Introduction

The Standards of Excellence (SOE) Program at Capital University serves as an accreditation program that holds our fraternities and sororities accountable as values-based organizations and leaders within the community.

The Standards of Excellence program serves to assess chapters on the minimum standards they should be meeting to be viable and successful members the Capital FSL community and of their (inter)national organizations. In doing so, the Office of Student and Community Engagement can more accurately target and provide assistance to individual chapters in the specific areas in which they may have fallen short of the standards.

In addition, the University understands that achievements and excellent chapters often go unnoticed; therefore, the Standards of Excellence program serves as a tool to publicly recognize the great work of all chapters.

Method of Evaluation

All chapters will submit a goal-setting chapter plan at the beginning of the executive officers’ term, and a comprehensive self-evaluation (chapter report) at the end of the executive officers’ term. Chapters will also submit Professional Development Programming reports at the end of each semester to reflect on their selected educational programs. The Office of Student and Community Engagement is responsible for reviewing and evaluating all submitted documents. It is the responsibility of each chapter to ensure that each of the area’s components have been completed and that the necessary forms, reports, and verification are submitted by the indicated due dates.

- **Annual Chapter Plan (Goal Setting):** February 15th (calendar year elections); May 15th (academic year elections)

- **Comprehensive Annual Chapter Report (Self-Evaluation):** November 30th (calendar year elections); March 30th (academic year elections)

- **Professional Development Programming Reports:** November 15th and April 30th

It is strongly recommended that each chapter assigns one of its officers the responsibility of maintaining the required documentation throughout the year, however it should be a group effort to make sure that all components are completed. The Office of Student and Community Engagement will provide the links to each designated officer and will provide instructions for collecting the required documentation. Each chapter’s plans, report, and other documentation forms are considered confidential, for the review only by the chapter, its advisors, its (inter)national organization (if applicable), the Office of Student and Community Engagement personnel, and Student Affairs staff. Upon request, the documentation forms will be returned to the chapter after they have been reviewed and evaluated.

*Annual Chapter Report (Self-Evaluation)*
The comprehensive Annual Chapter Report consists of two parts. Part 1 may be completed by fully completing and submitting the provided Google Form. Part 2 will require documentation of activities (i.e. sign-in sheets, pictures, etc.) which will be submitted to the Office of Student and Community Engagement, electronically or in-person, before or on November 30th.

A chapter is REQUIRED to meet 70% of the standards that apply to their organization (some standards only apply to national organizations or specific council member organizations) and all of the standards designated as recognition standards in order to remain in good standing with the University.

- A chapter that attains 80% of the standards shall be designated as a Silver Chapter and shall receive the following recognition and incentives: [to be determined]
- A chapter that attains 90% of the standards shall be designated as a Gold Chapter and shall receive the following recognition and incentives: [to be determined]
- One fraternity and one sorority will be designated as Fraternity/Sorority of the Year, and will be recognized during the annual Greek Week/Greek Awards. The chapter that has the most improvement shall also be recognized.

The standards are intended to be exceeded so that the “bar” can be adjusted each year as chapters progress. At any point, a committee, appointed by the Assistant Director of Student and Community Engagement, may be created (which could include fraternity and sorority student leaders, Greek alumni, chapter advisors, and Student Affairs staff) to review the standards and recommend revisions. Chapter presidents, chapter advisors, and (inter)national officers will be given an opportunity to provide input to the committee as part of the review process.

After reviewing the Chapter Report, any chapter that fails to attain this recognition level shall be required meet with the Assistant Director of Student and Community Engagement to ensure that strategic goals are written and transitioned to incoming officers. A review of the chapter’s progress shall be made at the end of the first semester of the new officer term and must be performing at 70% and or will have met all portions of the performance agreement. There will be no imposed sanctions on the chapter during the first semester of the new officer term, if the chapter has attained the mid-year benchmarks from the previously issued strategic goals. If the chapter has failed to attain the agreed upon mid-year benchmarks from the strategic goals during the first semester of the new officer term, the chapter will be placed on probation during the following semester.

