



POSITION STATEMENT

Recruitment

[The North-American Interfraternity Conference (NIC), through its President & CEO, takes a position on each of the critical issues within the fraternity industry.]

The NIC supports year-round recruitment because we believe any students who want to experience fraternity have the right to participate. For many, joining a fraternity as a first year student is the first step to building a bond and developing life experiences and opportunities that carry through college and beyond.

Throughout the history of the fraternity movement, the term “rush” has described the various activities used by fraternity men to entice freshmen to join their chapters. Today the word “recruitment” is more accurate in describing a carefully crafted plan of action by successful chapters in communicating the benefits of fraternity membership to potential new members. Recruitment is a deliberate process that should involve every member of the chapter with an emphasis on personal development and fraternity values.

NIC Standards on Recruitment (updated April 2013)

The membership of the NIC has adopted the following standards for all NIC members related to recruitment. These standards are reflective of NIC principles and minimum expectations related to recruitment.

1. Establishment and Enforcement of Policy on Minimum GPA Requirements for Joining Undergraduate Chapters. Each member organization shall:

- a. Have and enforce a policy establishing minimum GPA requirements for joining any of its undergraduate chapters by requiring the following:
 - i. In order to join an undergraduate chapter, a potential new member who has yet to establish a collegiate GPA shall have a minimum high school GPA of 2.50. A member organization, at its discretion, may establish a policy on minimum GPA requirements for joining that is higher than a 2.50.
 - ii. In order to join an undergraduate chapter, a potential new member who has established a collegiate GPA shall have at least a 2.50 collegiate GPA. A member organization, at its discretion, may establish a policy on minimum GPA requirements for joining that is higher than a 2.50.
- b. Provide ongoing education to its undergraduate chapters on its policy establishing minimum GPA requirements for joining.

2. Establishment of Policy Prohibiting Alcohol and Drug Use During Recruitment Activities and Appropriate Follow up on Non-Compliance. Each member organization shall:

- a. Have and provide appropriate follow up with their chapters on compliance with a policy prohibiting alcohol and drug use at any formal, informal and summer/break recruitment activities undertaken by its undergraduate chapters.
- b. Provide ongoing education to its undergraduate chapters on its policy prohibiting alcohol and drug use during recruitment activities.

3. Establishment and Enforcement of Policy Supporting Open Recruitment. Each member organization shall:

- a. Have and enforce a policy in support of open recruitment, which is defined as the ability of undergraduate chapters of any member organization to recruit for membership any male, who



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meets the minimum GPA requirement for joining within Section 2(a)(5) of these bylaws and without restrictions on the date, time and place of membership invitation, extension, and acceptance.

- b. Provide ongoing education to its undergraduate chapters on its policy in support of open recruitment.

There are common terms requiring a universal understanding:

Continuous Recruitment/24-7 – Recruitment is a constant process that happens every day, regardless of the time of year.

- **Rationale:** The continuous recruitment efforts recognize the reality of relationships. There is no set time to build relationships that result in a mutual interest in affiliation. Men and chapters should be free to associate with each other at a time that is mutually beneficial and agreeable to them.
- **NIC Position:** Support; Interest in membership and relationships that lead to membership are not developed in a specified structure or period of time.

Summer Recruitment – Coordinated either by an IFC or individual chapter and occurs when the campus is not in session. Events can take place on the campus, in a chapter house, or at another designated location.

- **Rationale:** Recruiting practices that bring chapter members to the potential new member are ideal for building individual friendships. Summer recruitment can and should involve the parents of potential new members.
- **NIC Position:** Support; Men who are enrolled in and meet eligibility requirements should have the opportunity to decide if the fraternity experience is right for them and if so, the best time for them to join.

Delayed Recruitment – A coordinated recruitment process conducted after the beginning of the first academic period, usually between four and eight weeks after the first day of classes. Delayed recruitment is designed to allow first year men to get to know the fraternities and their new environment before deciding which to join.

- **Rationale:** Potential new members will be introduced to fraternities after they have had a chance to begin their classes and develop successful habits that will help them manage their transition to college.
- **NIC Position:** Support: Although this recruitment period is supported we strongly recommend campuses to pair this with a continuous recruitment plan in order to allow the potential new member to decide when it is right for him to join.

Deferred Recruitment – Potential new members are required by the campus to wait a certain amount of time or complete a designated number of credits before being allowed to join a fraternity.

- **Rationale:** This allows the student(s) to become acclimated to the college setting allowing a less stressful transition from high school while promoting a safer new member experience.
- **NIC Position:** the NIC does not support deferred recruitment as it is an inequitable application of student policy and an infringement on the associational rights of students and organizations. Independent research shows the following:
 - Fraternity members exhibit higher levels of growth, learning, and development than non-fraternity men, and the difference in growth is most pronounced during a man's first semester of college.



