



STUDENT AFFAIRS &
STUDENT SUCCESS

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Operating Procedure on Membership Intake

Purpose

The purpose of this operating procedure is to assist fraternities and sororities at the University of South Florida with their Membership Intake efforts. This document is meant to educate USF fraternity and sorority members, their advisors, and aspiring members about the Membership Intake expectations and procedures of the University of South Florida's Center for Student Involvement & Fraternity/Sorority Life (CSIFSL). CSIFSL believes in partnerships with fraternity and sorority members, Graduate/Chapter Advisors, and (inter) national headquarters/boards to ensure a successful and positive experience for all involved. *It is our philosophy that Membership Intake activities should support the mission and core values of the University of South Florida, the Center for Student Involvement & Fraternity/Sorority Life, and each (inter) national organization.*

Prohibition of Hazing

Senate Bill 51 requires each university in the state of Florida university system to adopt a written anti-hazing policy and, pursuant to such policy, adopt rules prohibiting students or other persons associated with any University organization (including alumni/ae) from engaging in any activity which can be described as hazing. The University of South Florida system (regulation number 6.0023) has adopted the following paragraph for all students and student organizations to follow regarding hazing:

"As used in this regulation, "hazing" as defined by §1006.63, Florida Statutes, means any action or situation that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for purposes including, but not limited to, initiation or admission into or affiliation with any organization operating under the sanction of a postsecondary institution, regardless of a person's willingness to participate. "Hazing" includes, but is not limited to, pressuring or coercing the student into violating state or federal law; any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping, beating, branding, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, drug, or other substance; or other forced physical activity that could adversely affect the physical health or safety of the student; and also includes any activity that would subject the student to extreme mental stress, such as sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, forced conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment, or other forced activity that could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the student. Hazing does not include customary athletic events or other similar contests or competitions or any activity or conduct that furthers a legal and legitimate objective.

In addition to Florida Statutes §1006.63, hazing as defined by the USF system also includes, but is not limited to, the forced use of alcohol; morally degrading or humiliating games and activities; physical and psychological shocks; deception; verbal abuse; personal servitude; kidnapping; deprivation of privileges granted to others in the organization by use of force or duress; and any other activities which are contrary to academic achievement, the stated purpose of the local and/or (inter)national organization, and/or the mission, policies or regulations of the USF system or applicable state law."

In recognition of FIPG and (inter) national organizational standards, the activities listed below are also considered hazing by CSIFSL:

- requiring active members to be called a particular title other than those prescribed by the (inter) national organization (if any)
- throwing harmful substances at members
- any activity requiring members to march around particular locations or act in synchronized movement
- treasure hunts, scavenger hunts, quests and abandonment
- wearing of uniforms or public apparel which is conspicuous and not normally in good taste
- wearing or carrying any obscene or burdensome article
- line-ups
- individual interrogations, quizzing or testing on meaningless information or while under duress
- transportation with the intention of abandonment
- assigning of pranks
- disruption of normal or proper hygiene and diet schedules
- confining individuals in an area which is uncomfortable or dangerous

The above definition applies to any act conducted on or off the USF campus. A good rule to follow when planning activities is, “when in doubt, leave it out!”