If a chapter fails to meet 70% of the standards that apply to their organization a second consecutive year, the chapter will continue loss of social privileges and be required to develop revised strategic goals, with mid-year benchmarks equivalent to the standard. A review of the chapter’s progress will be made at the end of the new officer term. If the chapter has attained the mid-year benchmarks, social privileges will be reinstated. If the chapter has failed to attain the agreed upon mid-year benchmarks from the written strategic goals, the Assistant Director of Student and Community Engagement will be placed on suspension, and recognition (“on-campus status”) will be withdrawn. A decision to withdraw recognition may be appealed to the Assistant Director of Student and Community Engagement. A chapter in this category will not be eligible for awards recognition status the following year.

If a chapter fails to attain the recognition level a third consecutive year, the chapter’s on-campus status will be suspended, subject to appeal to the Assistant Director of Student and Community Engagement.
Engagement. A chapter in this category will not be eligible for awards recognition status the following year.

A chapter that has its on-campus status (affiliation) suspended may apply for re-recognition any time after one semester. The Assistant Director of Student and Community Engagement may grant re-recognition if the chapter is able to demonstrate that it is performing at the recognition level (70%). A decision to deny re-recognition may be appealed to the Director of Student and Community Engagement.

If a chapter does not participate in the SOE program, it’s on-campus recognition will be suspended. All rights and privileges of the fraternity or sorority will be withdrawn until further notice.

Timeliness and Accountability

As part of professional growth it is imperative that chapters understand the importance of timeliness, as well as the respect of others time and obligations. In order to ensure an environment of respect to time, chapters are held accountable to any penalties due to lateness or lack of documentation.

If a chapter does not submit any, or all, SOE documents on-time they will be given a one-time warning. As well as they will not be considered for any Greek Awards.

If, after a warning has been given, a chapter does not submit any, or all, SOE documents they will be placed on probation. This will consist of the inability to host any events aside from philanthropy/service and limited recruitment events. As well as they will not be considered for any Greek or Leadership Awards.

If a chapter does not submit any, or all, SOE documents in two (2) consecutive semesters they will be placed on suspension, and will not be recognized by the University as a student organization.

Academic Standard

Vision Statement: We envision organizations that support and encourage individuals to achieve their personal academic best while collectively achieving an overall Greek grade point average that consistently exceeds the all-undergraduate average.

Definition: The Academic standard reinforces the scholastic principles of fraternities and sororities and connects organizations’ purposes to the academic mission of the University. The fraternity and sorority community at Capital University is committed to promoting high academic standards in the selection and development of its members.

Chapter Responsibilities:

1. The minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) to be a new member or participate in intake is determined by the individual chapters. However, we encourage that all new members have at least a 2.5 cumulative GPA.
2. The University supports organizations that may have more stringent academic standards for membership.
3. The semester GPA for each chapter (new members and initiated members) should meet or exceed the all-undergraduate average of the same academic semester. Chapters below the all-
undergraduate average must improve their semester average by any amount over the previous semester until they reach that standard.

4. Chapters failing to meet or exceed the semester all-undergraduate GPA will be given two academic semesters (excluding summer) to meet that goal. Those failing to meet the goal or to show steady, significant progress toward that goal within the two-semester grace period will be placed on probation.

5. Chapters failing to achieve a 2.50 GPA for the previous semester must arrange a meeting with the Assistant Director of Student and Community Engagement. The chapter must present a plan assessing current practices and a plan for improvement.

University Responsibilities:

1. The Assistant Director of Student and Community Engagement will meet each semester with officers of each chapter that failed to achieve a 2.50 semester chapter GPA for the previous semester to review the officers’ plan to improve chapter grades.

2. The University will share an Academic Improvement Plan with chapters prior to chapters falling below the standard. The improvement document will contain academic success tips, resources on campus, best practices from the FSL community and a model for the improvement plan to be submitted when meeting with Student and Community Engagement and/or Academic Success.

3. Student and Community Engagement may request a meeting with chapter leadership if a chapter’s semester GPA decreases in any two consecutive semesters.

