GOLD BOOK

Policy Statement

The Gold Book encompasses the policies governing Greek Life at The University of Southern Mississippi. Students who participate in Greek Life are expected to know and follow the various policies.

Reason for Policy/Purpose

The Gold Book is designed as the policy manual for students involved in Greek Life. It is necessary for the effective communication of university policy regarding Greek Life.

Who Needs to Know This Policy

All members of The University of Southern Mississippi community associated with Greek Life.

Website Address for this Policy

www.usm.edu/institutional-policies/policy-stua-gl-001

Definitions

Policy/Procedures

Article I: Name

Section 1. The name of this document shall be the GOLD BOOK OF THE GREEK LIFE OFFICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI.

Article II: Construction

Section 1. This document shall be construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the
Great State of Mississippi; shall affect all fraternity/sorority (Greek) chapters housed within the Greek Life office; and shall extend on- and off-campus.

**Article III: Official Charter Recognition Statuses**

**Section 1.** Good standing. Chapter is entitled to all rights and privileges of a registered student organization on campus not otherwise suspended or amended by additional sanctioning or actions.

**Section 2.** Probation. Chapter is formally warned for a prescribed duration of time while continuing to retain all rights and privileges afforded student organizations on the campus of the University of Southern Mississippi not otherwise suspended or amended by additional sanctioning or actions.

**Section 3.** Deferred Suspension (i.e. Show Cause). The suspension of a chapter’s recognition is deferred (not enforced) pending the completion of a prescribed list of objectives, goals, or actions within a set time frame. The chapter therefore must “show cause” for their continuation as a student organization and recognized chapter at the University of Southern Mississippi.

**Section 4.** Suspension. A chapter’s recognition is revoked for a prescribed or indefinite amount of time. All activities and actions of the chapter will cease and desist. No re-colonization will be permitted or recognized until the duration of suspension has ceased.

**Section 5.** Silent. The suspension of a Chapter’s recognition of charter has elapsed; however, the Chapter has not been reinstated by the national organization and recognized by the University.

**Section 6.** Expulsion. The Chapter’s recognition is revoked permanently and no re-colonization effort will ever be permitted.

**Article IV: Alcohol**

**Section 1.** The University of Southern Mississippi prohibits the unlawful possession, consumption, and distribution of alcoholic beverages by students and employees on its campus.

Further, any possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages of any kind in plain view shall be considered in violation of campus policy.

Privacy rights of students in their residential space will be respected, but any public nuisance coming from private space related to the consumption of alcohol shall bring the full force of this policy and applicable state law into play.

The concealment of illegal alcohol consumption from plain open view does not preclude the enforcement of state laws or this policy for other just cause.
Section 2. Community alcohol. The presence of “community alcohol” including, but not limited to drinking games and rapid consumption techniques and devices (e.g., flip cup, beer pong, quarters, funnels, power hour, whoop juice, card games, shots, etc.)

Any fraternity or sorority found in violation of this policy shall be subject to, at minimum:
1. First Offense
   a. Mandatory alcohol education program
   b. Mandatory community service for the entire chapter, including new/associate members
   c. “Probation of social activities” for the remainder of the semester.
2. Second Offense (while on “Probation of social activities”)
   a. “Suspension of social activities” for one calendar year.

Article V: Hazing

See Hazing Policy at www.usm.edu/institutional-policies/policy-stua-gl-002

Article VI: Auxiliary Groups

Section 1. In accordance with inter/national fraternity and sorority policies, chapter recognition (public, underground, or otherwise) of any auxiliary groups that include opposite sex member, known as “big sisters,” “little sisters,” “big brothers,” “little brothers,” or by any other terminology is strictly prohibited.

Section 2. Definition. [Groups] “acting as a subsidiary or supplementary.” In practical sense, a single sweetheart or small collection of sweethearts are permissible provided they do not meet any of the following traditionally accepted practices of “little brother/sister programs.”

Section 3. Wearing of “letters.” While it is not against policy to allow individuals of the opposite sex the privilege of wearing fraternity or sorority letters, it is highly advised against given that specific practice is/was commonplace in little sister/brother programs.

Article VII: Events

Section 1. There shall be no minimum number of persons that constitute a chapter “event.”

Section 2. Criteria for determination. The following criteria will be used as a guide when considering if a fraternity/sorority is responsible for an event:
   A. Would a reasonable/prudent person consider the event to be hosted or sponsored by the chapter?
   B. Was the event discussed at a chapter or executive board meeting?
   C. Was the event publicized to members or non-members in any manner?
   D. Did the chapter fund the event in whole or part?
   E. Did chapter members have knowledge of the event, yet chose to ignore the situation or engage in an attempt to cover it up?
   F. It is more likely than not that the event was hosted or sponsored by the chapter?
Section 3. Events on campus are required to have a “Social Event Documentation Form” completed and submitted within 48 hours following the event.
   A. The form is to be submitted to the appropriate council advisor.
   B. The form should be accompanied by a completed guest list/ticket inventory.

