|  |
| --- |
| **Fraternity and Sorority** |
| Membership Intake Guidelines, Procedures, and Intent Form |

The office of fraternity and sorority life at Virginia Commonwealth University encourages the growth and development of our fraternal community by ensuring a safe and educational environment for membership selection. Each organization conducting intake shall keep the fraternity and sorority life office informed of all intake activities each semester. This reporting is mandatory and may be available for review and revision each semester as needed.

Members, new members, alumni and members of the graduate or alumni chapters will be held responsible individually for their actions during the new member process. It is important that everyone understand that their actions may have repercussions on the undergraduate chapters.

The steps and guidelines listed below must be completed each semester in addition to the inter/national organization’s policies and procedures for intake. The following information is private and is only available to the fraternity and sorority life office staff. These items are required in order to ensure the safety of all members and aspirants, while preserving the traditions of the organizations.

**Pre-Intake / Intake and New Member Activity Documentation**

1. Prior to any intake activities (formal/council coordinated, continuous recruitment, any intake activities or other), and prior to any new member education activities taking place (meetings, retreats, teambuilding activities, or other) all proper documentation needs to be submitted **10 days prior to any activity**.
2. Any national or regional paperwork that needs to be signed by the fraternity & sorority life staff.
3. The **Membership Intake Request Form** must include the dates, times and locations of intake events or interest meetings (formal or informal), the date of the start of the new member process, the anticipated end date of the new member process, and the expected date of initiation and new member show (if applicable). **It also must include all required signatures and supporting** **documentation**.
   1. **All activities must take place between the hours of 7am to 11pm.**
   2. **No new member program should extend beyond eight (8) weeks.**
4. An intake calendar including the times of any intake activities with as much information as possible: date, time and location. Dates are not limited to “formal” periods of membership intake for chapters who conduct year-round intake. Year round events may be included on “formal” intake calendar or submitted at a later date following the same requirements. The fraternity & sorority life staff must approve activities before they commence. Activities to include on the calendar, if applicable:
   1. Intake events/interest meetings and/or informational meetings
   2. Selection date(s)
   3. Extension of Membership
   4. Formal acceptance of Membership
   5. Start date of the new member’s official education/ process
   6. Expected Initiation Date
   7. New Member Show Date (If Applicable)
5. The chapter officer must also supply a copy of the formal/informal interest meeting flyer to be approved by the office of fraternity and sorority life**. The intake paperwork will not be approved without a flyer.**
   1. Please note all forms of advertising must be approved through the fraternity and sorority life staff. Please also attach any flyers or copies of promotional items to the form. Please note if students call the office we will give out dates of intake events or interest meeting.
   2. All flyers must be posted in both the fraternity and sorority life office and in the University Student Commons via the television screens.
   3. All flyers must be posted for a minimum of 7 days.
6. **Within 24 hours of the interest meeting,** the chapter must turn in an attendance/grade check list to the office of fraternity and sorority life. This must include the signatures and student ID (V#) numbers of all attendees. The grade check form can be found at: http://www.usca.vcu.edu/fraternity-sorority-life/chapter-resources/.
7. If the chapter would like to continue with the process, grade checks are required for all potential members or aspirants. Grade checks must be complete before extending an invitation of membership.
   1. Please give the fraternity and sorority life staff three (3) days to return grade checks.
8. Within 48 hours of being accepted for membership, all aspirants must meet as a group with an FSL office staff member and sign the **Anti-Hazing Card**. Failure to turn in these cards will result in an immediate cease and desist of all intake activities.

**Requirements for Intake Events Hosted by Chapters**

1. All organizations must adhere to the following requirements when conducting intake events:
   1. No alcoholic beverages will be permitted.
   2. All National Policies of the organization and governing Council must be met.
   3. Excessive vulgarity and profanity will not be tolerated; neither will language or activities that create an atmosphere of discrimination or intolerance.
   4. No inappropriate or revealing attire.
   5. Any event that poses a threat of danger to individuals who participate will not be allowed.
   6. Any event that would be perceived by a reasonable observer as a membership intake event is subject to these rules.
2. Chapters found in violation of these requirements will have their event stopped immediately. Referrals to the chapter’s council judicial board will be made if necessary.

