



Office of Fraternity & Sorority Life

December 20, 2023

Dear Parents and Families,

We hope this message finds you doing well and that you are looking forward to spending time with your loved ones and friends over the holidays. We are excited that your student is interested in participating in the [Panhellenic Council's](#) recruitment process at SMU and look forward to seeing them in a few weeks. This letter outlines important information about the formal process in which your student is registered to participate next month.

Panhellenic is the governing council for [National Panhellenic Conference](#) (NPC) sororities at SMU. There are 26 organizations nationally and SMU hosts seven chapters. Panhellenic strives to lead with courage and integrity to positively impact and unite its chapters, campus, and local communities. Residential Commons will open on **January 5, 2024**, for students to move in early for recruitment. Students should notify their residential commons as soon as possible that they will be returning to campus early.

The [following dates](#) are important for the Panhellenic's recruitment process:

- Monday, January 8, 2024, at noon: Mandatory Potential Member Info Session
- Tuesday, January 9, 2024: Open House Day 1
- Wednesday, January 10, 2024: Open House Day 2
- Thursday, January 11, 2024: Philanthropy Day
- Friday, January 12, 2024: Sisterhood Day
- Saturday, January 13, 2024: Preference Day
- Sunday, January 14, 2024: Bid Day

Eligibility Requirements

Students interested in joining one of our fraternities or sororities must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- First-year students must have completed and passed at least 12 college credit hours in the previous semester to joining (defined as fall or spring term); may have completed at a previous institution. Upper-class students must have a demonstrated ability to meet this requirement.
- Achieved a 2.5 GPA, cumulatively and in the previous semester.
- Not be placed on conduct probation or higher with the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards at any point in the current or previous semester to joining or initiation.
- Must be enrolled at SMU before starting the recruitment process.

SMU will check GPAs as grades are submitted prior to, and shortly after winter break. Typically, 94% of registered individuals will meet these eligibility requirements. If your student is found to be ineligible,

they will receive an email notification from SMU's Fraternity and Sorority Life staff. Every attempt is made to contact students prior to winter break, but pending grade submissions, this may take place in early January. Students may check their own grades in their [my.SMU](https://my.smu.edu) portal at any time.

What to Wear Each Day

The SMU Panhellenic website has helpful information regarding the schedule and [recruitment attire](#). *Please review this information with your student as it explains the activities during the week and attire.* Also, keep in mind that temperatures get cold in January, even in Texas. Your student can wear a coat or jacket depending on the weather, and sorority houses will have coat storage available for their use.

Managing Expectations

The recruitment process can be an exciting time. It can also be disappointing for some. Approximately 650 students participate in the Panhellenic recruitment process at SMU, and about 78% will accept a formal bid to join a sorority at the conclusion of the week. We encourage students to keep an open mind throughout the process. Not every person will be invited back to their first preference, but we hope they choose to continue the process. Keeping an open mind and being willing to explore the sisterhood experience in any of our six participating chapters is the key to a successful recruitment. Based on past recruitment figures, we predict that on average 1% (seven to nine students) will not receive an invitation from a sorority during the week. An additional five students will not receive a formal bid at the end of the week from their preferred sorority or sororities. These students will be notified in advance by staff.

Approximately 20% of the starting pool – or about 125 students – will continue to receive invitations throughout the week, but for their own reasons choose to withdraw themselves from the process. Our staff will be available to meet one-on-one with these students to help create an involvement plan for the spring semester, discuss future Greek life engagement and help connect them to additional resources on campus.

You can play an important role in offering emotional support and encouragement to your student during this process. Our professional staff in the Fraternity and Sorority Life Office and student advisors (referred to as “Rho Gammas”) will also be available to support and help answer any questions or concerns that students may have. Please note that SMU utilizes a national recruitment structure outlined by the National Panhellenic Conference. All membership decisions are decided by individual organizations alone. We cannot influence or edit membership decisions and will often not have information regarding the decision processes behind these decisions.

While the recruitment process may be challenging for some, the numbers indicate that overall, if your student keeps an open mind and wants to join an organization, one will be available. However, there will be many who for several reasons choose to withdraw from the process out of disappointment. We respect those personal decisions and hope that your student will maximize these opportunities and approach the process with impartiality. While we cannot guarantee that your student will receive a bid or a bid from their preferred organization, we have found that those who participate fully in the process, including attending all the recruitment events to which they are invited and ranked, are

matched successfully, and will receive a bid.

Alpha Delta Pi & Fall Recruitment

If your student chooses not to join an organization in early January, we encourage them to explore our newest sorority, Alpha Delta Pi, which will be holding their own recruitment process at the end of January. Being a founding member of a new sorority is an exciting and unique experience! Students and families can review [their website](#) for details and fill out the interest form. We encourage students to review the many other substantive ways they can engage and participate in campus life. SMU has more than 200 [student organizations](#), and we hope that all students participate in as many organizations as possible. Should a student wish to explore recruitment again, all seven of our organizations will be participating in a formal recruitment process during the fall 2024 semester. More details regarding that process will be available on the FSL website soon.

Recommendation Letters

The Panhellenic Council does not require nor manage letters of recommendation. Any recommendations must be submitted directly to the chapters through the national organization's website. SMU has no authority or say in how an organization chooses to offer membership. Legacies (those with relatives who are members) are not guaranteed to receive a bid from that sorority. Your student should also know that any conversation with members of an organization in the fall should not be interpreted as a guarantee for a bid to join the organization.

Student Safety

The safety of our students is our top priority. Hazing is not tolerated and is a violation of Texas law, the [SMU Student Code of Conduct](#), and the inter/national policies for each of our fraternities and sororities. Hazing violations can be reported online through SMU's dedicated [website](#). You can also review the conduct status of student organizations at SMU that have been found responsible for violating the SMU Student Code of Conduct within the last three years on the following [website](#).

Resources and More Information

Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with the resources available on SMU's Fraternity and Sorority Life [website](#), [including the information on the parent and families page](#). Your student also has access to Panhellenic's [Recruitment Guidebook](#) which contains a lot of helpful background information and resources. Should your student join a sorority, we will follow up with both of you later in January regarding the new member education process and related information. Our professional staff is here to help answer any questions about the recruitment process, so please do not hesitate to contact us.

We look forward to welcoming all our students back next month and hope your student has a fun and engaging experience during recruitment week.

Sincerely,



Ashley Fitzpatrick

Director, Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life

(214) 768-3633 or alfitzpatrick@smu.edu