

UTC Fraternity & Sorority Community

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga is currently home to 26 fraternity and sorority chapters/colonies in which over 1,500 students are active members. Twenty-one of these organizations are under three governing councils: the Interfraternity Council (IFC); the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC); and the Panhellenic Association (Panhellenic). Each of these governing councils and organizations, advised by professional staff from the Office of the Dean of Students, establishes membership policies and provides education/programming around areas of operation and mutual concern while supporting the mission and learning outcomes of the Office of the Dean of Students and the University's Strategic Plan. All fraternities and sororities celebrate the shared values of academic excellence, leadership development, civic engagement, brotherhood/sisterhood, and social responsibility.

For council websites, contact information, information on recruitment/intake, grade reports, chapter/colony information and more, please visit www.utc.edu/dean-students/fsl.

Executive Summary

Beginning on June 1st, 2017 the Office of the Dean of Students will post fraternity/sorority organizational conduct status and history information under the "Fraternity and Sorority Life" tab of their website. Associate Dean Daniel Grzesik and Assistant Dean Aubrey Duman had conversations and forums for feedback with fraternity/sorority presidents, governing council leadership, local advisors, Inter/National Headquarters representatives, UTC staff members, University departments, and Higher Education professionals beyond the institution throughout the Spring 2017 semester regarding this initiative and its' specifics. Questions around fraternity/sorority conduct are amongst the most frequent on a local and national level and we believe that now is the time to move forward with this initiative. The Office of the Dean of Students hopes that chapters/colonies, governing councils, and advisors will increase the level of conversation and actions around accountability and transparency. Any additional questions or clarification about this initiative should be directed to Associate Dean Daniel Grzesik at Daniel-Grzesik@utc.edu or Assistant Dean Aubrey Duman at Aubrey-Duman@utc.edu. Both Office of the Dean of Students staff members can also be reached at (423)425-2321.

Communication Timeline

- Continuous:** Conversations with Higher Education Professionals throughout the Spring 2017 semester and at the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors (AFA) Annual Meeting in Boston from November 30th, 2016 to December 3rd, 2016
- January 20th, 2017 and January 21st, 2017:** During the Fraternity Sorority Life Executives Institute (FSLEI), discussions around this initiative and the Student Conduct process took place with organization presidents, council leadership, recruitment chairs, and local advisors in attendance
- March 1st:** Meeting with Jim Hicks, Dean of Students
- March 7th:** Meeting with Dr. Dee Dee Anderson, Interim Vice Chancellor for Student Development
- March 15th:** Presentation to the Office of the Dean of Students
- Week of March 20th:** Communication with Yousef Hamadeh, UTC Assistant General Counsel
- Between March 22nd and April 19th:** Conversations at Council Executive Board Meetings (twice) and General Body Meetings
- Between March 22nd and April 19th:** Conversations with organizational presidents during a bi-weekly 1:1 meeting with Associate Dean Daniel Grzesik or Assistant Dean Aubrey Duman

