



**ROCHESTER**  
UNIVERSITY

**GREEK LIFE HANDBOOK**

**2023-2024**

Greek Life Handbook

### **Rochester University Mission**

Rochester University prepares students for professional and personal success as they serve in God's world.

### **Center for Student Life Mission**

Steadfast with the mission and Christian identity of RU, the Center for Student Life (hereafter, CSL) empowers our diverse student body through intentional programming to cultivate an environment and experience that nurtures personal, relational, and spiritual formation in service to God's world.

### **Purpose of Greek Life**

Greek Life organizations exist to support and embody the mission and values of Rochester University and the Center for Student Life by uniting students of common interests through the integration of faith, service, learning, and living.

Greek Life contributes to a positive student experience by offering students opportunities for spiritual, intellectual, social, physical, and civic growth through a range of inclusive relationships and activities with peers.

### **Greek Life Advocacy**

In addition to embodying the identity and purpose of specific fraternities/sororities, Greek Life members are also called upon to serve as Greek Life advocates. Advocating for Greek Life includes:

1. Identification of fraternity/sorority membership by the wearing of the fraternity/sorority gear
2. Inter-fraternal cooperation
3. Campus collaboration and participation
4. Helping prospective members find the right fraternity/sorority

## **Fraternities/Sororities**

### **Local Greek Fraternities/Sororities**

Local Greek organizations include fraternities/sororities that are unique to Rochester University and are not guided by or responsible to a governing body outside of the university. Local Greek organizations include:

#### **Women's Sororities**

Omicron Omega Zeta

#### **Men's Fraternities**

Epsilon Theta Chi

#### **Gender Inclusive Fraternities**

Sigma Phi Delta Nu

### **National Greek Fraternities**

National Greek organizations include fraternities/sororities that are not unique to Rochester University but have a national presence and governance with whom Rochester University has an active chapter. National Greek organizations may include common interest groups, professional oriented organizations and national honor societies. The university is committed to maintaining chapters of nationally recognized Greek organizations as long as such organization is consistent with the mission and values of the institution and the university's intended purposes for Greek Life. National Greek organizations are guided and governed by a national board, constitution and by-laws that provide the framework for the organization. Departments other than the Center for Student Life may provide the institutional governance of nationally recognized Greek organizations (i.e. academic departments). Current National Greek organizations include:

Psi Chi Psychology Honor Society

Students are limited to participating in one local Greek organization but may participate in multiple national Greek organizations.

## **Rules/Order**

### **Maintaining Good Standing**

All Greek Life organizations must maintain and adhere to a constitution and a current copy of each organization's constitution must be filed with the Center for Student Life.

All Greek Life organizations must renew their charters, annually, prior to the Fall semester.

The charter renewal process includes the submission of any addendums to the organization's constitution, a list of officers, a list of current sponsors, and a list of active members.

### **Chartering a New Local Greek Organization**

To create a new local Greek Life organization, the following requirements must be met:

1. An initial founding membership of, at minimum, ten students, but no more than twenty-five
2. Secure one qualified and approved sponsors
3. Submission of a completed constitution to the Center for Student Life

### **Chartering a New Chapter of a National Greek Organization**

In addition to all established requirements, those wishing to create a new chapter of a nationally recognized/organized Greek organization must:

1. Submit a copy of the organization's constitution to the Center for Student Life
2. Recruit an initial founding membership of, at minimum, eight students
3. Secure two qualified and approved sponsors

### **Constitutions**

Each organization must maintain a constitution that concretely articulates the identity, purpose, goals and function of the organization. Officers and sponsors should review constitutions annually. Any addendums to the constitution must be submitted during the annual charter renewal process and must be approved by the Center for Student Life prior to their execution. Constitutions must include:

1. Name, mission, mottos, songs, scriptures,
2. Service statement and adopted service organization
3. Organizational Structure Officer positions, descriptions of roles and responsibilities, process for selecting officers, process for removing officers, process for replacing officers that step down or are removed
4. Membership Requirements qualifications, rites of passage, dues, roles
5. Membership Expectations events, meetings, leadership, activities
- . Sponsor Expectations number of sponsors, selection process, communication strategies

**Greek Life Officers**

All Greek Life officers must be in good academic and judicial standing at Rochester University and must meet their respective Greek organization's constitution requirements prior to accepting a position as an officer. Officers must be enrolled full-time at the time of election and throughout their tenure as an officer, unless the officer is in their last semester.

Greek Life executive officers must attend and/or complete a student officer training that will occur within the first two weeks of the Fall semester.

Fraternities/Sororities members may nominate candidates for officer positions based upon the organization's constitution. All Greek Life executive officers must be selected and communicated to the Center for Student Life prior to the end of the Spring semester.

**Inter-Club Council (ICC)**

The Inter-Club Council (ICC) is made up of the Presidents of all Greek Life organizations. The ICC provides opportunities for fraternities and sororities to develop collaborative programming, receive information related to institutional updates, develop and share strategies for the continued improvement of Greek Life and work together to resolve internal and external conflicts.

