



## UNANIMOUS AGREEMENTS

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Basic to the National Panhellenic Conference are the following unanimous agreements, which express the fair play essential to interfraternity activity and that set forth the rights of women's fraternities as private, voluntary social organizations.

Since 1902, the member groups of NPC have unanimously agreed to pursue certain procedures and ethics that lead to the orderly and equitable conduct of their mutual functions. If one group votes NO, the proposed agreement is not accepted. As a further assurance that all 26 member groups are truly unified in their decisions, the unanimous agreements are ratified by the Inter/National President of each fraternity. Her signature is her fraternity's pledge that every collegiate and alumna member will abide by and honor the unanimous agreements.

Therefore, each College Panhellenic (or Inter-Sorority Council or the equivalent organization) and Alumnae Panhellenic must incorporate the NPC unanimous agreements into its own procedures and methods of operation (constitution, bylaws and membership recruitment rules). These unanimous agreements are binding on all member fraternities of the National Panhellenic Conference.

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## **UNANIMOUS AGREEMENTS**

### **I. THE PANHELLENIC CREED**

We, as Undergraduate members of women's fraternities, stand for good scholarship, for guarding of good health, for maintenance of fine standards, and for serving, to the best of our ability, our college community. Cooperation for furthering fraternity life, in harmony with its best possibilities, is the ideal that shall guide our fraternity activities.

We, as Fraternity Women, stand for service through the development of character inspired by the close contact and deep friendship of individual fraternity and Panhellenic life. The opportunity for wide and wise human service, through mutual respect and helpfulness, is the tenet by which we strive to live.

### **II. JURISDICTION OF PANHELLENIC ASSOCIATIONS**

Panhellenic associations are based on democratic principles and organized to afford cooperation among the women's fraternities. Panhellenic members shall respect and obey the letter and spirit of all National Panhellenic Conference unanimous agreements. Panhellenic associations' constitutions and bylaws shall conform to all unanimous agreements.

#### **1. College Panhellenic Associations**

- A. The administrative body of a College Panhellenic Association is a College Panhellenic Council.
- B. A College Panhellenic Council shall be comprised of delegates selected by individual chapters from the NPC fraternities.
- C. A College Panhellenic Council shall take no action that infringes on the sovereignty, rights, or privileges of the individual NPC fraternities. Infringements include but are not limited to the following:
  - i. Requiring fraternity chapters to maintain a specific scholastic grade point average.
  - ii. Requiring a scholastic grade point average as a condition for a chapter's participation in membership recruitment.
  - iii. Requiring a scholastic grade point average as a condition for a woman's participation in the membership recruitment process.
  - iv. Requiring a scholastic grade point average as a qualification for pledging or initiation.
  - v. Requiring fraternity chapters to maintain a minimum number of members.
  - vi. Surveying to collect data that reflects a chapter's internal information or requiring documents that are considered confidential material regarding the chapter's internal operations.
  - vii. Lowering a chapter's quota as a penalty.
  - viii. Requiring a chapter's Panhellenic delegate to be a specific chapter officer.
  - ix. Enacting a College Panhellenic governing document provision or sanction that infringes on the sovereignty, rights or privileges of the individual NPC fraternities.
  - x. Voting to contradict an NPC Unanimous Agreement.

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- D. Language that infringes on the sovereignty, rights or privileges of the individual NPC fraternities or that contradicts an NPC Unanimous Agreement must be removed immediately; no vote is necessary.
- E. Except in routine matters, a College Panhellenic Council and officers of a College Panhellenic Council shall act only upon a vote of the delegate body after referral to the member fraternity chapters.

### **2. Alumnae Panhellenic Associations**

- A. The administrative body of an Alumnae Panhellenic Association is an Alumnae Panhellenic Council.
- B. Alumnae Panhellenic Councils shall be composed of delegates selected by their organized alumnae groups; an individual may represent her fraternity where there is no alumnae group.
- C. One vote shall be granted to each NPC member fraternity represented in the Alumnae Panhellenic Association.
- D. Alumnae Panhellenic Associations shall not expel a member group of any NPC fraternity from its membership in the Alumnae Panhellenic Association.
- E. A re-established alumnae group shall take its place in rotation in the Alumnae Panhellenic Association according to the date of its re-establishment.

