

An open letter to parents or guardians, or family members, about fraternities, sororities, and other fraternal organizations...

A new semester is upon us, and besides thinking about their academics, we know that many students are thinking about what to do on campus socially, and which of the 180+ clubs or activities to join. Your student may consider participating in a fraternity or sorority. Our hope is that your family will have as much information as possible for making those choices. If you want information about the expectations of membership in a fraternal organization or even what it means for a group to be registered at Geneseo, please feel free to call me (Dean Sancilio) at (585) 245-5706, or our fraternal advisor at (585) 245-5968 or go online to our website at <http://greeks.geneseo.edu>.

Registered Fraternal Organizations

For the colleges and universities that now comprise the State University of New York, fraternities and sororities have existed since the early 1800's. Currently there are 23 social, 1 service, and 3 professional organizations that are registered at Geneseo. Among the groups, 3 social fraternities and 5 social sororities are national organizations (i.e., have other chapters throughout the United States); the others are local chapters (i.e., are Geneseo-specific organizations). Overall, approximately 20% of the student body is a member of a College-affiliated fraternal social, service, or professional organization. While these groups are not disproportionately influential on campus, in terms of leadership positions or membership on teams, they are a very visible presence.

The fraternal organizations are governed by a Statement of Relationship between the College and the organizations, the Inter-Greek Council constitution, and the Student Code of Conduct. This relationship statement formalizes the expectations, rights and responsibilities of both the College and the organizations themselves, so that each group knows what is expected of it and what can be expected of the other. Fraternal organizations do not have College-sponsored housing on or off campus, but their official registration with the College authorizes them to use campus facilities for their activities, to participate in social, recreational and intramural programs, and to work with other student organizations to sponsor campus events and programs. If members of these registered groups choose to conduct their activities off campus, they do so without College supervision. If you have any questions about the registration status or conduct standing of an organization, please contact me or look at our website.

The currently registered sororities are:

Alpha Delta Epsilon (AD), Alpha Kappa Phi (Ago), Alpha Omega Pi (AOPi), Alpha Sigma Tau (AST), Sigma Gamma Phi (Arethusa), Delta Phi Epsilon (DPhiE), Phi Kappa Pi (Clio), Phi Lambda Chi (Phi Lamb), Royal Lady Knights (RLK), Sigma Delta Tau (SDT), Sigma Kappa (Kappa), Sisters Making a Change (SMAC), Zeta Phi Beta (Zeta)

The currently registered fraternities are:

Alpha Chi Rho (Crow), Delta Kappa Tau (DK), Men of Action and Change (MAC), Omega Beta Psi (Omega), Phi Kappa Chi (Phi Kap), Sigma Alpha Mu (SAM), Sigma Nu Chi (Sig Nu), Sigma Tau Psi (Sig Tau), Theta Chi, Zeta Beta Xi (ZBXi)

The co-ed groups are:

Alpha Phi Omega** (service), Alpha Kappa Psi** (business), Phi Alpha Delta** (law), Phi Delta Epsilon** (medical)

What To Expect

Recruitment is the act of gathering information/getting educated on the different registered groups. First-year and new transfer students are allowed to participate fully in recruitment events. Pledging is the official act of joining an organization. **Social sororities and fraternities (those other than the ones ** above) are not allowed to 'pledge,' or initiate freshmen or new transfer students during the student's first semester on campus. New transfer students may only join with prior written permission from me.** Our goal is to give new students at least one semester to adjust to the academic and social demands of college, specifically Geneseo, before becoming involved in fraternities and sororities. We want to give students the time to establish good study habits and time management skills, the opportunity

to investigate and explore the many options for involvement in the life of the College, the space to find their own niche, and the freedom to begin to become more independent

When To Be Concerned And What To Do

1. If your student is involved in pledging/joining a social fraternal organization during their first semester on campus, or if they join without having the qualifying grades or credit hours (complete grade release form via Knightweb), it means they are involved with a group that is breaking College policy (unless they receive a waiver from me as Dean of Students, to participate in pledging). Talk about it with your student and find out as much as you can about their understanding of the situation.

If they are pledging an unregistered or suspended group, remind them that an important policy is being violated (which may subject them and the group to campus conduct action). Determine whether it is acceptable to you or your student that they are involved with a group that disregards the rules.

Contact me to inform us about rule infractions by any of the groups.

2. Hazing can be a concern when working with fraternities and sororities, as it is with many other types of groups. College policy defines hazing as any act, explicit or implicit, committed by a person, whether individually or in concert with others, against a student in connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization or team *and* which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of, humiliating, intimidating or demeaning the student or endangering the mental or physical health of the student, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. Hazing also includes soliciting, directing, aiding, or otherwise participating actively or passively in the above acts. If hazing occurs within a registered or suspended organization, people and procedures are in place to address these issues should they be brought to our attention.

In addition to the mandatory workshops that we present and meetings that we hold, we have put together a *Stand Up and Stop Hazing* brochure to educate the community about hazing. A copy of the brochure can be found [online](#) While reports of hazing at Geneseo are rare, it is sometimes the symptoms of hazing that are the first signs to parents that their student is pledging.

Students will have many choices to make regarding the direction of their Geneseo careers. Educated decisions usually come after a period of investigation and discernment. There is a whole body of research regarding the benefits and drawbacks to participating in fraternal life as a college student. We all share the goal of academic and personal success for our students, and we strive to provide the highest quality campus environment that is conducive to that success. We are committed to maintaining a strong fraternal life program with high standards for academic success, leadership development, responsible social activities, philanthropy, and service. If this is something that might be of interest to your student, make sure they do their homework and educate themselves before making such an important decision.

If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Leonard Sancilio, Jr., Ph.D.
Dean of Students