**Sponsors**

Sponsors are volunteers who serve to advise members in meeting the mission, purpose and goals of the organization, as well as being mentors with whom lasting relationships may be formed. Sponsors must support and be in alignment with the mission and values of Rochester University.

Greek organizations assume the responsibility of providing sponsors with effective and timely communication. Sponsors are to be notified well in advance of all meetings, events and activities. Meeting agendas are to be submitted to sponsors in advance of each meeting.

Each organization must have a minimum of one institutionally approved sponsor. Institutionally approved sponsors are listed below:

- Current RU faculty
- Current RU professional staff member
- Alumni (must be 4 years out from graduation year)

Organizations with 50 or more active members must have a minimum of two institutionally approved sponsors. Family members of current Greek Life members are not eligible to be sponsors.

All activities (on and off campus), including but not limited to meetings, rush and pledging related events must be approved by Center for Student Life personnel and institutionally approved sponsor(s).

**Membership Recruitment/Rush Week**

Rochester University's Greek organizations may recruit potential members during Rochester University's Rush Week. Rush Week is identified as a week in which each organization will set up an on-campus activity each night of the week as a way of introducing fellow students to Greek Life and inviting students to interact with current fraternity/sorority members through approved events, activities and service. Rush Week occurs during the last full week of September. Greek organizations must submit, for approval from their sponsor and Center for Student Life personnel, a detailed account of all Rush activities a full week prior to Rush Week to Center for Student Life personnel. Alumni may also participate in Rush Week but must be approved by the executive board of their respective fraternity or sorority.

A potential member is defined as any undergraduate student attending at least part time at Rochester University. Graduate students that seek interest must contact the president of the sorority or fraternity. Membership for graduate students is not guaranteed.

For Rush Week events that are joint (2 or more greek life organizations), only 1 sponsor must be present, from either greek life organizations.

For Rush Week events that are individual, sponsors are required to attend a minimum of 2 events that week.

See the Membership Recruitment Addendum for more information

**Membership Application**

Membership in local Greek Life organizations is open to any undergraduate student enrolled in six or more hours at Rochester University and in good academic (minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0) and judicial standing. Individual organizations may have additional membership requirements as stated in their constitutions. Membership may only be pursued and granted during the Fall semester through formal application, selection and completion of the pledging process.

National Greek Life organizations may adhere to distinct processes and timelines that differ from the institution based upon nationally established guides and standards.

Students wishing to apply for membership in a local Greek Life organization must submit an application prior to the application deadline. Late applications will not be considered.

### **Bids and Bid Night/All Greek Life Meeting**

The names of eligible applicants will be sent to the presidents immediately following the close of the application. Applications will open the first day of Rush Week and will close the Friday of Rush Week at 5PM. Each Greek Life organization, with a sponsor present, will spend the weekend right after Rush Week to vote on the prospective members and extend bids to their prospective members. Determination and communication of bids is based on each Greek Life organization constitution and traditions. Bids must be accepted on that Friday following Rush Week. Once a prospective member accepts a bid, they have now transitioned to a new member status.

Bid Night will occur two weeks after Rush Week. The Inter-Club Council (ICC) will determine if they wish to do a joint Bid Night Ceremony between all Greek Life organizations in one setting or choose to host individual Bid Ceremonies. During Bid Night, all Greek Life organizations will meet in a space on campus, communicated through the Center for Student Life for the all Greek Life meeting. During this meeting, all future and current members must read and accept the Anti-Hazing Agreement. Violation of this agreement will result in a meeting with Center for Student Life personnel.

### **Pledging/New Member Process**

New members must fully participate, within the limits, boundaries and standards of anti-hazing laws and policies, in pledge activities to be inducted into a Greek Life organization. Greek organizations must submit, for approval from their sponsor and non-sponsor personnel in the Center for Student Life office, a detailed account of all Pledging activities a full week prior to Rush Week to personnel in the Center for Student Life. No pledge related activities may be conducted without the approval of personnel from the Center for Student Life. All Pledging related activities plans must be consistent with the mission and values of Rochester University and the Center for Student Life and must support and demonstrate the identity, purpose, goals and function of the organization. Pledging will end with the induction of new members.

For Pledge activities, each Greek life organization is required to have at least one sponsor at each event. This is to ensure that no hazing is occurring during these activities.

### **Membership Types**

To remain active, a member must be in good academic standing (minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0) and judicial standing and must adhere to the membership requirements as prescribed in the organization's constitution. Members may be classified in two ways:

- **Active:** A member meeting all eligibility requirements and actively participating in the organization's function
- **Inactive:** A member who chooses, by their own will, to go inactive therefore forfeiting eligibility to participate in any club activities or functions. The length of inactivity is determined by the respective Greek Life organization.

The Center for Student Life reserves the right to remove a student from a Greek Life organization, for cause, at any time.