### **III. THE PANHELLENIC COMPACT**

- 1. A woman who is or who has ever been an initiated member of an existing NPC fraternity shall not be eligible for membership in another NPC fraternity.
- 2. To be eligible to pledge an NPC fraternity chapter on the campus where a woman is enrolled, she shall be regularly matriculated according to the definition of matriculation established by that institution.
- 3. No female student shall be asked to join an NPC fraternity during any school recess except during a formal membership recruitment period and the ensuing continuous open bidding held immediately prior to an academic term.
- 4. A signed membership recruitment acceptance or a continuous open bidding (COB) acceptance is binding. If a potential member receives a bid under the preference system, she is ineligible to be pledged to any other NPC fraternity on the same campus for one calendar year. If a potential member does not receive a bid under the preference system, she is eligible for COB.
- 5. If through the primary membership recruitment process, a potential member receives a bid and declines it, then she is ineligible to be pledged to another NPC fraternity on the same campus until the beginning of the next year's primary membership recruitment period.
- 6. At a later date but before the next primary membership recruitment period, if the potential member who declined her bid expresses interest in being pledged to the chapter with which she originally matched, she may do so only if the chapter extends another bid to her and has quota or total spaces to fill.
- 7. If a potential member does not receive a bid at the end of the primary membership recruitment period, she is eligible immediately to participate in continuous open bidding (COB).

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8. If through the primary recruitment process a potential member accepts a bid and then has her pledge broken by an NPC fraternity or breaks her pledge, then she is ineligible to be pledged to another NPC fraternity on the same campus until the beginning of the next year's primary membership recruitment period.
9. A COB acceptance is a binding agreement. If a potential member accepts a bid, signs a COB acceptance and then has her pledge broken by an NPC fraternity or breaks her pledge, then she is ineligible to be pledged to another NPC fraternity on that campus until the beginning of the next year's primary membership recruitment period.
10. A woman who has accepted a bid either through primary or COB recruitment and who has had her pledge broken by an NPC fraternity or has broken her pledge, may be repledged by the same NPC fraternity chapter on the campus at any time before the beginning of the next year's primary membership recruitment period, even if the chapter is over total.

### IV. STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

1. National Panhellenic Conference fraternities shall impress upon their undergraduate and alumnae members that they shall respect and obey the letter and the spirit of all NPC Unanimous Agreements.
2. In case of Panhellenic difficulties, all chapters involved shall do their utmost to restore harmony and to prevent publicity, both in the college and the community.
3. National Panhellenic Conference denounces the arbitrary priority rating of women's fraternities.
4. National Panhellenic Conference denounces the ranking or categorization of chapters determined by administrative personnel according to a chapter's compliance with university standards or guidelines.
5. National Panhellenic Conference fraternity members shall not suggest to any potential member that she refuse a bid from one group in order to wait for a bid from another group or suggest that a potential member list only one choice on her membership recruitment acceptance.
6. It is in accord with the dignity and good manners of fraternity women to:
  - A. Avoid disparaging remarks about any fraternity or college woman.
  - B. Create friendly relations between fraternity and nonfraternity women.
  - C. Avoid negative publicity on Panhellenic matters.
7. National Panhellenic Conference discourages the use of Greek-letter fraternity names and insignia in inappropriate or distasteful commercial advertising.
8. National Panhellenic Conference has no affiliation or connection with any high school sorority.
9. National Panhellenic Conference supports all efforts to eliminate hazing.