- March 31st**: Communication with Cynthia Weston, NPC Area Advisor
- Week of April 3rd**: Conversations with Stephanie Rowland, J.D., Title IX Coordinator
- April 3rd–April 13th**: Conversations with Whitney Metz, Office of Development and Alumni Affairs
- April 7th**: Presentation to the Division of Student Development
- April 11th**: Presentation to the Student Government Association
- April 13th**: Meeting with Fall 2017 New Member Educators/Deans of Pledge Education
- April 13th**: Panhellenic Recruitment Meeting with Recruitment Chairs and Advisors
- April 17th**: Meeting with representatives from Special Interest Organizations
- April 20th**: Live Zoom Webinar with local advisors, Inter/National Headquarters, and Regional contacts; access <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Do3TApJz8u4> for the webinar recording
- April 25th**: Recorded Zoom Webinar and slideshow sent to local advisors, Inter/National Headquarters, and Regional contacts (any additional feedback was requested by May 15th)
- April 26th**: Recorded Zoom Webinar and slideshow sent to fraternity/sorority organization presidents and council leadership (any additional feedback was requested by May 15th)
- May 10th**: Initiated communication with Terry Denniston (Chief of Staff) and Dr. Steven Angle (Chancellor)
- May 18th and May 25th**: Communication with Fraternity and Sorority Life Staff at other University of Tennessee System campuses
- May 23rd**: Final initiative decisions communicated to the Office of the Dean of Students staff
- May 25th**:
 - Final initiative decisions communicated to fraternity/sorority organization presidents, alumni advisors, council leadership, Inter/National Headquarters’ staff members and Regional Contacts
- May 26th (Tentative)**:
 - Conversation with Chuck Cantrell, Associate Vice Chancellor for Communications and Marketing
 - Inter/National Headquarters, alumni advisors, and undergraduate leadership of the organizations immediately affected by this initiative will be contacted
 - Final initiative decisions communicated to the Division of Student Development and specific UTC Community Members (i.e. Chancellor’s Office, Office of Development and Alumni Affairs)
- June 1st at 9:00am**: Launch of Fraternity and Sorority Life Organizational Conduct Status and History Website
- August 21st**: Information about the Fraternity and Sorority Life Organizational Conduct Status and History Posting initiative included in the monthly Parent & Family Newsletter

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

Please read through the below information carefully for pertinent details. Any additional questions or clarification about this initiative should be directed to Associate Dean Daniel Grzesik at Daniel-Grzesik@utc.edu or Assistant Dean Aubrey Duman at Aubrey-Duman@utc.edu. Both Office of the Dean of Students staff members can also be reached at (423)425-2321.

1)Where will the fraternity/sorority organizational conduct status and history information be located?

Current fraternity/sorority organizational conduct status and their history will be located under the “Fraternity & Sorority Life” tab on the Office of the Dean of Students website. The future location of this website will be re-evaluated as Associate Dean Daniel Grzesik and Assistant Dean Aubrey Duman continue to emphasize the importance of transparency and accountability across campus.

2)What information can be found on the fraternity/sorority organizational conduct status and history website?

The designed website will include links to a glossary of terms specific to fraternity/sorority life and the Student Conduct process; the Student Handbook; our incident reporting form; the student of concern referral process; and an Inter/National Headquarters or Corporate Office contact sheet that includes a phone number, email, website, and location for each organization. The website will also include a link to a recorded webinar that explains the UTC Student Conduct process by August 1st, 2017. The Office of the Dean of Students was not able to embed the UTCFSL social media account news feeds on this particular page due to website design limitations.

The fraternity/sorority organizational conduct information will be divided into three areas: “Current Conduct Status,” “Organizational Conduct History,” and “Inactive/Suspended/Closed Organizations”. The “Current Conduct Status” and “Organizational Conduct History” sections will include the name of the organization; the date the report was received; the date the investigation began; the date the organization was charged; the date the probationary period ends; a response on whether or not Inter/National Organization Sanctions were imposed; charges for which the organization was only found responsible for; a description of events; and any additional requirements part of the sanction. The “Inactive/Suspended/Closed” area will include the name of the organization; current status (i.e. suspended, closed, etc.); who took action; the date of the action taken; the reason for the current status; and the length of the current status (if known or applicable).

Please note that the name of a fraternity/sorority will only be listed, in alphabetical order regardless of any affiliation or when the conduct case was resolved, if they fall into of the three above mentioned areas. Above the “Current Conduct Status” portion of the website, it will mention that chapters/colonies not listed are in good disciplinary standing with the Office of the Dean of Students.

3)When will the Office of the Dean of Students update the current fraternity/sorority organizational conduct status portion of website with new information?

The Office of the Dean of Students will update the current fraternity/sorority organizational conduct status portion of the website as soon as possible after a case is resolved. Multiple alternatives were discussed, but we felt that this is the fairest option. Before the website is updated with a resolved case, the undergraduate leadership, alumni advisor, Inter/National Headquarters or Regional Leadership of the organization involved will continue to be notified first. Chapter/colony presidents, governing council leadership, and the Division of Student Development will also be notified before new conduct information is posted on the website.