Expectations of Organizations Conducting Intake

- The academic mission of the institution will be upheld and promoted to aspirants.
- The cumulative grade point average of the aspirants will be at least a 2.5 the semester they are initiated.
- Membership intake activities will not interfere with academic endeavors or class schedules, will not occur between the hours of 12 a.m. and 8 a.m., and will not include the presence or consumption of alcohol.
- No more than 12 hours of activity should be required of aspirants any given week.
- The membership intake process period will not exceed eight (8) weeks.
- The selection of aspirants will be free of any form of mental and/or physical abuse and hazing.
- Members will be selected on the criteria set forth by the (inter) national organization.
- Chapters will not engage in pre or post hazing activities. Hazing is not tolerated in any form—as part of the new member program or as acts of individual members of the chapter.
- Chapters will be in good standing with their (inter) national organization, their respective council, CSIFSL and the University of South Florida.
- Chapters will complete all required paperwork thoroughly, in a timely fashion, and will not willingly omit any information.
- Aspirants will be thoroughly educated on the University of South Florida Hazing Policy by the chapter.
- Chapters are not to engage in any Membership Intake activities outside of the parameters outlined by their (inter) national headquarters/organizations.
- All membership intake activities (including Neophyte Presentations and any alternatives) are to conclude prior to the first day of Reading Days.
- All aspirants, Membership Intake Coordinators, and Assistants will complete the anti-hazing online course “Hazing Prevention: It’s Everyone’s Responsibility” within two weeks of the beginning of the education process.

- The position of the University of South Florida concerning a chapter's Membership Intake process is that it will be a positive, educational experience for all involved. Names such as "Hell Week" should not be used in reference to pre or post application and initiation activities.
- The practice of surprising aspirants with the date/and or time of initiation is not acceptable. Aspirants should be informed as to the date of initiation no later than two weeks after the Membership Intake process begins.
- Aspirants should never be subject to sleep deprivation, servitude and/or moral degradation or humiliation.
- Aspirants should never be forced to stay or live anywhere against their will.
- The individuals named as the Membership Intake Coordinator and any Assistants will represent their role during the Membership Intake process and at any related presentations.

Aspirants' Rights

The Membership Intake process should be conducted in a manner that respects the dignity of aspirants and protects their mental and physical well-being. Examples of acceptable behavior include activities that are not classified as hazing, but promote scholarship, promote service, develop leadership and/or social skills, assist career goals, involve students with alumni/ae, improve relations with others, build awareness of fraternity or sorority history, instill a sense of brotherhood or sisterhood, foster chapter solidarity or otherwise promote the institutional mission of the University.

No aspirant shall be required by any person or persons to perform any act which:

- Interferes with the academic process – causes the aspirant to miss or be ill prepared for classes, labs, study sessions, or tests
- Causes the aspirant to violate USF policies
- Requires or pressures the aspirant to consume any substance
- Prevents the aspirant from securing normal amounts of sleep
- Requires the aspirant to perform personal services for collegiate or alumni/ae members
- Is sadistic and treats the aspirant in a "sub-human" manner
- Is illegal
- Is immoral
- Places the aspirant in physical danger or in jeopardy of losing his or her life
- Places severe emotional stress upon the aspirant
- Requires the aspirant to be present at activities for unreasonable periods of time
- Requires the aspirant to participate in individual questioning activities or line-ups
- Prescribes the wearing of anything to identify aspirant status
- Requires the aspirant to carry items that they would not normally bear
- Requires the aspirant to answer the telephone in a manner unlike a member would answer it
- Prevents the aspirant from speaking for a period of time
- Involves the abandonment of an aspirant or active member thereby requiring them to find their own way back to campus
- Requires the blindfolding of the aspirant (exceptions: during low ropes course with trained facilitator, or as prescribed in writing for inter/national Ritual)
- Requires the aspirant to intentionally deface property or requires the aspirant to clean others' property
- Requires aspirants to enter locations only from a specific entry point

- Requires aspirants to eat meals together, attend unscheduled “call-down” meetings, work out together or sleep somewhere together for any length of time without written permission from USF and inter/national office
- Requires aspirants to address or refer to members in a manner different from how they are addressed by the general membership
- Requires aspirants to participate in scavenger hunts or similar activities by any name that involves taking of items, time deadlines, etc.

THIS LIST IS IN NO WAY INCLUSIVE.