### V. AGREEMENT ON EXTENSION

1. National Panhellenic Conference believes that it is unethical for an NPC fraternity to contact an institution and/or its students concerning the establishment of a chapter where the institution fails to meet the NPC requirements for a host institution, i.e., the institution must be a senior college or university that is authorized to confer a

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bachelor's degree and that has received a satisfactory rating by the pertinent recognized regional association of colleges and secondary schools or other recognized agency and/or entity that confers accreditation in the relevant jurisdiction.

2. The proper authority shall be defined as follows:
  - A. Where there are two or more NPC fraternities present on campus, then a vote of those NPC fraternities as evidenced in written minutes of the College Panhellenic Council (if organized) shall constitute the proper authority or if there is no College Panhellenic Council, then a separate vote of the NPC chapters present on campus shall constitute the proper authority.
  - B. On campuses where there is one or no NPC fraternity and where the administration is willing to recognize women's fraternities, a letter from a senior-level student affairs administrator shall constitute the proper authority.
  - C. The NPC Extension Committee is the proper authority on campuses where there is one or no NPC fraternity and the college administration does not grant recognition to women's fraternities but does not discipline students for joining.
3. Contact regarding extension by NPC fraternities, volunteers, staff, collegiate and alumnae members shall include the following:
  - A. NPC fraternities may contact the administration of any college or university that meets the criteria listed in Unanimous Agreement V, No. 1 and serves as the proper authority.
  - B. When a campus has two or more NPC fraternities and is open for extension, NPC fraternities can communicate with a student(s), an interest group or a local sorority only with prior permission of the proper authority.
  - C. NPC fraternities that are contacted by student(s), local sororities or interest groups from campuses with two or more NPC fraternities must refer the student(s), local sorority or interest group to the proper authority.
  - D. NPC fraternities should not be in contact with students of any college or university concerning membership where the administration disciplines students for joining women's fraternities.
  - E. When a local sorority or interest group is in discussions with an NPC fraternity regarding affiliation after approval by the proper authority, no other group shall be in communication with that local sorority or interest group.
4. Any colony of an NPC fraternity shall become a provisional member of the College Panhellenic Association and shall conform to the association's established rules, regulations and policies.
5. When an NPC fraternity has installed a chapter, that chapter shall become a regular member of the College Panhellenic Association.

## **VI. COLLEGE PANHELLENIC ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT**

1. **Establishment and Regulation of a College Panhellenic Association**
  - A. A College Panhellenic Association shall be established where two or more NPC fraternities have installed undergraduate chapters.
  - B. The NPC fraternity chapter first installed on that campus shall take the initiative in organizing the College Panhellenic Association with the participation and involvement of other existing NPC fraternity chapters on that campus.

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- C. When an NPC member fraternity has followed the NPC Agreement on Extension, and a chapter has been installed, that chapter shall become a regular member of the College Panhellenic Association.
- D. Each installed NPC fraternity chapter shall have one vote.
- E. A College Panhellenic Association shall not expel a chapter of any NPC fraternity from its membership, nor shall it have the authority to recommend such action.
- F. An NPC fraternity chapter shall not have the right to withdraw from its College Panhellenic Association.
- G. A re-established NPC fraternity chapter shall take its place in the College Panhellenic Association according to the date of its most recent installation.

### **2. Establishment and Regulation of Membership Recruitment**

- A. Each College Panhellenic Council shall establish rules governing membership recruitment activities.
- B. Each NPC fraternity chapter has the right to COB to reach quota or its total allowable chapter size during the regular school year as defined by the school calendar. To accommodate the colonization of a chapter or to allow a chapter to build its membership, the College Panhellenic Council may vote to suspend COB for a period not to exceed three weeks.
- C. Each College Panhellenic Association shall prohibit the use of alcoholic beverages in membership recruitment and Bid Day activities.
- D. Each College Panhellenic Association shall prohibit the participation of men in membership recruitment and Bid Day activities.
- E. All members, including alumnae and new members, shall be bound by College Panhellenic Association rules governing membership recruitment.
- F. Regardless of recruitment style, a potential new member shall sign a binding agreement of membership.