4)How was information about fraternity/sorority conduct communicated on campus prior to June 1st? Will there be any changes?

Fraternity/Sorority Presidents, council leadership, and staff members in the Division of Student Development received notification when a fraternity/sorority conduct case was resolved. The notifications included Student Code of Conduct Violation charges, the findings of those charges, sanctions, educational requirements, and any additional instructions for the community. This notification was sent out after the undergraduate leadership, alumni advisor, and Inter/National Headquarters or Regional Leadership of the organization discussed had been contacted.

Beginning on June 1st, fraternity/sorority presidents, council leadership, and Division of Student Development staff members will receive the name of the organization; the date the report was received; the date the investigation began; the date the organization was charged; the date the probationary period ends; a response on whether or not Inter/National Organization Sanctions were imposed; the charges for which the organization was only found responsible for; a description of events; additional requirements as part of the sanction; and any additional instructions for the community. A notification will also be sent out to notify the community that a fraternity or sorority's sanctions have expired and that all requirements have been met. This information will be sent out internally before it is posted/moved (if applicable) on the designed website.

When a fraternity/sorority was placed on "Interim Suspension Status" by the Vice Chancellor for Student Development or their designee, Fraternity/Sorority Presidents, council leadership, and staff members in the Division of Student Development received notification after the discussed organization has been contacted. This practice will continue past June 1st,2017.

Please note that the Office of the Dean of Students is expecting an increase in attention and interview requests from campus and local media regarding this initiative.

Associate Dean Daniel Grzesik and Assistant Dean Aubrey Duman will continue to serve as resources to fraternities/sororities and their leadership regarding the Student Code of Conduct process.

5)How long will organizational sanctions and educational requirements remain on the conduct website? When will they be removed?

The Office of the Dean of Students will keep fraternity/sorority conduct information on the website for three years after the last organizational sanction has expired and the last requirement has been completed. If a sanction has expired or the last requirement has been fulfilled on/or after the first day of classes in a fall or spring academic semester, the conduct details will be removed from the website the day after the semester's last day of final exams. Knowing that recruitment/intake and initial membership education processes happen throughout a semester, we feel that this timeline is most attentive to the needs of potential new members/interests, transparency, and the health and safety of our students. Ensuring that all requirements are completed before any conduct information is removed encourages organization leadership to complete requirements in a timely manner. Please note that not completing all requirements by the deadline provided may result in further Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure violations, including Failure to Comply.

If a fraternity or sorority will have conduct information and educational requirements on the website on June 1st, the undergraduate president, an alumni advisor, and an Inter/National Headquarters or Regional staff member will be contacted prior to the beginning of June.

6) How many years of past organizational conduct history will be included on the website by the Office of the Dean of Students?

Any fraternity/sorority that has organizational sanctions that have not expired or educational requirements that have not been completed as of the last day of final exams in Spring 2014 (April 28th) will have their conduct information included on the website. Conduct history will remain on the website for three years after the last organizational sanction expired or the last requirement was completed. If a sanction expired or the last requirement was completed on/or after the first day of classes in a fall or spring academic semester, the conduct details will be removed from the website the day after the semester's last day of final exams. Taking into account student feedback on membership trends and our emphasis on health and safety and transparency, the Office of the Dean of Students believes that going back three years is appropriate and that accurate records could be retrieved.

If a fraternity or sorority will have conduct history information on the website on June 1st, the undergraduate president, an alumni advisor, and an Inter/National Headquarters or Regional staff member will be contacted prior to the beginning of June.

7) This initiative is a requirement in other states either because it is a private institution or because of a state law (South Carolina's Tucker Higgs Law). Is there anything in Tennessee requiring this? If not, what is the basis of this?