Section 4. Special events.
   A. These events would include such things as philanthropy days/weeks, tabling/sales, meetings, educational programs, new member presentation shows, pageants, ticketed events, and events in Bennett Auditorium.
   B. Fraternities and sororities are to complete the “Event Request Form” on the student activities website at least one month prior to the day of the event.
   C. Fraternities and sororities shall attend a “pre-event meeting” scheduled through Student Activities.
   D. Chapters must pay for the required number of police officers (as determined by the Student Activities committee) by the established deadline.
   E. Payment of police shall be made to the University Police department in the form of cash or cashier’s check.
   F. Special events may be held on any day of the week.

Section 5. House parties.
   A. These events specifically take place within a chapter facility on campus.
   B. Fraternities and sororities are to complete the “Event Request Form” on the student activities website by Monday at 4 p.m. for events the following Monday–Friday. If Monday is a holiday, the event forms are due the Friday before at 4 p.m.
   C. Chapters must pay for the required number of police officers (as determined by the Chief of Police) by the established deadline.
   D. The cost of police shall be equally split between all chapters hosting house parties on a given day.
   E. Payment of police shall be made to the Interfraternity Council in the form of cash, cashier’s check, or chapter check.
   F. House parties shall only be held on Thursday, Friday, or Saturday unless the Student Activities Committee grants special permission.

Section 6. Noise. The University of Southern Mississippi prohibits the disruption or disturbance of the campus community by the operation of sound devices. No person shall play, use or operate any device for reproducing or amplifying sound on university property if the sound generated is audible at a distance of 50 feet from the device producing the sound.

Section 7. Open parties. Fraternities and sororities shall not host open social functions, unless specifically permitted by their national organization. A guest list or ticket inventory record system shall be used by a chapter and should comply with the policies of a chapter’s inter/national organization.

Section 8. Themes. All party themes, signs, marketing, and t-shirts shall be in good taste and contain no vulgar or inappropriate language.
Section 9. Failure to. The following instances pertain to a chapter’s failure to perform a certain action.

A. Register an event. All events held on campus shall be registered with the Office of Student Activities using the “Event Request Form.”
   1. Philanthropy: Chapter shall be referred to their appropriate council judicial body or the Assistant Dean of Students.
   2. Special event: Chapter shall be referred to their appropriate council judicial body or the Assistant Dean of Students.
   3. House party: Chapter shall be fined $96. Chapters who exceed failures to register in an academic year shall be referred to their council judicial body and placed on suspension of social activities for six (6) months.

B. Shut down/terminate an event. All events held on campus shall be terminated by the times designated on the event form.

Article VIII: Membership

Section 1. All members of fraternities and sororities are required to complete a membership card that shall be filed in the Office of Greek Life. The membership card shall contain information relative to: Commitment to not engage in hazing, a release of academic records, and housing responsibilities.

Section 2. Alumna/us or inactive status.
   A. Alumni or inactive members are not responsible for housing draft or parlor fees.
   B. Alumni or inactive members are removed from the official chapter roster for purposes of grades and dues billing.
   C. Chapters are financially responsible for their minimum housing occupancy, and no credit or exception will be given for alumni/inactive status.
   D. Chapters may grant alumna/us or inactive status as they desire provided their inter/national organization allows for the status.

Section 3. Size. All fraternities and sororities shall maintain a membership size that is at least ten (10) full-time student members. There are two exemptions possible:
   A. Inter/national or regional moratorium on new membership was in effect the prior semester.
   B. The chapter has previously demonstrated a pattern of annual intake (fall, spring, or both terms are acceptable).

Section 4. The CPC shall be the only council governed by a quota-total system.

Article IX: Academics

Section 1. Good standing. Chapter has attained a term composite GPA at or above the respective gender average.
Section 2. Academic Warning. Chapter has attained a term GPA below their respective gender average after having been at “Good standing” in the previous term.

Section 3. Academic Reprimand. Chapter has attained a term GPA below their respective gender average after having been at “Academic Warning” in the previous term. As such, the chapter shall:

A. Submit an academic enhancement plan that is supported by the chapter advisor and national organization.
B. Receive an official “Reprimand” to be placed in their file and communicated to their inter/national organization.

Section 4. Academic Social Suspension I. Chapter has achieved a term composite GPA below the respective gender average after having been at “Academic Reprimand” in the previous term. As such, the chapter shall:

A. Submit an amended academic enhancement plan that is supported by the chapter advisor and national organization.
B. Forfeit the ability to host, co-host, sponsor, or co-sponsor any social activities on or off campus for the duration of the current academic term.
C. If a chapter was moved to this status at midterm, and fails to attain the gender average at the conclusion of the term, the chapter shall remain on this status for the following term.