### **3. Preferential Bidding**

When a preferential bidding system is used, the College Panhellenic Association shall observe the following:

- A. When a woman receives a bid under the preferential system, the signing of the membership acceptance is binding to the extent she shall be considered ineligible for one calendar year to accept a bid from any other NPC fraternity on the same campus. However, she may be repledged by the same NPC fraternity chapter at any time within that calendar year.
- B. The person in charge of preferential bidding shall be required to safeguard all records and keep them for one year from the date of signing.

### **4. Continuous Open Bidding (COB)**

- A. During COB, the proof of a woman's acceptance of membership shall be a dated COB acceptance signed by the woman and witnessed by a member of the NPC fraternity chapter.
- B. The person in charge of record-keeping shall be required to safeguard all COB records and keep them for one year from the date of signing.

## VII. COLLEGE PANHELLENIC ASSOCIATION JUDICIAL PROCEDURE

### 1. Judicial Board

Each College Panhellenic Association shall establish a judicial board for the limited purpose of handling member group infractions of NPC Unanimous Agreements, College Panhellenic constitution and/or bylaws, membership recruitment rules/guidelines, Panhellenic code of ethics, and College Panhellenic standing rules.

- A. The composition and duties of the judicial board must be defined in the College Panhellenic constitution and/or bylaws.
- B. A College Panhellenic shall develop a workable judicial board based on the needs of the campus.
- C. The duties and responsibilities of the judicial board must be consistent with all NPC Unanimous Agreements.
- D. The NPC judicial forms shall be used to ensure proper documentation and adherence to the NPC Unanimous Agreements. The forms are:
  - i. College Panhellenic Violation Report
  - ii. College Panhellenic Notice of Infraction
  - iii. College Panhellenic Record of Judicial Board Hearing
  - iv. College Panhellenic Judicial Board Hearing Minutes
  - v. College Panhellenic Notice of Appeal
- E. Documentation of all judicial proceedings shall be retained by the College Panhellenic for a period of three years.

### 2. Judicial Process Overview

Fraternities are encouraged to resolve alleged infractions through informal discussion with the involved parties. Should the informal discussions be unsuccessful, the judicial process will be set in motion by the filing of a report of an alleged violation. Violations must be reported in the following manner on the College Panhellenic Violation Report available from the College Panhellenic:

- A. Timing
  - i. The College Panhellenic Violation Report shall be completed and presented to the president of the College Panhellenic Association in a timely manner, but not more than 30 calendar days from the date of the alleged infraction (including university/college breaks). If the College Panhellenic president is unavailable or the violation is against her fraternity, the report shall be presented to the College Panhellenic vice president or fraternity/sorority advisor.
  - ii. The College Panhellenic president and fraternity/sorority advisor shall review the College Panhellenic Violation Report to ensure it has been filled out completely, including proper signatures and indication of rule/policy violated. An incomplete report shall be returned to the reporting party for completion prior to proceeding.
- B. Proper Reporting Authority
  - i. Infractions excluding recruitment infractions must be reported and signed by the president of a member group on behalf of her chapter.
  - ii. Recruitment infractions may be reported and signed by either:
    - a. President of the member group on behalf of her chapter.