Membership Intake Procedures

A. Prior to any Membership Intake activities being planned:

1. The organization will ensure that the official and current Membership Intake education policy set forth by the (inter) national organization will be on file with the Council Advisor (including any rules pertaining to Neophyte Presentations or its alternatives, and parties related to celebrating aspirants).
2. Each chapter will receive a letter from CSIFSL certifying the chapter is in good standing for the semester and eligible for intake activities within **five (5) business days** of the completion of the semester’s Convocation.
3. All chapters must fill out the Membership Intake Intent Form to specify whether they intend to complete Membership Intake that semester or not. This form must be returned to CSIFSL within **twenty-five (25) business days** of the start of the semester (but before Membership Intake activities begin). Failure to submit this form on time will result in a \$100 fine. *It is highly recommended that you turn this form in prior to conducting any Informationals.*
4. The Membership Intake Coordinator (MIC) and Chapter President must schedule a meeting with the Council Advisor (Chapter Advisors and Assistant Membership Intake Coordinator may also attend but are not required) at least ten **(10) business days** prior to the start of the Membership Intake Process. At this meeting, the MIC and Chapter President will provide the following:
 - Any (inter) national and/or regional documents that are to be completed by CSIFSL staff (including any letters that need to be written to specific organization representatives, exact wording needed, name of representative, and the mailing address, phone number(s), and email for such representative)
 - Completed Membership Intake Registration Form via BullSync
 - Completed Membership Intake Agreement via BullSync

NOTE: Failure to bring any of these items entirely completed to this meeting will result in the meeting being rescheduled for a later date.

B. Following the meeting between the chapter representatives and the CSIFSL:

1. Within five (5) business days, the Chapter President and Membership Intake Coordinator will receive a letter from CSIFSL certifying whether the Membership Intake process registration has been accepted based on the information presented or not accepted based on pending details. **If an organization’s registration has been accepted**, they may begin the Membership Intake process. In the event the Membership Intake process registration **has not been accepted**, the organization will need to submit additional information. It is important to understand that **until the organization receives registration approval from CSIFSL to begin their Membership Intake process**, they will

not be allowed to conduct any activities with the aspirants.

2. **Five (5) business days** following the chapter's Informational Meeting, the MIC will submit the attendance sheet(s) for each Informational Meeting conducted via BullSync.
3. **Five (5) business days prior** to the beginning of all Membership Intake activities, the MIC will submit the (Inter)National Organization Approval Form signed by the (inter) national or regional official stating the chapter is eligible to conduct Membership Intake activities via BullSync.
4. **Two (2) business days** after the start of the Membership Intake process (based on the timeline listed on the Membership Intake Registration Form), the Verification of Aspirants Form and the electronic individual membership registration form must be turned in via BullSync. The Verification of Aspirants Form must include the names of all individuals approved by your organization submitted to your regional and/or (inter) national representatives as aspirants for membership. Additionally, at this time any **changes to the Membership Intake Registration Form must be submitted.**

C. Following Initiation:

1. Chapter Presidents must submit the End of Intake Report to CSIFSL within **five (5) business days** of initiation via BullSync. Failure to submit this form on time will result in a \$100 fine.
2. Neophyte Presentation: If the organization intends to have a Neophyte Presentation, the *Neophyte Presentation Agreement* must be submitted to the CSIFSL at least **fifteen (15) business days** prior to the date of the Neophyte Presentation. All necessary paperwork must be submitted to Event Meeting Services and the EMS Proof of Approval must be attached to the Neophyte Presentation Agreement when it is turned in to the CSIFSL.
3. If the organization does not intend to have a Neophyte Presentation, the Alternative to Neophyte Presentation Form must be submitted to the CSIFSL within ten (10) business days of the activity taking place. **This activity must be registered with the CSIFSL for it to take place.**

Forms

All forms submitted must include original electronic signatures by all required parties; without all of the electronic signatures, the paperwork will not be considered complete. Without the submission of the proper paperwork, Membership Intake registration will not be accepted. Should Membership Intake activities begin without adherence to the above mentioned policies and procedures, Membership Intake activities will cease immediately and the organization will be referred for judicial proceedings.