**New Member Process**

1. A new member calendar including a timetable of any activities exclusive to, or expected of, new members with dates, times, and locations. **All activities must end one week prior to finals and must take place between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.** without advance approval. **No new member program should extend beyond eight (8) weeks** to be consistent with national standards and VCU policy. Activities to include on the calendar, if applicable:
   1. Formal acceptance of Membership
   2. Initiation date.
      1. Chapters must initiate new members within 8 weeks of beginning their process.
   3. Any additional dates pertinent to a specific organization
   4. In the event that any dates and times need to be changed on the calendars of events, chapter members should notify their council advisor (in writing) as soon as the event has been updated.
2. Without the submission of the above paperwork, intake will not be approved. In the event that the intake or new member activities begin without the knowledge and signed approval of the council advisor, and/or the chapter has not adhered to these written intake procedures, intake and/or new member activities will cease immediately and the chapter may be placed on suspension. These sanctions will be initiated and/or imposed by the council advisor/s.

**New Member Show Guidelines and Procedures**

1. If new members would like to have a new member show/presentation, they may do so; but shows are not mandated by the University. The following procedures should be used, and failure to do so will result in the new member show/presentation being cancelled indefinitely.
   1. Notify the MGC/NPHC advisor of the date of new member show.
   2. **The space reservation *must* be made by the MGC/NPHC advisor, and the chapter must meet with the advisor to review the details of the show.**
      1. These reservations will be made as “general events” in order to protect the organizations anonymity prior to the show.
      2. Should the chapter wish to host a reception on campus following the new member presentation, this space must be reserved by the MGC/NPHC advisor.
   3. All University policies and procedure must be followed.
   4. All presentations must be respectful, supportive of the fraternal community, family-oriented and portray a

positive image of Fraternity and Sorority Life at VCU.

1. Presentation of new members should take place **no more than seven (7) calendar days after the members have been initiated** into the chapter.
2. Requests for space will be made upon receipt of the VCU fraternity and sorority life office intent for intake paperwork, which includes the date, time and proposed location of the new member show.
3. New member shows will not be a part of any other program or event i.e.: not during a step show, educational program, or social event.
4. The duration of the show should be no longer than one (1) hour if there are fifteen (15) or less members presenting. For each additional new member beyond fifteen (15), the show may be extended five (5) minutes per member.
   1. For example, a new member presentation with fifteen new members cannot extend beyond an hour. A new member presentation with sixteen new members cannot be longer than one hour and five minutes. And a new member presentation with twenty new members cannot extend longer than one hour and twenty-five minutes.
5. The clock starts at the advertised time of the event. **If the organization starts later than the advertised time, the show still must still end on time.**
6. The organization will have 30 minutes from the time of completion to clear the plaza. Failure to do so will result in an immediate disciplinary action in addition to paying for police officers and any other applicable fees and/or fines from Event Planning.
7. No show shall commence without a member of the fraternity & sorority life staff.
8. All university & event planning policies and procedures must be followed.
9. Restricted Area Management:
   1. The Commons Plaza or the Larrick Center Plaza will be the locations for all new member shows.
      1. No new member show will take place on top of the VCU bricks in the Commons Plaza. This means that chapters will not enter, step, or present their new members on top of this space of yellow bricks. The shows can take place in the middle of the commons plaza.
   2. The area where the new member show takes place will be blocked off with barricades provided by the University Student Commons.
   3. The internal area will provide space for families and members of the organizations in which the show associates. There will be chairs for the family members and space reserved in front of the chairs, on the ground, for the members of the organization hosting the new member show.
   4. There will be space inside the area in front of the families and members of the organization for the new members to complete their presentation.
   5. No one inside of the restricted area may stand on the chairs or other objects to be able to see.
10. Outside restricted area:
    1. People attending the show will be permitted to stand outside the restricted area. No one will be permitted to stand behind the new members. The only exception to that rule is if the people viewing the show are watching from the staging area.
    2. No one outside of the restricted area will be permitted to stand on tables, chairs, or other property in the Commons Plaza. This will be managed by the USC&A Student Manager and/or the VCU Police.