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- Fraternity members have higher campus retention rates than non-fraternity men
- The graduation rate among fraternity men is higher than non-fraternity men.
- A successful fraternity experience provides men with a sense of community and support network that aids in a successful transition to the collegiate experience.

Formal Recruitment – a designated and coordinated recruitment period usually organized and handled by the IFC. In most cases, potential new members are required to register for recruitment, attend a certain number of recruitment events, and cannot accept a bid until a designated date. Formal recruitment is a desire of fraternity men to do a minimum amount of work and a university's belief that this type of recruitment is better organized and will result in more men joining.

- **Rationale:** The process seems to promote a fair approach, allowing all chapters to meet the men going through recruitment without creating additional barriers to joining. This process is easier for a chapter, who waits for the men to come to them.
- **NIC Position:** The NIC can support formal recruitment when it does not create additional barriers to joining and is used in conjunction with continuous and summer recruitment.

There are several common concerns voiced by both Greek professionals and IFC leadership related to local recruitment challenges:

Fewer Men Joining - The campus, as well as the IFC and individual chapters, have a tendency to measure success in terms of the number of new members. The number of new members is not an accurate measuring tool. Meaningful filters and predictors of future success are high school GPA, membership and leadership position in clubs, membership in National Honor Society, and involvement in philanthropic and community service projects.

NIC Recommendation: IFC leaders should look at membership trends in their community and compare them with national trending available from the NIC. Current trends show continued growth and interest in the fraternity experience. Furthermore, IFC leaders should assess the real reasons why men are not joining at the expected level and address those concerns through IFC advocacy efforts, chapter programming, training, and accountability within the community.

Coaches Restrict Joining - Many team coaches were not a member of a fraternity when an undergraduate. Consequently, they do not relate to what a fraternity is really about, instead listening and believing in inaccurate stereotypes.

NIC Recommendation: The way to counter this is to have a plan to recruit the scholar-athlete and included in that plan should be meetings with their coach to address their concerns.

Deferred Recruitment - Deferred recruitment can generate, and usually does, strong feelings on each side of a discussion. There is only anecdotal data that non-fraternity men enjoy higher GPA's than fraternity men during the semester of their new member period. It should also be noted that there have been no studies conducted since the NIC Standards were enacted in 2004, which includes shortened new member programs.

Deferred recruitment is a broad-brush punitive action applied against all current members and their respective chapters whether or not involved in activities resulting in disciplinary actions against the chapter. It represents a double standard since it does not apply to all student organizations.



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The NIC's position is that on a typical campus:

- a) fraternity membership has a positive effect on the growth, learning, and development of men and that influence is most pronounced during a student's first semester.
- b) fraternity membership leads to a higher retention rate than the general male undergraduate population, which is in the best interests of a college/university,
- c) fraternity membership leads to a higher graduation rate than the general male undergraduate population, which is in the best interests of a college/university,
- d) fraternity membership leads to a higher proportion compared to the general male alumni population, of contributions to a college/university educational foundation following graduation, which is in the best interests of a college/university,
- e) fraternity membership leads to higher amounts of philanthropic and community service activities than the general male undergraduate population, which bring credit to the college/university,

and furthermore:

- 1) deferred recruitment is an inequitable application of student policy because other student organizations – such as intercollegiate athletics, school-sanctioned clubs and others – are free to recruit, select and enroll new members at any time. deferred recruitment is a punishment inflicted on all without regard to whether members in a given chapter have done something wrong,
- 2) deferred recruitment does not change an alcohol based campus culture,
- 3) deferred recruitment denies a basic human emotion, the establishment of friendships,
- 4) deferred recruitment denies the research that shows that fraternity membership leads to higher retention rates and higher graduation rates,
- 5) deferred recruitment does not accomplish anything other than deny a person a basic right guaranteed by the United States Constitution in the Bill of Rights: the right to mutual association.

In conclusion:

The NIC's member fraternities are sympathetic to the concerns of colleges and universities in dealing with the multiple challenges associated with alcohol and its relationship to dysfunctional behavior. We are also dedicated to high academic achievement. We favor cooperative/partnering actions that will lead to positive change in a campus' culture. Deferred recruitment is not such an action.

The NIC is and will remain committed to working with educators, policymakers, parents and students – as well as our member fraternities – to assist in the fraternity experience being purposeful, safe and rewarding for the men who participate and for the many stakeholders and communities it supports.