4. Upon request, Academic Success will provide specific academic training and resources for chapter academic chairs, officers and advisors. Fraternity and Sorority Life will provide resources of various offices on campus to assist with academic development.

Individual Responsibilities:

1. Members should maintain at least a 2.50 cumulative GPA. If a member falls below 2.50 GPA, the student should meet with a chapter/campus advisor and discuss a plan to improve. If a member falls below a cumulative 2.50 GPA, the student should meet a defined list of required items (whether inactive or not). Items may include but are not limited to:
   - Meeting with Academic Success
   - Mid-term report or bi-weekly progress reports back to advisors and Assistant Director of Student and Community Engagement
   - Meeting with academic advisor
   - Active participation in study tables
   - Members should show consistent improvement to remain members within chapter.

2. Chapter Officers should maintain at least a 2.50 cumulative GPA. If an officer cannot raise their GPA to the needed level in one semester, the officer shall be removed from the position.

Advisors and Alumni Standard

Vision Statement: We envision advisors (alumni and university faculty/staff) who are recruited from a broad base; who are experienced and involved; and who are educated, supported, and recognized for their service.

Definition: Advisors and alumni play a key role in the growth and prosperity of the fraternity and sorority community at Capital University. Advisors guide chapter operations, advocate for mature and responsible behavior, and foster leadership development for chapter members. Through advisors and alumni, fraternity and sorority members understand their lifetime commitment to their organization.
Chapter Responsibilities:
1. Each chapter must select at least two advisors. At least one of the two must be a member of the university staff or faculty (Campus Advisor), though that person does not need to be a member of the organization they advise.
2. Chapter and Campus Advisors should adhere to the expectations and standards stated in the Student Organization Advisor Manual. Chapter must provide evidence of advisor involvement. This may result in a submitted letter from the advisor(s) providing verification of the met expectations.
3. At least one advisor must complete Advisor Training through the Office of Student and Community Engagement. Advisors must complete training every two years.
4. At least one advisor from each chapter must attend the semesterly Advisor meetings.
5. At least one advisor (chapter or campus) must live within one hour of campus. The Office of Student and Community Engagement must approve exceptions.
6. The Chapter and Campus Advisor must review and approve the Annual Chapter Plan and Annual Chapter Report.

University Responsibilities:
1. An Advisor Training will be provided through the university that will inform advisors of common issues and concerns and identify available resources.
2. The university will assist chapters in identifying advisors, particularly among the faculty and staff. A list will be available with the Office of Student and Community Engagement to identify faculty and staff members who are affiliated with Greek-letter organizations.

Community Engagement Standard

Vision Statement: We envision a FSL community that recognizes the value and significance of connecting with all aspects of society. That develops a strong sense of community through serving the needs of others and fostering relationships among others across campus, the City of Bexley, Columbus, and beyond.

Definition: Capital University is committed to fostering relationship through serving our community, locally and globally. The fraternity and sorority community at Capital University exemplifies the principles of our University by committing ourselves to hands-on community service and philanthropic activities. As well as, the fraternity and sorority community creates an encouraging environment for its members to influence and impact the larger community through their involvement outside of their chapter.

Chapter Responsibilities:
1. Chapters must sponsor or participate in at least four (4) hands-on community service event per year (2 events per semester).
2. At least 75% of chapter membership must participate in chapter planned/promoted hands-on service throughout the course of the year. Chapters can complete this requirement in multiple experiences if necessary. A summary of the activity/activities, including objectives, statistics, and outcomes must be provided on an annual basis (Chapter Report), including contact information for the coordinating service agency. A letter of documentation from the volunteering agency is highly recommended.
3. A list of individual members’ service will be provided to the Office of Student and Community Engagement.
Engagement on an annual basis (Chapter Report). As well as a report on any donations made on behalf of the chapter.

4. Each chapter is expected to elect or appoint at least one person as the service chair. Chapters will provide contact information for this individual on a semester basis.

