

It's All Greek to Me: Greek 101 for Parents

Parents, understandably, have many questions about Greek Life on a college campus. Following are answers to commonly asked questions that will help you support your child during her exploration, and throughout her active membership.

What is my role?

You have the right and responsibility to investigate the college's Greek Life offerings, to learn more about the chapters available on campus, and about the college expectations and standards. Once your daughter has joined a sorority, you will have opportunities to support her involvement by attending Parent's Weekend, Homecoming, or a parent support group sponsored by the chapter.

How much does joining a chapter cost?

Joining a fraternity or sorority is a financial commitment. Typically, students and alumni determine the dues for each chapter, in an effort to be self-sustaining. National and international chapters will need to incorporate national fees and liability insurance costs into their annual dues. Most chapters offer payment plans, scholarships or grants to support members.

How are the dues allocated?

Although each campus and chapter is different, typically chapter dues help pay for operational expenses, social activities, service projects, insurance, academic resources, and parent and alumni functions. In addition, similar to other student organizations, each chapter will allocate money for leadership training, retreat costs, and national leadership conferences.

How will Greek membership impact academic priorities?

Academics are the number one priority of any college student, and fraternities and sororities know and support that. When your daughter first explores the chapters available on her campus, she should research each chapter's group GPA and GPA requirements. The majority of chapters have a minimum GPA requirement to remain in good standing with the chapter.

Will my child have to participate in activities surrounding alcohol and hazing to become a member?

Alcohol, substance abuse, and hazing are not tolerated by the sponsoring national associations, or the colleges hosting the chapters. In recent years, chapters have been requiring mandatory educational sessions on the dangers of substance abuse and hazing. Such educational efforts have increased awareness and promoted strategies to ensure a safe environment at sponsored events.

What are the benefits of Greek membership?

There are five pillars of Greek Life that are often referred to as the benefits of membership:

- **Scholarship** – resources and support to help each member achieve their academic goals.
- **Service** – involvement to help others through participation in community service activities.
- **Sisterhood/Brotherhood** – lifelong friendships and national networks that can be beneficial while at college and following, when members pursue careers or further education.
- **Social** – more than just dances and socials, the social aspect can include everything from education programs, community service events, intramural sports, Homecoming, dinner exchanges, and so much more.
- **Leadership** – skills and experiences that will be a future investment as a professional, community member and individual.

Greek Resources

Here are resources that might be of further assistance.

- ◆ Campus Greek Life Office
Most college campuses that recognize Greek chapters have an office or staff member responsible for advising Greek Life. Search the college website for contact information.
- ◆ National Association of Latino Fraternal Organizations, Inc.
<http://www.nalfo.org/>
- ◆ North-American Interfraternity Conference
<http://www.nicindy.org/>
- ◆ National Panhellenic Conference
<http://www.npcwomen.org/>