

**Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
and  
General Men's and Women's Fraternities/Sororities  
Resolution on Relationship**

**Whereas**, Fraternities/Sororities have been closely identified with the purposes of American higher education since the first students at the College of William and Mary met to form Phi Beta Kappa in 1776.

**Whereas**, These students were motivated by the commonly expressed need for belonging--to encourage scholarship, to emulate high purpose, to discuss the great intellectual, social, and political concerns, and to share in literary presentations and debates on the great moral issues of the day.

**Whereas**, Fraternities/Sororities were always associated with the host college or university, and served to espouse the purposes and missions of their respective institution of learning.

**Whereas**, Host institutions which have made the decision to foster and encourage fraternity/sorority experience as one option of leadership training and educational experience for their students, have affirmed the values which can accrue to the individual students and benefit the varied communities of the host institution.

**Whereas**, Loyalty to alma mater, fraternity/sorority member's persistence to graduation, and more concerned involvement with the welfare of the college and university are documented advantages and benefits for colleges and universities in making the decision to encourage and support fraternity/sorority chapters.

**Whereas**, The administration, faculty, community, alumni, undergraduates, general fraternity/sorority volunteers, and general fraternity/sorority national/international professional staff members seek shared partnership for the perpetuation of excellence in college and university fraternal organizations.

**Now, therefore be it resolved**, That the following obligations and statements be recognized as a guide, a vision, a prospectus for the successful relationship of men's and women's general fraternities/sororities with the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (hereafter referred to as Virginia Tech):

**I. Obligations of the University**

a. The university employs staff personnel to advise the members, chapters, the Interfraternity Council (IFC), Panhellenic Council (PhC), National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC), and oversees the development of policies related to men's and women's general fraternities/sororities.

b. The university, through its policies and procedures, in agreement with the constitution and by-laws of IFC/PhC/NPHC/UCFS, in collaboration with the Greek Judicial Board will oversee the judicial system for general fraternities and sororities.

c. The university will support, participate in, and encourage the Greek Life Advisory Council. The organization, duties, powers and mission of the council are to set forth in the documents: Greek Life Advisory Council, **mission statement and membership selection procedures**.

d. The university will provide adequate use of its facilities and provide office space to the IFC/PhC/NPHC/UCFS.

e. The university shall encourage individual chapters to set minimum academic criteria for students wishing to pledge/associate with a General fraternity/sorority. This criteria will be consistent with policies of other institutions of higher education and not be used to unreasonably restrict a student's right to associate with a general fraternity/sorority.

f. The university has set minimum academic criteria for initiation into such student organizations. The criteria are consistent with other institutions of higher education and will not unreasonably restrict a student's right to associate with a general fraternity/sorority.

g. The university shall provide housing, upon expressed interest, for individual general fraternities/sororities through the Special Purpose Housing (phases I, II, and III) or residence halls, based on available space.

h. The university shall recognize a general fraternity/sorority for as long as the general fraternity/sorority operates within the guidelines and tenets of its charter, granted by their respective national/international governing body; published policies, rules and regulations of said governing body (if applicable); the policies and procedures of the university; the laws of the Town of Blacksburg or County of residence; the Commonwealth of Virginia; the Federal Government, and the constitution, and by-laws of the IFC/PhC/NPHC/UCFS. Loss of recognition from IFC/PhC/NPHC/UCFS will lead to loss of recognition by the university or vice versa.

i. The university, in conjunction with the appropriate governing body (NIC, NPC, NPHC), shall set standards and criteria for the expansion of the system of general fraternity/sororities. These standards and criteria will not unreasonably restrict the right of an organization to exist on this campus.