5. At least 80% of chapter membership must be engaged in an aspect of campus outside of the chapter. This does not include campus employment. A list of each member and their involvements must be submitted to the Office of Student and Community Engagement on an annual basis (Chapter Report).

6. Chapters should create an encouraging environment for members seeking to become leaders within the chapter, council, or other student organizations.

7. Chapters must co-sponsor at least three (3) public events per year. At least one (1) must be with a non-Greek organization.

University Responsibilities:

1. Service opportunities and contact information to assist chapter in finding community service projects will be provided by the Office of Student and Community Engagement.

2. Student and Community Engagement will encourage chapter reflection, chapter generated service events, and participation in other chapters’, campus-based and community service events through marketing support, technological support, and leadership training.

Individual Responsibilities:

1. Individual members of fraternities and sororities are expected to participate in at least fifteen (15) hours of hands-on community service each year in a project of their choice in addition to the chapter group service requirements. The University supports organizations that may have more stringent standards for its members.

Diversity Commitment and Education Standard

Vision Statement: We envision a fraternity and sorority community that “fosters an appreciation and respect for the culture, history, and tradition of all people.”

Definition: The Diversity Commitment and Education Standard at Capital University promotes opportunities for fraternities and sororities to fulfill the institutional vision by preparing “individuals to be knowledgeable, independent, critical thinkers — educated for lives of leadership and service in an increasingly diverse society.” Addressing issues of diversity and learning about one's own personal identity will prepare chapter members the ability to lead in an increasingly diverse world. Through mutual promotion of diversity by students, faculty and staff in conjunction with the Diversity Commitment and Education standard, the Capital University community can truly learn about and from one another.

Chapter Responsibilities:

1. Each chapter will educate its members on issues related to diverse populations identified by ethnicity, race, religious preference, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. Each semester, 80% of the membership of each chapter, must participate in at least one (1) diversity-oriented program or event. It is highly encouraged that this is completed as a group.

2. Chapters should create a space where members feel encourage to explore all aspects of diversity.

3. Qualifying programs will focus on a diversity topic other than one central to the organization.
(e.g. A sorority attending a women’s program would not necessarily meet the diversity requirement unless the focus of the event digs deeper in other areas of diversity that are different from the prominent identity within the chapter, such as race, religion, etc.). Clarifications should be sought from Student and Community Engagement. A summary of the event and explanation of outcomes must be included in the Professional Development Programming Report.

University Responsibilities:
1. The University will continue to provide programs and events that allow students to learning about various aspects of diversity.
2. The University will create spaces for students to express differences and similarities.

Individual Responsibilities:
1. Individual members should approach the Diversity Commitment and Education Standard as an opportunity to grow and learn about areas of diversity that are not their own.

**Recruitment Standard**

Vision Statement: We envision recruitment based on quality while maintaining retention through involvement.

Definition: The Recruitment Standard provides guidelines to promote the growth of the fraternity and sorority community through values-based recruitment. Through thoughtful planning, promoting positive benefits of membership, and regular reflection of recruitment activities, sororities and fraternities are better able to recruit quality members that add to the reputation of Capital University’s Fraternity and Sorority community.

Chapter Responsibilities:
1. As part of its comprehensive chapter plan each chapter, in consultation with its advisors, will set a realistic goal for the ideal size of its membership by the end of the year as acknowledged by the advisor. NPC affiliated groups must continue to follow total guidelines.
2. To help meet chapter goals, chapters must submit a yearly and/or semester recruitment plan, new member intake guidelines and new member education (NME) plans and calendar.
   a. **Interfraternity Council** – Recruitment dates are selected during the first IFC meeting in April through the Recruitment Draft. Fall recruitment details are due to IFC and SCE by July 31st prior to the beginning of the school year. NME plans for the Fall semester should also be submitted at that time.
      i. Spring recruitment and NME plans should be submitted to the SCE by the end of the first week of the Spring semester.
   b. **National Pan-Hellenic Council** – All university officials should be informed about chapter’s intentions to host membership intake by September 30th for the current school year.
   c. **Panhellenic Association** – All recruitment details for formal recruitment should be submitted to PHA and SCE by August 1st.
      i. The Panhellenic Council and Advisor should be informed by the first day of classes of the Spring semester if chapter chooses to participate in informal recruitment. Spring NME plans should be submitted to the SCE by the end of the first week of the Spring semester.
3. Chapter goals must be consistent with the chapter’s national/international policies.