Organizational Qualifications for Membership Intake

All organizations participating in Membership Intake must be in good standing with CSIFSL, their respective council, and (inter) national organization. To be considered in good standing, organizations must be fiscally and judicially sound with their respective council, CSIFSL, the University and the (inter) national organization. In the event the (inter) national organization requires the chapter to be certified in order to conduct Membership Intake activities, proof of such certification will be required for the Intake processes to be accepted, including the names of those approved to conduct Membership Intake activities. If an organization has a question regarding their status, they are to contact the Council Advisor and/or their (inter) national organization.

Aspirants' Qualifications for Membership Intake

All aspirants must **at least** meet the organization's minimum academic (grades and credit hour)

requirements in order to take part in Membership Intake. The criteria designated by the (inter) national organization should be the only criteria used for qualifying members for Membership Intake. The cumulative grade point average of the aspirants must be at least a 2.5 the semester they are initiated.

Timeline of Membership Intake Activities

All Membership Intake activities shall be conducted only in the fall or spring semester of each academic year. CSIFSL considers the start of the Membership Intake process to be the point when the aspirant is being extended an invitation for membership by the organization. **Regardless of start date, all membership intake activities SHALL end no later than the day prior to the beginning of Reading Days (please check the CSIFSL calendar each semester for this date). There is to be no crossover of Membership Intake activities from semester to semester (all Membership Intake activities, including Neophyte Presentations, must happen in the same semester).**

The Membership Intake process will not last any longer than what the (inter) national headquarters/(inter) national body for each organization has approved. If an organization is not able to comply with these steps (due to requirements from its (inter) national headquarters/(inter) national body), **minor alterations are acceptable as long as changes and reason for the changes are submitted in writing by the Chapter Advisor, the Regional Director and/or (inter) national headquarters at least five (5) business days prior to the change. These changes must be accepted by the CSIFSL for them to be considered valid. Failure to submit these changes and gain approval from the CSIFSL will result in a violation of the Membership Intake Policy.**

Membership Intake Coordinator(s)

Anyone serving as a Membership Intake Coordinator(s) needs to be an active member of the chapter at USF per the chapter's submitted roster. Exceptions may be made with the approval of the (inter)national organization; written documentation from a regional officer, national board member, or headquarters staff member must be submitted in order for this exception to be approved and must include the name of the individual(s) being approved as the Membership Intake Coordinator(s).

Informational Meeting

CSIFSL defines an Informational Meeting as *a meeting held by an organization for aspirants who are seeking general information about the organization and/or a formal meeting held by an organization for potential members that details the application process, rules of the organization, and allows them to express interest in being considered for membership.* Based on these definitions, all Membership Intake paperwork should be filled out according to these descriptions. The Informational Attendance Sheet must be filled out and submitted to CSIFSL within five (5) business days of the Informational.

Informational without Conducting Intake

The nature of an Informational is to provide aspirants with general information about the organization. An organization can host an Informational without conducting Membership Intake the same semester. In order to do this, organizations must fill out the Membership Intake Intent Form within the specified deadline and indicate in the form that they will host an Informational. Dates, times, and locations need to also be submitted to CSIFSL. The Informational Attendance Sheet must be filled out and submitted to CSIFSL within five (5) business days of the Informational.

Following the Informational, organizations are not to engage in any pre-pledging activities not part of the (inter) national Membership Intake process with these members.

Flyers for Informational Meetings

The chapter will turn in to CSIFSL at least one (1) flyer promoting Informational Meetings at least ten (10) business days prior to the event. This flyer will be available in CSIFSL for advertisement purposes.

Socials Prior to Intake

CSIFSL understands that each (inter) national organization conducts their Intake Processes in different steps or styles. With this in mind, any organization that is allowed to partake in socials with interested members prior to the beginning of the intake process on a (inter) national level must register these events with CSIFSL by submitting the Interest Group Activity Form five (5) business days prior to the activity taking place with supporting documents from the (inter) national organization documenting the approved activities, requirements of interests, and timeline of events and meet with the Council Advisor. Following this meeting, organizations will receive a letter certifying whether the registration of these activities has been accepted. Once the registration of these activities has been accepted, organizations will be allowed to start these activities.