## **II. Obligations of the Individual Chapters**

a. General fraternities/sororities are expected to comply with all local, state, and federal laws and university policies, as well as all policies and laws of their respective national/international governing body and the laws and policies of IFC/PhC/NPHC/UCFS.

b. General fraternities/sororities are expected to conduct their affairs in accordance with the mission and purpose of Virginia Tech, the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life, and their respective national/international organizations.

c. General fraternities/sororities are expected to establish alumni/ae support for the purpose of providing community, stability, information, training, discipline, leadership, business expertise and maturity.

d. General fraternities/sororities should maintain a grade point average at or above the all-men's/women's average. Consequently, chapters are expected to develop scholarship programs, appoint or elect a scholarship chairperson and actively support academic excellence among its members.

e. General fraternities/sororities shall encourage and support the members and pledges/associates to be involved not only in fraternity/sorority leadership positions, but leadership positions in other campus organizations and student bodies of Virginia Tech.

f. General fraternities/sororities shall encourage and support leadership training programs through their own regional or national/international organizations and on-campus workshops sponsored by other organizations or the administration. Chapter attendance and involvement in regional or national/international conventions, conclaves, leadership schools, is an expectation of chapter operation.

g. General fraternities/sororities will develop a program of philanthropic activities that include service to the university, the community, and the general public. Each chapter should participate annually in at least one service project in which a significant proportion of the membership is actively involved.

h. General fraternities/sororities shall pay its obligations to the university for any item or services supplied by the university within 60 days of a statement being rendered. A General fraternity/sorority that has an outstanding obligation to the university must submit, in writing, an acceptable timetable insuring repayment of the total obligation. Failure to do so can lead to loss of certified housing status and/or loss of recognition by the university.

i. General fraternity/sorority members, pledges and/or associates shall acquaint themselves with the documents of **Rights and Responsibilities of Greek Membership**, and **A Statement of Fraternal Values and Ethics: Basic Expectations**, and strive to attain the tenets incorporated therein. These documents follow and should be considered an integral part of this resolution.

j. General fraternities/sororities shall not engage in any form of hazing. The definition of hazing will be that found in the University Policies for Student Life. Chapters are charged with familiarizing themselves with the Virginia Tech Hazing Policy and are held to comply with it in its entirety, as well as their national/international policies, and the Commonwealth code.

k. General fraternities/sororities, in accordance with university policy, shall not discriminate based on race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or ability in membership selection. Multicultural diversity is to be appreciated, encouraged, and embraced among all chapters.

l. SOGEs are required by each chapter by Reading Day of each semester.

### **III. Obligations of the National/International Fraternity/Sorority**

a. The national/international organization of each general fraternity/sorority will assist its chapter in complying with this resolution.

b. The national/international organization shall communicate with the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life in a reciprocal partnership for the betterment of their chapter.

c. The national/international organizations are encouraged to schedule an on-site visit to their respective chapter by a professional staff member, or volunteer, at least once a semester, if applicable. This person and a member of the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life will make every attempt to meet during his/her visit.

d. The national/international will monitor its chapter adherence to the National/International Constitution and Bylaws.

e. The national/international will further monitor, by use of an advisor or other qualified brother/sister, the performance problems of the chapter's ritual.

f. The national/international headquarters will assist the university, IFC/PhC/NPHC/UCFS, in resolving conduct/performance problems involving its chapter at Virginia Tech.

#### **IV. Obligations of the House Corporation** (if applicable)

The house corporation is a legal business entity designed to protect the individuals involved in the maintaining operations of all officially recognized houses.

- a. The house corporation will constitute itself as such under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- b. The house corporation will provide and manage the living accommodations, if not housed by the university, for its chapter at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. If the chapter is residing in Oak Lane, the house corporation will assist in the supervision of the maintenance of the physical plant.
- c. The house corporation will supervise the finances of the chapter's residence and instill prudent financial management techniques so as to insure the solvency of their respective chapter's housing finances.
- d. The house corporation will advise the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life of its present directors and officers and maintain communications with the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life in a timely manner.
- e. The house corporation will be responsible for seeing that its chapter's housing meets all health, safety, and code regulations.
- f. The house corporation should meet on a regular basis to discuss housing issues and plan for long-range residency in adequate housing.

#### **V. Obligations of the Chapter Advisor**

- a. The chapter advisor shall be chosen by the chapter, the alumni/house corporation and/or the national/international fraternity/sorority.
- b. The chapter advisor shall be aware of, and conversant in, the university's policies regarding the fraternity/sorority community and equally knowledgeable of the laws and policies of their respective organizations.
- c. The chapter advisor shall regularly attend his/her chapter's meetings if possible and be aware of the chapter's functions, activities, and regular operations.
- d. The chapter advisor will supervise the finances of the chapter and instill prudent financial management techniques.
- e. The chapter advisor shall meet regularly with the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life and with other chapter advisors to exchange ideas, discuss policies to enhance the fraternity/sorority community at Virginia Tech.
- f. The chapter advisor shall assist his/her chapter in meeting its obligations according to this resolution on relationship.
- g. The chapter adviser will assist his/her chapter in meeting its obligations to its national/international organization.