***Expectations of the Sponsoring Chapter/Organization***

1. The MGC or NPHC on-campus advisor will meet with the fraternity/sorority representative(s) to discuss the following:
   1. Inter/National, Regional and/or chapter guidelines regarding New Member Shows
   2. Definition of Hazing and perceptions of Hazing
   3. Risk Management
   4. Content and Presentation
   5. Logistics, Time and Date
   6. Crowd Control
   7. Previous history with new members shows and program planning
2. To be approved, the fraternity/sorority must meet the following minimum requirements:
3. Submit the VCU fraternity and sorority life office intent for intake paperwork.
4. Meet all deadlines for the event approval process.
5. Guarantee the active presence of the chapter advisor or non-student representative of the organization serving in an advisory capacity.
6. Be at a time that a member of the fraternity and sorority life staff can be present.
7. Demonstration of adequate plan for crowd control and safety. The plan for crowd control must include the use of physical barriers, and identifiable crowd control staff.
8. Any changes to the event, including content, location, and/or date, ***must*** be communicated to the MGC/NPHC on-campus advisor at least 5 business days in advance of the event date.
9. The MGC/NPHC on-campus advisor may require changes to the event date, location, and/or time due to potential problems with crowd control, safety, and access to surrounding facilities
10. If the event is approved, the event planning office staff will communicate the details of the event to the University Student Commons and Activities staff and VCU Police.
11. Any props, outfits, and accessories to be used in the show must also be approved (i.e. clothing, shields, staffs, masks, etc.). In general paddles, bricks, and other outward symbols of “pledging” are not allowed.
12. If chapter assigns line numbers to new members, the numbers should accurately represent the numbers of new members being presented (i.e if there are five men being presented, the numbers should be 1-5, not 1,2,4,5,6, etc.) Any exceptions must be approved 48 hours in advance of the presentation.
13. No inappropriate or revealing attire.
14. No Alcoholic beverages - this includes chapter members, new members, alumni, students, and guests.
15. No physical abuse will be tolerated. This includes but is not limited to: slapping, kicking, spitting, punching, pushing, poking, caning, etc. (Canes may be used as a part of the performance but may not be used as a weapon to harm another individual.)
16. The management of the organization members inside of the restricted area is the responsibility of the chapter. This includes alumni, members from other campuses, families, and current members.
17. The chapter is to ensure that all members of the organization are sitting on the ground at all times during the show.
    1. Special arrangements can be made with the NPHC/MGC Advisor if there are members of the chapter and/or family members who will participate in the revealing of new members.
    2. If the chapter is not able to manage their guests inside of the restricted area then all future new member show privileges will be revoked and the chapter will be referred to the NPHC/MGC Judicial Board.
18. The chapter will notify the NPHC/MGC Advisor of the estimated time of arrival of the new members in order to prepare appropriately.
19. The chapter, in combination with the NPHC/MGC Advisor, makes the rain call. In the case of any lightning the new member show will be cancelled.
20. Any additional dates pertinent to a specific organization must be communicated to the fraternity and sorority life staff.

***Expectations of the Governing Council***

1. Two police officers will be provided for each show. The costs associated with the police will be paid by the governing councils.

**Confidentiality**

1. All documents supplied to the Fraternity and Sorority Life Office are kept confidential. They may be shared with university officials, specific chapter officers, and national organization staff as needed and allowed by the academic waiver signed.

**Hazing**

1. No chapter, colony, student or alumnus shall conduct nor condone hazing activities, and all will support and follow the Virginia Commonwealth University Hazing Policy and FIPG Guidelines. This includes all aspirant members, new members, members, alumni/ae members, parents, or any other involved in the recruitment, intake or education of fraternity/sorority new members. Hazing activities are defined as:
   1. “Any action taken or situation created, intentionally, whether on or off fraternity premises, to produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule. Such activities may include but are not limited to the following: use of alcohol; paddling in any form; creation of excessive fatigue; physical and psychological shocks; quests, treasure hunts, scavenger hunts, road trips or any other such activities carried on outside or inside of the confines of the chapter house; wearing of public apparel which is conspicuous and not normally in good taste; engaging in public stunts and buffoonery; morally degrading or humiliating games and activities; and any other activities which are not consistent with academic achievement, fraternal law, ritual or policy.”
      1. This definition can also be found in the Fraternity and Sorority Councils of VCU Risk Management Policies and Procedures.

**Violations**

1. Violations of intake regulations may result in being recommended to the council judicial board. Chapters will receive notice of violation from their council, and their council procedures will be followed.
2. Violations include:
   1. Intentional submission of improper paperwork (i.e., changing of dates on forms, falsifying original signatures, incomplete paper work, etc.)
   2. Holding membership intake activities or events without conforming to the intake guidelines and procedures set by the fraternity and sorority life office.
   3. Hazing: Any violations of the VCU Policy on Hazing will be referred to the council’s judicial board, and possibly individuals being referred to the office of student conduct & academic integrity, as well as any sanctions outlined by the national organization. The office of fraternity & sorority life will work in partnership with both bodies to create a comprehensive plan that avoids duplication and may be both educational and punitive.

All questions and concerns must be expressed by the chapter president and officer responsible for intake. If any questions regarding the Regulations arise, they may be discussed between the members of the chapter and the council advisor/s. Final jurisdiction and decision-making authority rests in the hands of the council advisor/s and the council.

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_by FSL Staff Member: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_