Associate Dean Daniel Grzesik and Assistant Dean Aubrey Duman did research and had conversations with North-American Interfraternity Conference (NIC) representatives, but they are not aware of any pending Tennessee state laws or processes that would require public institutions to post organizational conduct status and/or history. However, the UTC Office of the Dean of Students does believe that it is our responsibility to provide fraternity/sorority conduct information to our invested constituents to encourage informed decision-making and to promote the physical and mental health and well-being of our students and campus community. Questions around conduct are amongst the most frequent and we believe that now is the time to move forward with this initiative. The Office of the Dean of Students hopes that the availability of conduct information will positively impact membership behaviors/decisions and emphasize the urgency of addressing actions that do not promote the organization's values or purpose.

Please note that there are also public institutions and Inter/National fraternities and sororities across the country where there is no current state law requirement that do post organizational fraternity/sorority conduct status and/or history.

8) In South Carolina, all student organizations must have their records posted. The University talked about the main reason for this initiative is to be transparent. Will this be in effect for all student organizations (student athletics, student government, campus activities board, etc.)?

Associate Dean Daniel Grzesik and Assistant Dean Aubrey Duman made presentations about the Fraternity Sorority Organizational Conduct Status and History Posting Initiative to colleagues that oversee many of the above mentioned areas and to the Student Government Association during the Spring 2017 semester, but this initiative will start with fraternities and sororities on June 1st. The fraternity/sorority community has a great opportunity to begin to change the cultures within campus organizations with this initiative. Aubrey and Daniel are in favor of transparency and accountability across campus, but they are excited to take the lead in this effort at UTC.

9) *We appreciate the data on South Carolina schools/recruitment enrollment stats. What about data from the others? Is that available or do you know how it has affected other schools?*

It is tough to determine how exactly posting organizational conduct status and history affects fraternity and sorority communities, as there are typically supporting efforts that are also in place before and after. The Office of the Dean of Students hopes that chapters/colonies, councils, and advisors will increase the level of conversation and actions around accountability and transparency. We are expecting an increase in attention and interview requests from campus and local media. The physical and mental health and well-being of our students and campus community is our top priority.

10) *We don't believe posting a glossary, as well as general information about the nature of the offense will give those unfamiliar with fraternity/sorority life enough context. For example, say a group has allegations of hazing and the Inter/National organization does a complete re-organization or a sanction is imposed based on the action of a very few and not the entire chapter. Will a potential new member or parent understand that the fraternity/sorority has removed the responsible individuals and/or taken other disciplinary action(s)?*

The designed website will only show the Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure violations that a fraternity or sorority, as an organization, is found "Responsible" for. This initiative does not currently include governing council bylaw or constitution violations. The website with the organizational conduct statuses and history will include a description/facts of the events related to the "Responsible" findings without violating FERPA, but also be attentive to transparency and accountability. The Office of the Dean of Students would not add text that was not included in communication to the chapter/colony or the organization's president during the conduct case, but this information does provide further clarification that will help a consumer make an informed decision. The Office of the Dean of Students can include an Inter/National Organization's imposed sanctions on a local colony/chapter in the University's official case resolution notice. In this case, the Inter/National Organization's sanctions will then be included on the website. Chapters/colonies can also utilize available mechanisms to promote transparency, lessons learned, and actions taken.

An extensive glossary of terms and the general number for Inter/National Headquarters will not answer all questions, but it will give constituents a place to turn to for further information.

11) *As private organizations, many of our groups do not release documents considered private. If private documentation or information is required but not submitted (such as the New Member Education Packet), will it be marked online as not complying with the University? For some of those private documentations and similar information, can we show the Fraternity and Sorority Life Office rather than turning it in? Or, would we still be marked as non-compliant?*

At this time, required new member education/initial membership development packet information is only provided to Assistant Dean Aubrey Duman and Associate Dean Daniel Grzesik. If a new member education plan/initial membership development plan is not approved prior to the start of Bid Day or an Interest Meeting, all colony/chapter new member education/intake activities are suspended until all requirements are met. The first notice is sent to the colony/chapter president and advisor. The second notice includes the new members/candidates. The third notice includes a notification to the community regarding the suspension of new member education/initial membership development activities. At the time of the third notice, the organization will be referred to Student Conduct to investigate potential Code of Conduct violations. A potential Code of Conduct violation charge can include provision number 24, "Failing to respond to a request to report to a University administrative office; failing to comply with a lawful directive of a University employee or other public official acting within the scope of his/her duties; or failing to identify oneself to a University employee or other public official acting within the scope of his/her duties when requested to do so."

