail not exceeding one year, or by imprisonment in the state prison.
- e. The person against whom the hazing is directed may commence a civil action for injury or damages. The action may be brought against any participants in the hazing, or any organization to which the student is seeking membership whose agents, directors, trustees, managers, or officers authorized, requested, commanded, participated in, or ratified the hazing.
- f. Prosecution under this section shall not prohibit prosecution under any other provision of law.

SEC. 5. This act shall be known and may be cited as "Matt's Law" in memory of Matthew William Carrington, who died on February 2, 2005, as a result of hazing.

Matt Carrington, a Pleasant Hill resident and student at California State University, Chico, died in February of 2005 of water intoxication after being forced to drink gallons of water and do push-ups as part of his initiation into a fraternity. For the full text of Senate Bill 1454, and subsequently, Matt's law, follow this link: http://info.sen.ca.gov/pub/05-06/statute/ch_0601-0650/ch_601_st_2006_sb_1454.

10. Membership Recruitment

All fraternity and sorority recruitment activities shall be alcohol and drug free. Each fraternity and sorority is expected to fully explain the obligations of membership before offering a candidate or potential new member a bid to join the organization. Every new member will be required to attend new member education programming provide by the FASL staff in the semester they are extended a bid.

11. Community Relations

Greek organizations share mutual interests and obligations with the neighbors who live in the university community. Concern about crime, blight, neighborhood beautification effect both students and families alike who live, work, or study in the downtown San José area. Greek organizations and their members are expected to be positive and productive members of the greater community by living by the "Good Neighbor Policy" in *Section II of this document, Policies and Guidelines for Fraternity and Sorority Programs and Activities*.

Greek organizations should seek to be full-fledged members and active participants in neighborhood organizations and neighborhood events. Greek organizations should affirm their commitment to philanthropy by encouraging members to participate in hands-on service projects directly in the surrounding neighborhoods.

12. Chapter Houses

Chapters who occupy housing are expected to properly maintain their facilities and yard, to abide by all noise regulations, and to work in good faith to reduce traffic and parking impacts on the surrounding neighborhood. All Greek organizations that occupy housing will abide by code enforcement regulations, fire regulations, and all other guidelines and requirements set forth by the city of San José. Appropriate respect and responsible behavior are expected by any organization and their guests when utilizing or renting a facility on or off campus, regardless of whether they maintain a chapter house in the downtown area.

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

13. Expansion

Expansion should be undertaken when adding an additional social fraternity or sorority would strengthen the Greek community and benefit the University. The Greek coordinating councils in consultation with the University set policies and procedures regarding expansion. When a decision to pursue expansion is made, invitations to participate in the expansion process will be extended jointly by the Vice President for Student Affairs and the appropriate coordinating council. On behalf of the University, only the Vice President for Student Affairs may extend invitations to colonize a chapter at SJSU.

14. Auxiliary Organizations

A fraternity or sorority that restricts membership to a single gender may not sponsor an auxiliary organization or activity for members of the opposite gender that connotes membership of any kind in their organization (e.g., little sisters, sweetheart groups, etc.). Fraternity/sorority activities which shall be 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.

15. Assessment and Evaluation

All Greek organizations will be required to complete the Standards of Excellence program to evaluate compliance with minimum recognition requirements and to encourage and recognize chapter achievement. The evaluation process is designed to identify organizational strengths and weaknesses while providing guidance for making constructive improvements. Organizations that do not meet minimum standards will be placed on probation and may be subject to suspension and the loss of University recognition as stipulated in the Standards of Excellence preface.

16. Policies and Procedures

All fraternities, sororities, council, and individual members must adhere to all policies, programs, and procedures as outline in the Fraternity and Sorority Life Management Manual, which is distributed annually to every chapter and council.

Appendix A Scholarship Progress Plan

Each chapter will be required to create a chapter specific academic plan with either the Assistant Director and/or the Coordinator for Fraternity and Sorority Life. Plans must include the following:

Phase One

(any chapter below a 2.5 GPA)

- Chapters will be assigned a scholarship advisor in which the scholarship chair and/or scholarship committee will be required to meet with once a month
- Each member (i.e. new member, pledge, active, candidate, etc.) that is below a 2.5 GPA is required to meet with the scholarship advisor twice a month.
- Each chapter member that falls below a 2.5 GPA will fill out a progress reports once a semester. Student fills out one half of the sheet and must have their professor fill out the rest of the sheet. This is required for each class the student is taking.
- Chapter must schedule and mandate study hours twice a month.
- Host one academic related event a semester (in addition to standards of excellence requirements).
- Chapter may only hold two service or chapter morale related events throughout the semester, which must be approved by scholarship advisor.
- Chapter may hold one social event, pending mid semester progress reports at the discretion of the scholarship advisors.
- Chapter may not participate in any recruitment and/or intake activities.
- Chapter may not participate in any council activities.
- If a chapter does not raise GPA above a 2.5 and/or .3 GPA will be derecognized and will remain derecognized until chapter GPA is above a 2.5 and can reapply for recognition)

Phase Two

(only chapters that have completed Phase One and have raised the chapter GPA to a 2.5 and/or .3 GPA points above previous GPA)

- Chapter president must submit a semester calendar which can have a maximum of two social events and three service and/or chapter morale events, all of which must be approved by scholarship advisor
- Chapters will be assigned a scholarship advisor in which the scholarship chair and/or scholarship committee will be required to meet with once a month
- Each member (i.e. new member, pledge, active, candidate, etc.) that is below a 2.5 GPA is required to meet with the scholarship advisor twice a month.
- Each chapter member that falls below a 2.5 GPA will fill out a progress reports once a semester. Student fills out one half of the sheet and must have their professor fill out the rest of the sheet. This is required for each class the student is taking.
- Chapter must schedule and mandate study hours once a month.
- Host one academic related event a semester (in addition to standards of excellence requirements).
- Chapter may participate in recruitment/intake activities
- Chapter can participate in council activities but will have no vote on official council business.