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) organizations at The University of Southern Mississippi; 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/or 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.) is prohibited.

A. Any fraternity or sorority found in violation of this policy shall appear at a hearing by their respective council judicial board and 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 at a designated location agreed upon by the council judicial board.
      c. Suspension or Discontinuance of social activities for the remainder of the semester or six academic weeks (excluding summer semester) whichever is longer.
   2. Second Offense (prior to first offense sanction period completion)
      a. “Suspension of social activities” for one calendar year.
   3. Second Offense (within 12 months of the first offense)
      a. Mandatory alcohol education program approved by the Office of Greek Life
      b. Mandatory community service for the entire chapter, including new/associate members at a designated location agreed upon by the council judicial board.
      c. Suspension or Discontinuance of social activities for twelve academic weeks (excluding summer semester).
**Article V: Hazing**

The University of Southern Mississippi is a state institution of higher education devoted to excellence in teaching, research and service to the people of the state. A part of that mission is fulfilled by the university's commitment to the development of students through academic and extracurricular activities.

In keeping with its commitment to a positive academic environment, the university has unconditionally opposed any situation created intentionally or unintentionally to produce mental, physical, psychological or emotional discomfort, embarrassment, harassment or ridicule.

The University of Southern Mississippi interprets hazing in a manner consistent with the Association of Fraternity Insurance Purchasing Group (FIPG) in its statement of hazing and pre-initiation activities. The University of Southern Mississippi follows all state and federal guidelines concerning hazing and any other behavior that could be interpreted as such. In essence, hazing shall include any of the following:

**A.** Any willful act or practice by a member or new member directed against a member or new member that, with or without intent,

1. is likely, with reasonable possibility, to cause bodily harm or danger, offensive physical punishment or disturbing pain;
2. is likely to (a) compromise the dignity of a member or new member, (b) cause embarrassment or shame to a member or new member in public, (c) cause a member or new member to be an object of malicious amusement or ridicule, or (d) cause psychological harm or substantial emotional strain; or
3. will unreasonably or unusually, impair a member's or new member's academic efforts

Section 3. **Time.** New member activities shall not take place from the hours of 11 p.m. – 8 a.m., unless written permission is obtained from the national organization and Greek Life office.

Section 4. **Supportive behavior.** The creation of an environment conducive and/or supportive to the propagation of hazing traditions or culture is a violation of this policy. Insomuch, it is possible that self-directed or inflicted activities by members or new members would constitute hazing if a culture or atmosphere was pervasive enough to dictate acceptance, tradition, lineage, or otherwise perceived “need” to perform the activity.

Section 5. **Mississippi Hazing Law (§ 97-3-105. Hazing; initiation into organization.)**

A. A person is guilty of hazing in the first degree when, in the course of another person's initiation into or affiliation with any organization, he intentionally
or recklessly engages in conduct which creates a substantial risk of physical injury to such other person or a third person and thereby causes such injury.

1. Any person violating the provisions of “A” shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not more than Two Thousand Dollars ($2,000) or imprisonment in the county jail for not more than six (6) months, or both.

B. A person is guilty of hazing in the second degree when, in the course of another person’s initiation into or affiliation with any organization, he intentionally or recklessly engages in conduct which creates a substantial risk of physical injury to such other person or a third person.

1. Any person violating the provisions of subsection (3) of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not more than One Thousand Dollars ($1,000.00).

Article VI: Auxiliary Groups

Section 1. In practical sense, a single sweetheart per organization per academic year is permissible provided they do not contradict any of your organization’s inter/national policies.

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 1. In practical sense, a single sweetheart per organization per academic year is permissible provided they do not

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. Is it 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 by 5pm the following University business day. It is highly recommended that chapters utilize this form for off campus events.

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. On-Campus 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 held in on-campus venues.
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 4pm for events the following Monday – Friday. If Monday is a holiday, the event forms are due the prior Friday before at 4pm.
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 specific day.

E. Payment of police shall be made to the appropriate council in the form of 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. It is the responsibility of each chapter, members and guests to operate by their specific Risk Management Policy.

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. 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 University Administrator.
   2. Special event: Chapter shall be referred to their appropriate council judicial body or University Administrator.
   3. House party: Chapter shall be assessed the appropriate UPD fee.

B. Chapters who host an event and fail to register said event by Student Activities’ deadlines shall be referred to their council judicial body.

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

Section 10. It is the responsibility of fraternity/sorority organizations to ensure proper compliance with all Student Activities policies. A link to the policy can be found on the Student Activities website or http://www.usm.edu/sites/default/files/groups/office-student-activities/pdf/ppm_2014.pdf

Last Revision 12/19/2014
Article VIII: Membership

Section 1. All members of fraternities and sororities are required to complete a membership document/card that shall be filed in the Office of Greek Life. All members are considered a part of the chapter for their entire undergraduate career, unless the chapter provides proper documentation otherwise. This policy does apply to affiliate members. 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 removed from the official chapter roster for the purpose of grade reporting and council dues billing provided supporting documentation has been submitted by the appropriate deadline.
B. Chapters are financially responsible for their minimum housing occupancy. This will be enforced by Residence Life and/or Conference and Fraternity Housing.
C. Chapters may grant alumna/us or inactive status as they desire provided their inter/national organization allows for the status. Proper documentation must be provided.

Section 3. Size.
A. All fraternities and sororities shall maintain a membership size that is at least ten (10) full-time student members. There are two exemptions possible:
   1) Inter/national or regional moratorium on new membership was in effect the prior semester
   2) 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

All chapters are expected to maintain the highest academic standards. In addition to the chapter status designations below, each council judicial board or executive committee reserves the right to adjudicate additional sanctions at any designation level.

Section 1. Good standing. Chapter has attained a term composite GPA at or above the respective gender average at the university.
Section 2. Academic Warning. Chapter has attained a term GPA below their respective gender average at the university after having been at “Good standing” in the previous term.
   A. Submit an academic enhancement plan that is supported by the chapter and advisor.
   B. Status meeting with Greek Life Office personnel.

Section 3. Academic Reprimand. Chapter has attained a term GPA below their respective gender average at the university after having been at “Academic Warning” in the previous term. As such, the chapter shall:
   A. Submit an academic enhancement plan that is supported, through documentation, by the chapter advisor and national organization to Greek Life Office personnel.
   B. Receive an official “Reprimand” to be placed in their file and communicated to their inter/national organization.
   C. Chapter will be allowed no more than two total weekday social events unless specific approval has been granted by Greek Life Office personnel and relevant University Administration.

Section 4. Academic Social Suspension I. Chapter has achieved a term composite GPA below their respective gender average at the university 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, through documentation, 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.

Section 5. Academic Social Suspension II. The chapter has achieved a term composite GPA below their respective gender average at the university after having been at “Academic Social Suspension I” in the previous term. As such, the chapter shall:
   A. Submit an academic enhancement plan that was developed by the inter/national organization and alumni advisory group to the Greek Life Office personnel.
   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 their respective gender average at the university 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 fund-raising 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. As a minimum sanction, chapters failing to have their membership complete the aforementioned requirements will be subject to immediate administrative Suspension of Social Activities (including intramurals) until those meetings have been completed.

Section 8.

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 University gender average. If the colony membership is co-educational, it shall attain at or above the term University all-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, than the evidence shall be deemed considerable.
B. If a chapter is “more likely than not” (i.e. a 51% probability) complicit in an activity, than 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.

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