The current Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures can be found in the Student Rights & Responsibilities Section of the Student Handbook. For more information, please access <http://www.utc.edu/dean-students/pdfs/rights16.pdf>.

12) *For internal sanctions, our understanding is the University will not specify the organization's sanction (rather, simply reveal that one was imposed), but will publish Headquarters' contact info for those seeking more information. What if the Inter/National organization considers chapter sanctions/disciplinary process private and is unable to share that information?*

The options for the "Inter/National Organization Sanctions Imposed" Section of the website will be "yes," "no," or "This information was not communicated to the Office of the Dean of Students." If an invested constituent gives Headquarters a call, the Inter/national Organization staff members can respond in a way that they feel is most appropriate.

The Office of the Dean of Students can include an Inter/National Organization's imposed sanctions on a local colony/chapter if they are in the University's official case resolution notice. In this case, the Inter/National Organization's sanctions will then be included on the website.

13) *Will organizations have the ability to edit incorrect information? How will this be handled so that information doesn't become a risk to a group's reputation or detrimental to the group long-term?*

If the undergraduate organizational leadership has any concerns, they may contact the Office of the Dean of Students. The descriptions/facts of the events related to a "Responsible" organizational finding are part of the Student Conduct process, but they won't be made available on the website until the case has been resolved.

The current Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures can be found in the Student Rights & Responsibilities Section of the Student Handbook. For more information, please access <http://www.utc.edu/dean-students/pdfs/rights16.pdf>.

14) How will the availability of fraternity/sorority conduct status and history information be communicated?

Incoming first-year students and their family members will be notified where to find fraternity/sorority organizational conduct status and history during the Fraternity and Sorority Life Information Sessions at Orientation this summer. The Office of the Dean of Students also lets attendees know where to find semester overall academic reports for the fraternity/sorority community. Please note that staff members will not go over specific organizations/cases during these sessions.

The Office of the Dean of Students will also be communicating the availability of conduct status and history information during an August webinar for family members of prospective new fraternity/sorority members. Associate Dean Daniel Grzesik and Assistant Dean Aubrey Duman will also communicate with the Parent and Family Association through newsletters and events.

Please note that the Office of the Dean of Students is also expecting an increase in attention and interview requests from campus and local media.

15) Where can I go to learn more about the Student Conduct process?

The current Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures can be found in the Student Rights & Responsibilities Section of the Student Handbook. For more information, access <http://www.utc.edu/dean-students/pdfs/rights16.pdf>. The Office of the Dean of Students invites the membership of all fraternities/sororities, advisors, and invested constituents to review this content.

The fraternity/sorority organizational conduct status and history website also contains a link to a glossary of terms related to the Student Conduct process. This website will also include a link to a recorded webinar that explains how the UTC Student Conduct process by August 1st, 2017.

Should you have any further Student Conduct process questions, please directly email conduct@utc.edu or call (423)425-4301 during normal business hours.

16) When will the decision to post fraternity/sorority organizational conduct and history details be re-visited?

The Office of the Dean of Students will re-evaluate the specific details (i.e. how long information is left on the website of this initiative with chapter/colony presidents, council leadership, local advisors, Regional Leadership, Inter/National Headquarters and other invested constituents during the Spring 2019 semester.

Any additional questions or clarification about this initiative should be directed to Associate Dean Daniel Grzesik at Daniel-Grzesik@utc.edu or Assistant Dean Aubrey Duman at Aubrey-Duman@utc.edu. Both Office of the Dean of Students staff members can be reached at (423)425-2321.