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- b. College Panhellenic officer in charge of recruitment or the recruitment counselor.
  - c. Potential new member.
  - d. Fraternity/sorority advisor.
- C. Notice
- i. When a report of an infraction is properly received by the College Panhellenic, the accused fraternity shall be given formal notification in writing. The College Panhellenic President shall notify the member group using the College Panhellenic Notice of Infraction. The College Panhellenic Violation Report is retained by the College Panhellenic president or fraternity/sorority advisor and is available upon request from the accused fraternity. A copy of the College Panhellenic Violation Report shall be given to the NPC area advisor.
  - ii. The College Panhellenic Notice of Infraction shall be delivered to the president of the accused fraternity within one week of the College Panhellenic president's receipt of the College Panhellenic Violation Report. If the president of the accused fraternity is unavailable, delivery may be made to another appropriate fraternity officer or advisor. The record of delivery shall be documented on the report. A copy of the College Panhellenic Notice of Infraction shall be given to the fraternity/sorority advisor and the NPC area advisor within the same time period.
  - iii. Upon receipt of the College Panhellenic Notice of Infraction, the accused fraternity shall contact the College Panhellenic president within one week to schedule mediation or choose to proceed directly to a judicial hearing.
    - a. If the College Panhellenic Notice of Infraction is delivered during a college/university break, the mediation/judicial hearing may be scheduled after classes resume or held during the break if all parties are available.
    - b. On those campuses where the small size of the College Panhellenic makes a judicial hearing ineffective because of conflicts of interest and mediation has proved ineffective, an appeal may be made directly to the NPC College Panhellenics Judicial Appeals Committee.
- D. Mediation
- i. The purpose of mediation is to find a solution satisfactory to both the complaining party and the accused fraternity, which is appropriate under NPC Unanimous Agreements, the College Panhellenic Association constitution, bylaws and rules.
  - ii. The College Panhellenic president shall appoint a neutral party to serve as the mediator. The mediator shall not be an undergraduate student. The fraternity/sorority advisor may serve as a mediator if she/he has not filed the violation.
  - iii. Mediation shall be closed to the public. All participants in the mediation shall keep strict confidentiality. The participants shall be representatives from each fraternity involved, including a chapter advisor or the complaining party if other than a fraternity. In cases of recruitment infractions, the College Panhellenic recruitment chairman shall attend only if she has information that

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explains the violation. After she presents her information, she shall be excused from the mediation.

- E. Judicial Board Hearing
  - i. If mediation is not successful, a judicial board hearing shall be held.
  - ii. The College Panhellenic shall establish procedures to be followed during a judicial board hearing. The procedures shall be adopted in accordance with the College Panhellenic Association bylaws.
  - iii. Judicial board hearings shall be closed to the public. The participants in the judicial board hearing shall be representatives from each fraternity involved, including a chapter advisor, or the complaining party if other than a fraternity, the College Panhellenic president, the fraternity/sorority advisor and in cases of recruitment infractions, the College Panhellenic recruitment chairman.

### 3. Penalties

Each College Panhellenic shall strive to achieve a fair and reasonable resolution for infractions. Penalties should be assessed to fit the nature and degree of the offense.

#### A. Inappropriate Penalties

- i. Monetary fines shall only be acceptable for measurable recruitment infractions (i.e., late invitation lists, late events, etc.). The amounts shall be predetermined by a vote of the College Panhellenic Council and stated in the membership recruitment rules.
- ii. Penalties shall not forbid formal or informal entertainment that is part of membership recruitment or the observance of an inter/national fraternity celebration.
- iii. Penalties shall not affect a fraternity chapter's quota or total.
- iv. Penalties shall not affect the time of new member acceptance and/or initiation.
- v. Penalties shall not forbid the right of an NPC fraternity to vote in College Panhellenic meetings.

#### B. Duration of Penalties

The duration of any penalty imposed shall not exceed one calendar year from the time the decision is final.

#### C. NPC Notification of Penalties

Within 24 hours of the successful completion of mediation or the judicial hearing, the College Panhellenic president shall send a copy of the College Panhellenic Record of Mediation or judicial board hearing (not including the minutes) to the NPC area advisor, the NPC delegate and the inter/national president.

### 4. Appeals

- A. Judicial Board Decision. A decision of the College Panhellenic Association judicial board may be appealed by any involved party to the NPC College Panhellenics Judicial Appeals chairman. An appeal shall be filed with the College Panhellenic president using the College Panhellenic Notice of Appeal within **one week** of the decision. A penalty shall begin only after all properly filed appeals have been decided; however, should a sanctioned fraternity choose to begin fulfilling all or part of the stipulations of the sanction pending the outcome of filed appeals, the fraternity shall have that option.