Section 5. Academic Social Suspension II. The chapter has achieved a term composite GPA below the respective gender average after having been at “Academic Social Suspension I” in the previous term. As such, the chapter shall:

A. Submit an amended academic enhancement plan that was developed by the inter/national organization and alumni advisory group.
B. Continue to forfeit the ability to host, co-host, sponsor, or co-sponsor any social activities on or off campus for the duration of the current academic term.
C. Forfeit the ability to participate in campus intramurals
D. Have their official status moved to “Probation.” (see Article III, Section 2)

Section 6. Academic Social Suspension III. The chapter has achieved a term composite GPA below the respective gender average after having been at “Academic Social Suspension II” in the previous term. As such, the chapter shall:

A. Continue to forfeit the ability to host, co-host, sponsor, or co-sponsor any social activities on or off campus for the duration of the current academic term.
B. Continue to forfeit the ability to participate in campus intramurals.
C. Forfeit the ability to participate in university or Greek community events, community service activities, philanthropic or fundraising efforts, and university traditions (e.g. homecoming, tailgating).
D. Conduct a review of the chapter membership in partnership with the inter/national organization and alumni advisory group.
E. Develop a three year comprehensive “strategic success plan” that will be signed off by all remaining chapter members and the alumni advisory group.
F. Have their official status moved to “Deferred Suspension (Show cause).” (see Article III, Section 3)
Section 7. Individual members. All chapter members who fail to attain a 2.0 term composite 
GPA shall meet with GLO staff within the first month of the following semester. Chapters shall 
be held responsible for a member’s failure to complete this requirement.

Article X: Expansion/Extension

Section 1. As a public university, we recognize a student’s right to freedom of assembly/ 
association. In an effort to promote collaboration between all interested stakeholders, a series of 
guidelines exist relative to time, place, and manner.

Section 2. Informal requests. Interested students or inter/national organizations can make 
informal requests as they desire. Informal requests are not considered official steps in the 
expansion/extension procedure.

Section 3. Formal requests. In order to initiate the process of expansion/extension, a formal 
request must be made by an interested organization. This may come in the form of a “packet,” and should contain the following prospectus:
  A. Number of chapters, alumni members in the Gulf South area (Mississippi, Louisiana, 
     Alabama, Western Florida).
  B. Any recent colonizations (past 5 years) and their status today (including membership size 
at colonization and at present).
  C. Degree and form of support a new colony receives from the inter/national organization.
  D. Relevant policies of the inter/national organization that would impact a colony.
  E. Procedure for obtaining an official charter from the inter/national organization and an 
estimated (average) timetable from colonization to chartering.
  F. Desired colonization start date.

Section 4. Review of requests.
  A. Re-activation: Inter/national organizations of the NPHC and IFC may re-activate a 
charter through a formal request and review by the Greek Life Office.
  B. New requests: All new requests by IFC organizations shall be reviewed by the Greek Life 
Office.
  C. CPC: The CPC shall follow its extension procedures outlined in the most recent edition 
of their Manual of Information.

Section 5. Colonization. Colonies shall meet the recognition criteria set forth for all student 
organizations. Furthermore, colonies shall comply with the following stipulations:
  A. Colony should attain a term composite GPA at or above their respective gender average. 
     If the colony membership is co-educational, it shall attain a term undergraduate 
     composite GPA.
  B. Colony should create a “strategic success plan” that documents their goals and methods 
in the following areas: Housing, council participation, chapter structure/committees, 
brotherhood/sisterhood development; recruitment; new member education/retention; 
identity; public relations; philanthropy; community service, fundraising, and alumni 
outreach.
**Section 6.** Chapter status. Colonies shall be afforded “chapter status” when they obtain their inter/national charter.

**Article XI: Standard of Evidence and Proof**

**Section 1.** A chapter shall be found responsible if the preponderance of evidence yields such a conclusion. Stated another way:

A. If evidence is “more likely than not” (i.e. a 51% probability) accurate, then the evidence shall be deemed considerable.

B. If a chapter is “more likely than not” (i.e. a 51% probability) complicit in an activity, then the chapter shall be found responsible.

**Article XII: Relationship Statement**

**Section 1.** The university seeks to promote a collaborative partnership between inter/national organizations, students, and alumni advisory groups. This partnership should be mutually beneficial and promote the success of our fraternities and sororities on campus. As such, we recognize a formal relationship exists between our fraternities, sororities, and the University community. The relationship shall be defined as such:

A. Chapters shall:

1. Adhere to university policies and procedures, including those outlined in this document.
2. Respond to requests for information or action made by University administrators, offices, and departments as they may arise.

B. As such, the University shall:

1. Recognize fraternities and sororities as official campus organizations and afford them all the rights and privileges thereto appertaining.
2. Provide advisement to recognized fraternities and sororities through the Greek Life Office.
3. Provide timely reports on such things as community service, philanthropic contribution, membership statistics, and academics.

**Review**

The Assistant Dean for Greek Life is responsible for the review of this policy every four years (or whenever circumstances require immediate review).

**Forms/Instructions**

N/A

**Appendices**

N/A
Related Information

N/A

History

01/15/11: Adopted.
07/12/11: Revised.
01/23/12: Revised.
01/02/13: Revised.
03/20/13: Formatted for template. Minor editing throughout.
Amendments: Month, Day, Year – summary of changes
Authorization

GOLD BOOK
STUA-GL-001

As the Responsible Officer, I have reviewed this policy and believe it represents the current policy.

[Signature]
Responsible Officer

[Signature]
Date 4/25/13

Minor Edits
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