

# A Parent's Guide to Fraternities and Sororities at Winthrop University

As a parent, you undoubtedly are concerned about your son's and daughter's experience at college and the choices he/she will make. For your son or daughter, making the transition from a high school or a community college to a university may seem like an imposing challenge. Perhaps some questions have arisen, such as:

- Will I fit in and make new friends?
- Will I succeed academically?
- Will I be able to get involved in campus clubs and improve my leadership skills?
- Will I find other people who are interested in the same things as I am?
- How can I best prepare for my career and my profession?
- Will I feel like a part of the campus community, or will I be just another number?

This brochure is designed to answer some of the questions you may have about fraternity or sorority membership.



## About Fraternities & Sororities

Fraternities and Sororities exist as a proven support network for your son or daughter as he or she

embarks on this new period in life. Close to a million students across the country currently are fraternity or sorority members. The Greek community makes up 15% of the Winthrop student body. The fraternity or sorority can help personalize your son's or daughter's experience at college by offering a scholastic support system; by providing hands-on experience in leading committees, managing budgets, and interacting with faculty and administrators; by exposing the student to potential careers through educational programs and discussions with alumni; by offering the chance to give back to the community through service projects; and by creating close friendships with men and women that will cheer him or her on when times are tough. With all these opportunities available, it is no wonder that fraternity and sorority members tend to graduate from college at a significantly higher rate than those not involved in fraternities or sororities.

## What about alcohol and fraternities/sororities?

Alcohol abuse is unhealthy and inconsistent with fraternity ideals. All fraternities and sororities are expected to uphold state and city laws, and university, fraternity/sorority, and IFC/NPHC/Panhellenic (the governing boards for fraternities and sororities) policies regarding consumption of alcohol. In addition, fraternities are not allowed to purchase alcohol for members or guests. The days of open keg parties at Greek social functions are gone. Today's fraternities and sororities strive to promote responsibility concerning alcohol.

## What about pledging or hazing?

New fraternity and sorority members all experience a period of orientation. During this time, your son or daughter and other new members will participate in weekly meetings to learn about the university and the fraternity/sorority history, leadership retreats, community service projects, and activities designed to build friendships among new members and initiated members. ALL FRATERNITY AND SORORITY POLICIES FORBID HAZING and are committed to a membership education period that

instills a sense of responsibility and commitment in new members. This period will assist your son or daughter in overcoming some of the concerns about success in college,



## What impact could fraternity/sorority membership have on grades?

Students often find it difficult to manage their time when moving from the highly structured high school environment to the freedoms of college. Fraternities and Sororities assist in that transition by offering scholarship programs that may include study partners, test taking strategies, and incentives, along with management workshops. Your son or daughter can access and network with members who already know how to use campus resources such as the library, tutors, computer labs, study lounges, and academic advisors. While Greek organizations are concerned about members' academic achievement, your son or daughter is still ultimately responsible for utilizing the resources made available to students at Winthrop University.

## Who is actually "in charge" of the fraternity or sorority?

Fraternity and sorority members are elected to officer positions and manage the day-to-day operations of the organization. These officers are assisted by members serving on committees and by alumni serving as advisors. All of our fraternities and sororities are also part of an (inter) national organization that offers support, advice, and direction through paid professional staff members and regional volunteers. Professional college staff are also employed to assist, educate, and monitor the activities of Greek organizations.

## Doesn't it cost a lot of money to be in a fraternity or a sorority?

Each fraternity or sorority is self-supporting through dues charged to members. In the first year of membership, a few one-time expenses are assessed. After those initial payments are made, your son's or daughter's expense will be the regular monthly dues, which average between \$135 and \$450 for sororities and \$160 and \$300 for fraternities. A variety of payment plans are usually offered and should be explored.

## Doesn't being in a fraternity or sorority take a lot of time?

Participating in any worthwhile activity always requires an investment of one's time. Research has shown that involved college students are more likely to graduate and they report greater satisfaction with their college experience. Through his or her Greek involvement, your son or daughter will learn how to balance academics, work, campus involvement, and social commitments. Many Winthrop Greeks also work at least part-time (around 20 hours a week).



### How does my son or daughter go about joining a fraternity or sorority?

Fraternities and sororities utilize a process commonly referred to as “recruitment” or “intake” in order to meet prospective members. It is a mutual selection process. Recruitment offers nonaffiliated students an opportunity to meet a number of other people on campus and to learn what each group has to offer. Potential members are encouraged to ask questions and secure answers to each question from several members. Just like researching, visiting, and choosing a college, your son or daughter should seek out the fraternity/sorority that best fits his/her personality, needs, and desires. Potential members will find what they want if they keep an open mind.

### What is my role as a parent?

Be supportive, and learn as much as you can by asking your son or daughter questions before they join. Many groups will provide written statements concerning activities, finances, and policies; your son or daughter should be encouraged to obtain and read this information. In addition, allow your son or daughter to make his/her own choice (especially if you yourself were Greek). Your support should not end after the recruitment period but continue throughout your son’s or daughter’s years in school.

## A Statement of Fraternal Values and Ethics

*BASIC EXPECTATIONS– In an effort to lessen the disparity between fraternity ideals and individual behavior and to personalize these ideals in their daily undergraduate experience, the following BASIC EXPECTATIONS of fraternity membership have been established:*

- I I will know and understand the ideals expressed in my fraternity Ritual and will strive to incorporate them into my daily life.*
- II I will strive for academic achievement and practice academic integrity.*
- III I will respect the dignity of all persons; therefore, I will not physically, mentally, psychologically, or sexually abuse or haze any human being.*
- IV I respect my property and the property of others; therefore, I will protect the health and safety of all human beings.*
- V I will neither abuse nor tolerate the abuse of property.*
- VI I will meet my financial obligations in a timely manner.*
- VII I will neither use nor support the use of illegal drugs and alcohol.*
- VIII I acknowledge that a clean and attractive environment is essential to both physical and mental health; therefore, I will do all in my power to see that the chapter property is properly cleaned and maintained.*
- IX I will challenge all my fraternity members to abide by these fraternal expectations and will confront those who tolerate them.*

### 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 deal that shall guide our fraternity activities.*

*We, the Fraternity Women, stand for service through the development of character inspired by 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.*

# Greek Life



ΓΡΕΕΚ ΛΙΦΕ



Winthrop University

Division of Student Life

Department of Student Affairs

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a parent's guide