**Dropping Affiliation with Local Organizations**

At any time, any student wishing to drop their affiliation with their fraternity or sorority must send a written letter of disaffiliation to the president of their respective fraternity or sorority. The president will then forward that email/letter to personnel in the Center for Student Life. If that member chooses to pledge to a different fraternity or sorority, they must wait a full school year and the start of the next membership recruitment and go through that process again.

Example:

Taylor (Alpha Pi Alpha) decides to drop their affiliation SP22.

Taylor now wants to join (Beta Alpha Delta). Taylor would have to wait until FA24.

**Meetings, Events and Functions**

All organizations must complete an Event/Room Request form on [my.rochesteru.edu](http://my.rochesteru.edu) for all on and off-campus meetings, events, activities and functions. Rochester University's Event Coordinator and Center for Student Life personnel must approve the request prior to the marketing of or execution of the meeting, event, activity or function. Event/Room requests must be submitted a minimum of two weeks prior to the event.

One sponsor must be present for at least 50% of their Greek life organizations' meetings. All organizations must complete an Event/Room Request form on [my.rochesteru.edu](http://my.rochesteru.edu) for all on and off-campus meetings, events, activities and functions. Rochester University's Event Coordinator and Center for Student Life personnel must approve the request prior to the marketing of or execution of the meeting, event, activity or function. Event/Room requests must be submitted a minimum of two weeks prior to the event.

One sponsor must be present for at least 50% of their Greek life organizations' meetings.

**Fundraising**

All fundraising initiatives must be approved by non-sponsor personnel in the Center for Student Life and Rochester University's Development Office through the submission of a fundraising proposal. The funds received for any fundraising endeavor must be processed in alignment with Rochester University's accounting and financial practices in coordination with the Development Office and Business Office.

**Service/Philanthropy**

All fraternities/sororities must formally identify at least one non-profit service organization that they will partner with in the organization's constitution. This service organization will be the primary partner and outlet for the fraternity's/sorority's service and Rochester University fraternities/sororities will organize and coordinate a minimum of at least one service opportunity each semester with that organization. Fraternities/Sororities may open service opportunities up to the larger Rochester University community and are encouraged to allow partnerships with their chosen organization to become a part of their identity and heritage.



**Anti-Hazing**

Rochester University is committed to honoring personhood and state laws regarding hazing. Further, Rochester considers hazing to be in direct conflict with the mission and values of the institution and is, therefore, strictly prohibited. Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of safety, integrity and respect. All members, new and established, and sponsors must review and sign Rochester University's anti-hazing contract prior to participating in any bid or pledging activities.

No student shall 1) engage or threaten to engage in what is commonly known and recognized as hazing, 2) permit, encourage, aid or assist any person, whether a student or not, in the commission of hazing, 3) willfully acquiesce in the commission of hazing, 4) fail to promptly report awareness of the presence and/or practice of hazing to any sponsor or Center for Student Life personnel.

Hazing refers to any action, whether on or off campus, suggested or expected of someone to join a group or maintain status in a group that produces mental or physical discomfort, humiliates, degrades, risks emotional or physical harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. Some examples of hazing include, but are not limited to:

Personal servitude

Wearing unusual, uncomfortable or embarrassing attire

Forcing, requiring or endorsing nudity at any time

Requiring public stunts

Name-calling

Forced silence

Sleep deprivation

Staging any form or line-up or march or walk-out

Yelling, insulting or threatening

Forced calisthenics or physical exertion

Exposure to cold, hot or extreme weather without appropriate protections

Consumption of distasteful foods or concoctions

Striking, paddling, marking or branding

A clear legal concern exists for any organization or individual member that fails to adhere to the guidelines established by Rochester University in regards to the induction of new members. Any organization or individual member who engages in or threatens to engage in activities that have danger of physical or mental discomfort, pain or harm or subjects the new or established member to humiliation and/or degradation should be aware that the organization and the individual may become legally liable for such acts.

All members, new or established, have an obligation to ensure that the organization in which they hold membership upholds the guidelines set forth in this handbook. If a member, new or established, witnesses or is subjected to any inappropriate activity, it is important that the Michelle Guinyard and/or Center for Student Life be contacted immediately.

Greek Life Handbook

## **State of Michigan Hazing Laws**

### Hazing Law

#### **Disciplinary Procedures**

Disciplinary procedures for both individual students and student organizations are outlined in Rochester University's Student Handbook. Center for Student Life personnel will conduct an investigation of any individual or organizational violation of Rochester University policy. If, as a result of their investigation, they determine that disciplinary procedures are warranted, the student or organization will be asked to appear before the appropriate members of the Center for Student Life staff. After the meeting, the student or organization will be informed, in writing, of the specific charges, the penalty imposed and the right to an appeal before the Student Life Committee. Information regarding the appeals process is listed in the Student Handbook.

Any or all of the following may be imposed on an organization for a given infraction:

1. Warning: a written or verbal reprimand
2. Disciplinary Probation: probation for a specified period of time
3. Special Action: designed to enhance the education intent of the disciplinary process
4. Suspension of some or all activities for a specified period of time
5. Disbandment of the organization