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- B. NPC College Panhellenics Judicial Appeals Committee. If the NPC College Panhellenics Judicial Appeals Committee is unable to resolve the appeal, the committee chairman shall be responsible for the further conduct of the case. She shall submit by certified mail, return receipt requested, **all data** regarding the appeal to the inter/national president(s) of the fraternity(s) involved.
- C. Inter/National Presidents. If the inter/national presidents cannot resolve the case by discussions among themselves, the case may be referred by any inter/national president involved to the NPC Executive Committee.
- D. NPC Executive Committee. If the NPC Executive Committee cannot resolve the case, it may be appealed either by the inter/national president or by the NPC Executive Committee to the National Panhellenic Conference.
- E. National Panhellenic Conference. The decision of the National Panhellenic Conference shall be final.

### **VIII. AGREEMENT ON QUESTIONNAIRES**

Questionnaires, oral and written, shall not be answered until such time as they have been reviewed by the NPC Research Committee and information released to encourage a coordinated response to protect individual and group freedom of association and the right to privacy.

### **IX. NPC DECLARATION OF FREEDOM**

Knowledge is essential to the preservation of freedoms provided in the first 10 amendments of the Constitution of the United States, known as the Bill of Rights, and as provided by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Part 1, Constitution Act, 1982), known as the Guarantee of Rights and Freedoms.

Citizens of both the United States of America and Canada are guaranteed the rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of association. National Panhellenic Conference is dedicated to the preservation of freedom of citizens to choose their associates.

We, the members of the National Panhellenic Conference, agree that we have a responsibility to contribute to accurate and thorough knowledge of the freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and of any forces, organizations and ideologies that are potentially destructive to these freedoms.

### **X. PROTECTING THE RIGHT OF NPC MEMBERS TO REMAIN WOMEN-ONLY ORGANIZATIONS**

NPC member groups exist as women-only private social organizations. We believe that the right to enforce such membership restrictions is rooted in the freedom of association protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The U.S. Congress has recognized that right by providing in Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 that social fraternities are exempt from the prohibition against discrimination on the basis of sex in participation in educational programs or related activities (20 USC 1681) and in exempting "bona fide private membership clubs" from the general prohibition against sex discrimination in employment practice (26 USC 501(c)). To further protect the right to maintain our membership policies, the National Panhellenic Conference reaffirms its long-held beliefs and policies in the form of a Unanimous Agreement.

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1. The women's fraternities of the National Panhellenic Conference have the right to confine their membership to women and shall defend their right to exist as single-sex organizations.
2. **Auxiliaries.** Each College Panhellenic shall denounce the participation of undergraduate Panhellenic women in auxiliary groups to men's fraternities.
3. **Men's Recruitment.** Each College Panhellenic shall denounce the participation of undergraduate Panhellenic women in men's formal recruitment.

### **Rationale behind Unanimous Agreement X**

The primary purpose of this new Unanimous Agreement is to protect women's fraternities' single-sex status. The requirement under law for groups such as fraternities and sororities to remain single-sex organizations was a fight our leaders lobbied for and worked hard to win in the 1970s. Title IX, the 1972 amendment to the 1964 Civil Rights Act, banned sexual discrimination in public and private educational institutions. Because we demonstrated value and the ability to remain independent, we were able to maintain the right to confine our membership only to women and to exist as single-sex organizations. This status is one that many other single-sex civic and philanthropic organizations lost at the time — Rotary and Lions clubs, eating/social clubs, etc. — and were forced to integrate their membership.

NPC and our member groups have an ongoing responsibility to publically demonstrate that our recruitment, education and initiation of our members into our organizations is without need or dependence on others — especially those of the opposite sex. The presence, involvement and activity of sorority members at men's fraternity recruitment events and in men's auxiliary groups greatly weakens our position and gives support to the argument that fraternal organizations do not need to remain single-sex groups.