

Fraternity & Sorority Life External Review

Process Overview | January 2019

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Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Charge

Since 1857, the fraternity and sorority community at UW–Madison has enhanced the student experience, given back locally and nationally through philanthropic efforts, and created lasting friendships. We appreciate the many contributions individuals and chapters have made to UW–Madison. We also know that, nationally and locally, challenges remain in the areas of student safety and wellbeing. Many new initiatives and best practices have occurred nationally to enhance the support and positive contributions of these communities.

We are proud to have four councils overseeing fraternities and sororities at UW–Madison: Interfraternity Council (IFC), Multicultural Greek Council (MGC), National Panhellenic Council (NPHC), and Panhellenic Association (PHA). These groups oversee 60 chapters supporting 4,500 student members. While there are similarities among the four groups in terms of commitment to scholarship, service, and brotherhood/sisterhood, they also have unique attributes and processes. We are proud of the many contributions of these student organizations and yet we know we can do better and increase the safety of our students.

Therefore, I have requested a review of our fraternity/sorority community occur by hiring a team of national experts in fraternity/sorority life to do a review of our organizations.

Purpose

This external review is a proactive approach to assessing, clarifying, and strengthening the relationship between the University of Wisconsin–Madison and the fraternity and sorority community. By working with external experts in the field, we have the opportunity to explore specific areas of the community and our students' experiences, to set shared priorities, and determine next steps to ensure we continue to have a healthy and productive partnership. Our shared goal is for students to be healthy and safe and for fraternities and sororities to contribute positively to the campus community through their shared values of scholarship, leadership, service and brotherhood/sisterhood.

In preparation for this review, UW–Madison's Fraternity & Sorority Life (FSL) staff team consulted with Big Ten and industry peers for guidance in an effort to ensure that the review meets our intended purpose. This document contains information that will help inform the review process.

Project Scope

Given the complexity of the fraternity and sorority community, a broad series of topic areas will be addressed to help generate a comprehensive review. These areas of focus are listed in alphabetical order and may be expanded based on initial findings of the external consultant(s). Each area will

be explored across all four councils with specific areas of review identified within the descriptions below.

Accountability: Review existing discipline structures and processes, including the Committee on Student Organization, council based judicial efforts, and individual misconduct to determine effectiveness.

Diversity and Inclusion: Evaluate community climate (especially for traditionally underrepresented students), assess programming, and review institutional support.

Institutional Relationship: Explore role in FSL Housing (IFC, PHA), staff involvement in community (chapter hosted events, liability, etc.), and how self-governance plays a role within the community.

Membership Experience: Assess recruitment (IFC, PHA) and intake processes (MGC, NPHC), new member education, membership development efforts, leadership opportunities and academic engagement.

Resources and Support: Analyze current University advising and staffing structure, space, funding, programing and services that support the fraternity and sorority community.

Student Safety: Evaluate current strategies, programs and policies related to alcohol, other drugs, sexual violence, and hazing.

Process

A thorough review process provides a unique opportunity to elicit and respond to a wide variety of stakeholders within the fraternity and sorority community. To ensure a robust report that meets our intended purpose, the following groups will be included in this review process:

- Council officers
- Chapter officers
- Chapter Advisors
- General FSL members
- House corporation officers/house directors
- Alumni
- University and community partners

These constituents will be provided various engagement opportunities, including, but not limited to, focus groups, interviews, meetings, and surveys. In addition, the general student body, City of Madison officials, and the general public will have the opportunity to engage in the process.

In advance of the site visit, the Fraternity & Sorority Life team at UW–Madison will gather and organize existing, relevant materials for the external consultant’s review. These documents will relate specifically to the project’s scope, and will include the following:

- Campus Climate Survey
- Greek Alcohol Survey and Alcohol.Edu Survey
- Color of Drinking Survey
- AAU Campus Climate Survey (2015 and 2019)
- Membership #s & Chapter Breakdown
- Institutional Mission
- Division of Student Life and Division of Student Affairs Guiding Principles
- CfLI Mission & Vision, Staffing Model, etc.
- Listing of Current Programs and Services
- Grade Reports
- Commission on the Future of Fraternities & Sororities Reports (April 1989 & October 1999)

It is intended that the review meet both the needs of specific councils and inform the needs within the larger fraternity and sorority community. As a result, the review team will provide council-specific questions based on the project scope identified in this document. After compiling information from each council, the review team will provide both council-specific and community-wide reports.

External Review Team

The task of the external review team is to develop trust and gather accurate and in-depth information. A review team of 5 individuals, each holding membership in an organization that is part of our four governing councils (IFC, MGC, NPHC, PHA), will be charged to build trust and rapport with our students and generate a detailed report that meets our needs. The team of five will include a team lead responsible for submitting the final reports.

External Review Project Advisors

The success of this review will be dictated, in part, by the support of a wide variety of fraternity and sorority stakeholders. In an effort to ensure there is a shared direction for the review and an ability to build upon the review team’s final report, a group of project advisors will be generated. This group will be comprised of FSL students, alumni, faculty, staff, and community members. Special attention will be given to generating a group that has varied fraternity and sorority experiences, including different roles, chapter sizes, social identities, and council membership.

This group will meet in advance of the external review team’s visit to campus to provide guidance on the process. Additionally, the advisors will be asked for their feedback on how to proceed once the final report and recommendations are submitted.

Schedule & Timeline

The goal for this review is to engage with a sense of urgency while maintaining a commitment to being thorough. To help meet that intention, the following timeline has been developed:

- January/February: Update FSL Stakeholders of Pending Review
- February/March: Project Advisors Initial Meeting
- Early April: External Review Team Campus Visit
- Early Summer: Final Report and Recommendations Submitted
- Fall: Share Report Outcomes & Action Planning

Communication Plan

A primary principle guiding this review process is transparency. At the onset of the spring semester, the Vice Chancellor and University staff members will be communicating with council and chapter leaders the purpose and tentative plan for the external review. Additionally, key campus, community, and fraternity and sorority stakeholders will be notified. These constituency groups will be provided with a formal opportunity for input during the review.

At the time of the public announcement resources will be provided via an informational website, including FAQs, for the broader campus and Madison community to be informed and remain engaged.

Project Outcomes

At the conclusion of this process, the external review team will provide a report that includes a current analysis of the fraternity and sorority community at UW–Madison and a set of prioritized recommendations. The analysis and recommendations may focus on specific actions that can enhance relationships or address policies. The reviewers will be provided a project scope while still maintaining enough autonomy to produce an accurate and helpful report.

The final report will be reviewed by senior University leadership and invested Fraternity & Sorority Life stakeholders – including the project advisors – to determine a structure and process that can advance the recommendations that have been identified.