

**Missouri State University  
Fraternity and Sorority Life Relationship Statement**

**Relationship Statement:**

The purpose of this relationship statement is for mutual understanding of the minimum expectations between the Office of Student Engagement and the Fraternity and Sorority Life community. The university holds special relationships with social fraternities and sororities. The university explicitly recognizes the value of Fraternities & Sororities as an out of class experience that provides students with unique opportunities for personal growth, leadership development, academic excellence, and engagement in philanthropic and community service endeavors. Consequently, the university actively seeks to promote a strong Fraternity & Sorority community.

**Mission:**

Fraternity and Sorority Life at Missouri State University provides avenues for leadership and community involvement while aiding in the development of meaningful connections and personal growth.

**Vision:**

Fraternity and Sorority Life at Missouri State strives to be a model community by recruiting and developing a diverse group of engaged citizens, cultivating professional and interpersonal skills in members, and fostering a cross-council community.

**Values:**

Leadership | Service | Development | Scholarship | Community

**Approved by Governing Fraternity & Sorority Councils: IFC and PHA 3/09/2022, NPHC 3/22/2022**

**Approved by the Vice President of Student Affairs:**

**Approved by the Administrative Council:**

**Effective date:**

## **Preamble**

The State of Missouri has delegated, by statute, authority for the governance of Missouri State University to the Board of Governors. This includes full power and authority to adopt all needful rules and regulations for the guidance and supervision of the conduct of all Fraternities & Sororities and students while enrolled as such and the authority to enforce compliance to those rules and regulations. It also has the power to delegate disciplinary authority. Responsibility for the oversight, advising, and working with Fraternities & Sororities is specifically delegated to the Office of Student Engagement.

Missouri State University, as an institution with a public affairs mission, recognizes the inherent value of shared governance in working with Fraternities & Sororities. Therefore, the university recognizes the Inter-fraternity Council as a coordinating and governing body, the Panhellenic Council as coordinating and governing body, and the National Pan-Hellenic Association as a coordinating and governing body. The authority of these groups is outlined in each respective constitution and set of by-laws as an internal authority.

## **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Respect**

A core pillar of Missouri State University is Cultural Competency. The goal of this pillar is that students will recognize and respect multiple perspectives and cultures. Although social fraternities may limit membership on the basis of sex, each of our individual chapters should be recruiting based on their organizational values, finding potential members who best align with their values. Each member of our community should feel welcomed and should be given equal opportunity and access. The Missouri State Fraternity and Sorority Life community strives to uphold and reflect the Non-Discrimination Policy outlined by the university.

We encourage our community to demonstrate their care for others by increasing awareness and practices for diversity, equity, and inclusion education. Furthermore, we strive to ensure that the diversity of our community is inclusive in our discussions, thoughts, and operations. These practices should help promote a community of respect. We are an ever-growing and changing community, but respect should always be present despite our differences.

## **Chapter Rights and Responsibilities**

### **Rights**

All fraternities and sororities are required annually to register with the Office of Student Engagement as a student organization to gain university recognition. When annually registered, and any other forms as needed or required by the Office of Student Engagement are accounted for, fraternities and sororities will gain all the rights and privileges of student organizations. Additional benefits afforded to registered Fraternities & Sororities, unless limited by a governing council or the university through conduct consequences, include:

- Office of Student Engagement staff dedicated to the advisement of the Fraternity & Sorority community who receive ongoing training and professional development
- Assistance with recruitment and intake process including collection of recruitment applications, bid cards, GPA verification, and technical support

- Dedicated office space for all governing councils
- Financial support towards recruitment materials and educational programming
- Partnership with the SOAR program, which includes at minimum an information table and session promoting Fraternity & Sorority life
- Inclusion in office presentations to Residence Life, Housing and Dining Services, GEP 101 classes, University Ambassadors, and other offices upon request in conjunction with the Office of Student Engagement
- Resources for advisors and presidents including manuals and ongoing trainings
- Annual Fraternity and Sorority special award and recognition program.
- Listing in University publications and/or web pages

Students who wish to form a Fraternity or Sorority will do so through procedures established in concert with the appropriate governing council, Office of Student Engagement, and Inter/National Organization if applicable.

The Office of Student Engagement annually acknowledges the Fraternity and Sorority Life community and their dedication to student involvement. Each year chapters will have the opportunity to submit applications for various awards to honor the achievements of both individuals and chapters from the previous year.

### **Responsibilities**

Each fraternity/sorority is responsible for maintaining an active relationship with Missouri State University. Following through with the duties below will ensure that this partnership between the institution and Fraternity and Sorority Life community remains strong and unified.