## **VI. Obligations of the Governing Councils**

- a. The university recognizes the respective governing councils; Interfraternity Council, Panhellenic Council, National Pan-Hellenic Council, and the Unified Council of Fraternities and Sororities as the governing boards for the above stated constituencies. The power and authority of these councils are outlined in their respective constitutions and by-laws as approved by the Commission on Student Affairs, the internal authority.
- b. The governing councils shall provide services to its member chapters as decided by its directors and officers and in accordance with their governing documents.
- c. The governing councils shall strive to act as a resource organization for its member chapters of fraternity/sorority life and community stewardship.
- d. The governing councils shall be charged with continuous advocacy of Greek life to the community, the administration, the faculty, the student body and the general public.
- e. The governing councils shall strive to work with the administration of Virginia Tech in aiding and fulfilling its mission and values.
- f. The governing councils shall see that this resolution is communicated to its membership on an annual basis and encourages the respective chapters to incorporate it into their pledge/associate/new member and/or membership education programs.

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### **A Statement of Fraternal Values and Ethics: Basic Expectations**

In an effort to lessen the disparity between fraternity/sorority ideals and individual behavior and to personalize these basic ideals in the daily undergraduate experience, the following Basic Expectations of fraternity/sorority membership has been established.

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I will know and understand the ideals expressed by my fraternity/sorority ritual and will strive to incorporate them in my daily life.

I will strive for academic achievement and practice academic integrity.

I will respect the dignity of all persons; therefore, I will not physically, mentally, psychologically, sexually abuse or haze any human being.

I will protect the health and safety of all human beings.

I will respect my property and the property of others; therefore, I will neither abuse nor tolerate the abuse of property.

I will meet my financial obligations in a timely manner.

I will neither use nor support the use of illegal drugs; I will neither abuse nor support the abuse of alcohol.

I acknowledge that a clean and attractive environment is essential to both physical and mental health; therefore, I will do all in my power to see that the chapter property is properly cleaned and maintained.

I will challenge all my fraternity/sorority members to abide by these fraternal expectations and will confront those who violate them.

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### **Rights and Responsibilities of Greek Membership**

From the moment I commit myself to become a member of a fraternity or sorority on the campus of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, I am entitled to certain rights within the Greek system:

Right to be an individual, accepted as I am, with the personal qualities which mark me as both similar and different from others.

Right to dignity, free from intentional humiliation.

Right to equality, to be treated fairly as any other brother or sister.

Right to participation, as a partner, with the right to freely support or oppose a proposal under discussion by the membership.

Right to privacy, recognizing my need for personal time and the expectation that the security of my personal belongings will be respected.

Right to respect, for my culture and my spiritual beliefs.

Right to support, in my quest for personal growth, my studies, and my social life.

#### **At the same time that I acquire these rights, I also accept certain responsibilities:**

Responsibility for growth, to work diligently for the development of myself, my college, and my fraternity or sorority.

Responsibility for loyalty, to my fraternity or sorority and its members, to the Greek system at Virginia Tech, to my university, and to the ideals for which they stand.

Responsibility to participate, thoughtfully in the business of the chapter, to complete faithfully those assignments accepted, and to embrace, support, and adhere to the decisions of the chapter, governing body, and the national/international organizations, and govern wisely if elected to a position of chapter leadership.

Responsibility to responsible conduct, since my personal actions reflect not only on me, but on my brothers or sisters, on my college, and on my family and friends.

Responsibility to respect, the rights, convictions and privacy of others, and to work unceasingly to improve fraternity/sorority relations with all other Virginia Tech Greeks, with the university, with our campus neighbors, and with the general public.

I further accept the personal responsibility for familiarizing myself with the published creed or ideals of my fraternity or sorority, and for doing my best to conduct myself in accordance with these principles.

This document is endorsed by:

The Greek Life Advisory Council  
The Vice President for Student Affairs  
The National Pan-Hellenic Council  
The Panhellenic Council  
The Interfraternity Council

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