Convocation

Any student who would like to be considered for a Membership Intake process must attend at least one session of CSIFSL Convocation before being considered for membership. Convocation will take place at the beginning of each semester.

Initiation

Initiation is defined as *the ceremony in which aspirants become members of the organization* (in some organizations, it may be defined as “cross-over”). **Under no circumstances is the date of the initiation ceremony to remain a secret from the aspirants. Aspirants must be made aware of this date at least two weeks after the beginning of the educational process.**

Outline of New Member Activities

An outline of all activities conducted by the organization for Membership Intake purposes and those that include any aspirant involvement must be turned in to CSIFSL as part of the Membership Intake Registration Form during the one-on-one meeting with the Council Advisor. This outline must include (but is not limited to):

- All educational sessions
- Ritual or ceremony dates
- Study dates
- Initiation date
- Neophyte Presentation practices
- Community service projects
- Overnight activities
- Leadership development programs
- Big brother/sister activities

- Activities in which members will have an opportunity to meet and be involved with alumni/ae

It is important for organizations to understand that CSIFSL considers that if an activity is not listed in the outline then it will not occur. If any activities occur outside of those listed on the outline submitted, the organization will be subject to judicial action by the University.

Neophyte Presentations

- A copy of the organization's (inter) national policy on Neophyte Presentations must be on file with CSIFSL before planning for this type of event takes place.
- Space must be reserved through Event Meeting Services for **any** type of presentation.
- Prior approval from CSIFSL must be obtained for any type of Neophyte Presentation activities (and the proper paperwork must be submitted by the appropriate deadlines).
- Presentation of aspirants must take place no more than 30 days after the members have been initiated into the organization and prior to the day Reading Days begin. If the length of time your (inter)national organization requires is less, then you are expected to abide by your (inter)national organization's expectations.
- Presentations should not take place during University holidays/closure.

Alternatives to Neophyte Presentations

Organizations that do not conclude Membership Intake with a Neophyte Presentation but would like to have another method of introducing aspirants to the community must submit the Alternative to Neophyte Presentation Form to CSIFSL ten (10) business days prior to the activity taking place and receive written notification that the registration of the activity has been accepted from the Council Advisor or the Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life. Alternatives to Neophyte Presentations should not resemble a Neophyte Presentation in any way and should therefore not include any of the following: choreographed and/or coordinated steps or movement, unveiling/unmasking of any members, activities beyond the reasonable introduction of a member and/or disruptions of normal University affairs. All rules pertaining to Neophyte Presentations apply to alternate presentations and a location for the activity must be reserved through Event Meeting Services.

After Parties

If the organization intends to host a party following the Neophyte Presentation, the organization must have the event approved based on the CSIFSL Social Event Operating Procedure. Please refer to that policy for paperwork that needs to be completed as well as deadlines that need to be adhered to.

Violations

A judicial process to determine violations of the Membership Intake policy and/or the anti-hazing policy by organizations and its members will be handled through the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Violations of the intake policy may include (but are not limited to): intentional submission of improper paperwork (falsifying signatures, changing dates without approval, incomplete forms), holding Membership Intake without adherence to the policies and procedures set forth by CSIFSL, and not adhering to the policies of the (inter) national organization, the University of South Florida, and the CSIFSL as well as municipal, state, and federal laws. Penalties for violations may include (but are not limited to): fines in specified amounts; probation for specified academic terms, with or

without specified restrictions; loss of privileges including but not limited to the use of University space and facilities; and revocation of the privilege of being a registered student organization. The (inter) national office of any student organization violating the anti-hazing rules and Membership Intake policies will be notified of any violations and all penalties.

If you have any questions regarding paperwork that needs to be submitted or about the process for Membership Intake, please contact CSIFSL and/or the respective Council Advisor at 813-974-7335.