- An updated list of current chapter members, with birth dates, will be submitted to the Office of Student Engagement at least twice a semester, or when otherwise requested
- Students must sign a Membership Card and turn into the Office of Student Engagement within 7 days of joining the organization
- All chapters must complete a New Member Roster and turn into the Office of Student Engagement as requested
- Each chapter will send their risk management chair and at least one other appropriate position (e.g., social chair, programming chair, etc.) to a paperwork/ risk management session held each semester, only then will the chapter be able to hold social functions for the semester
- Fraternities & Sororities have the responsibility to operate within self-governance and to hold their members accountable for violations of university policies and their own standards
- Fraternities and Sororities have the responsibility to hold their fellow organizations accountable for actions that violate university policies, the policies of their governing councils, and the values common to all members of the Missouri State University Fraternity & Sorority community
- All standards of behavior established by the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities apply to all Fraternities & Sororities

## **Hazing**

University policy and state law prohibits hazing. Hazing is inconsistent with the values and mission of Missouri State University Fraternity and Sorority Life. Students are encouraged to report suspected and/or actual instances of hazing to the university. The express or implied consent and/or willing participation by a student does not justify hazing. Fraternities and sororities will be held responsible for violations of the university hazing policy.

## **Self-Governance**

Fraternities & Sororities are responsible for their effective self-governance and should be free from interference in their daily operations by university faculty and staff advisors and other university administrators, provided they are in compliance with university policies and applicable laws and ordinances. Missouri State University also recognizes the self-governance of the respective Fraternity and Sorority Life governing councils when matters do not reach the threshold of a university policy violation or require action from university offices or officials.

Conversely, student organizations must comply with all local, state, and federal laws. Fraternities & Sororities also must comply with all policies of the Inter/National chartering organization and established university policies, including but not limited to:

- Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities,
- Expressive Activities Policy, Commercial Advertising, Sales,
- Solicitation and Facilities Usage Policy,
- SOFAC Guidelines and Policies,
- Social Event Risk Management Policy,
- Residence Life Housing Policy,
- Policies and Ethics for Student Computer Use and Computer Network Use.

## **Jurisdiction**

The university reserves the right to determine whether charges are placed against a chapter or an individual on a case-by-case basis. The university reserves the right to withdraw recognition from a Fraternity or Sorority chapter upon determining that a good cause for such action exists.

Although not all acts of individual chapter members can or should be attributable to the chapter, any chapter or its members should be held responsible for its actions as described herein.

Fraternities & Sororities shall be held responsible for conduct violations of their guests and alumni at all chapter and university-sponsored events when such behaviors could be reasonably foreseen, prevented, and/or minimized. Occasional lapses by individual members or isolated individual failures in restraint should not be chargeable to the chapter, but evidence of chapter conduct exists where:

- Members of the chapter act in concert, or the chapter provides the impetus for members, to violate university policy;
- A violation arises out of a chapter-sponsored, financed, or endorsed event;

- An executive board officer has knowledge of the incident before it occurs and fails to take corrective action;
- The incident occurs on the premises owned, operated, leased, or would otherwise be identified as a property affiliated with the chapter;
- A pattern of individual violations is found to have existed without proper and appropriate chapter control, remedy, or sanction.

In determining whether a chapter may be held collectively responsible for the individual acts of its members, all the factors and circumstances surrounding the specific incident will be reviewed and evaluated. As a guiding principle, chapters will be held responsible for the acts of their members when those acts grow out of, or are in any way related, to chapter life. Situations where sexual harassment, sexual assault, hazing, or physical assault may have occurred will be investigated by the university regardless of whether or not the event(s) in question took place on or off campus.

### **Commitment to Chapter and Community Assessment**

Annually, each chapter will be assessed on various categories that the university feels reflect the values, principles, and ideals of Missouri State University Fraternity and Sorority Life and Inter/National affiliated governing bodies. A meeting to debrief the assessment data collected will be scheduled with each chapter at the beginning of each calendar year. The meeting will include a representative from the Office of Student Engagement, the chapter president, and their advisor. The purpose of the evaluation meeting is to explore the strengths and challenges of each chapter and to develop attainable goals and strategies to achieve them. It is through support of the university, Inter/National Headquarters staff, advisors, and student involvement that a mutual aspiration towards academic achievement, membership development, community and philanthropic work, risk management and more, can be evaluated.

The university and chapter relationship should be one which is mutually beneficial to both. The chapter is encouraged to provide feedback to the university and request assistance when necessary. Chapters should be providing feedback to the university as a means to better the larger fraternity and sorority community and to understand how the university can serve the chapter better.

### **Interpretation and Revisions**

- Any question of interpretation regarding the Fraternity and Sorority Life Relationship Statement shall be referred to the Office of Student Engagement for final determination, subject to appeal to the Vice President of Student Affairs or their designee.
- The Fraternity and Sorority Life Relationship Statement should be reviewed periodically under the direction of the Office of Student Engagement. Review of this document should involve student representation.
- Changes to the Fraternity and Sorority Life Relationship Statement which are editorial in nature and do not affect the fundamental nature of the document can be made by the

Office of Student Engagement and become effective upon approval by the Vice President of Student Affairs or their designee.

- Substantive changes recommended for the Fraternity and Sorority Relationship Statement as a result of the review process shall be submitted to the Administrative Council for approval and adoption.

**Line of authority:**

**Responsible administrator and office:** Vice President for Student Affairs

**Contact person in that office:** Director of the Office of Student Engagement

**Effective date:** May 2, 2022