4. Chapters must report all new members to Student and Community Engagement within 3-10 days of the new member accepting an invitation to join.

5. Any changes to the new member class status should be reported to the Office of Student and Community Engagement within 24 hours of changes made. (i.e. new member decides to withdraw or new member class is initiated)

University Responsibilities:

1. Student and Community Engagement will help facilitate communication with unaffiliated students, develop public relations and informational programs, register interested students, articulate expectations of membership, and coordinate recruitment activities.

2. Student and Community Engagement staff, will assist chapters in understanding their role within the University community and in forming relationships with the rest of the University. As fraternity and sorority communities across the country struggle to prove relevancy on today’s college campus, the office feels strongly that the University should help fraternity and sorority members understand their role in furthering the institutional goals and mission.

3. Student and Community Engagement staff will aid in achieving chapter goals through consultation and evaluation of submitted recruitment reports

Safety, Health, Wellness Standard

Vision Statement: We envision a safe organizational environment in which individuals exhibit responsible behavior while maintaining healthy surroundings.

Definition: The Safety, Health and Wellness Standard provides support to the fraternity and sorority community at Capital University to empower individual chapters to assess potential risks within the chapter, to plan proactively to educate members on their holistic development, and establish responsibility and accountability for the success of the community. Through mutual support of students, faculty, staff, and alumni, the Safety, Health, and Wellness Standard will establish a sense of positive health and wellness – mentally, physically, emotionally, spiritually.

Chapter Responsibilities:

1. At least once per semester, chapters must participate in and/or coordinate for their chapter an educational session addressing the safety, health, or wellness of their chapter and its members where 80% of the chapter is present. It is highly encouraged that this is completed as a group. A summary of the event and explanation of outcomes must be included in the Professional Development Programming Report.

2. In the risk management portion of the Chapter Plan, chapters will be encouraged to identify potential risks within the chapter and address the larger issues of risk management. Potential educational programs should be discussed in relation to how they can help educate members and reduce potential risks within the chapter.

3. All events must be registered regardless of council affiliation with Student and Community Engagement at least two weeks prior to the event. This does not impact the need to register social functions with other entities (e.g. headquarters or governing bodies).

University Responsibilities:

1. Letters from Student and Community Engagement detailing the benefits of fraternity and sorority membership as well as legal information about hazing and alcohol policies will be sent
to parents/guardians of new members within one month of the beginning of a new member process.

2. Student and Community Engagement will regularly provide or co-sponsor lectures and presentations for chapters to satisfy any required educational sessions. These presentations will be made on the major risk management issues of sexual abuse, alcohol and other drug abuse, and hazing. Student and Community Engagement will help organizations identify resources and offices on campus to help fulfill the requirements.

**Fiscal Responsibility Standard**

**Vision Statement:** We envision chapters that responsibly self-manage the chapter’s fiscal operations, while receiving guidance and support from advisors and the university where necessary.

**Definition:** The goal of the Fiscal Responsibility Standard is to ensure that sororities and fraternities maintain good financial standing with its partners, balance expenditures with income, and hold members accountable to the financial responsibility of fraternity and sorority membership. It is not the intention of the standard to control the financial operations of individual chapters, rather to offer assistance to and promote accountability of chapter finances.

**Chapter Responsibilities:**

1. The treasurer and executive officers are to prepare a balanced chapter budget each semester, to be approved by the chapter or financial advisor and the chapter executive board.
2. Chapters will submit financial information within the Chapter Plan and Chapter Report. This information is to be provided to the chapter advisor as well.
3. The chapter must strictly enforce financial discipline as prescribed by the chapter’s constitution & bylaws, or as mandated by their inter/national organization.
4. The chapter must pay its bills due to the respective governing council (IFC/PHA/NPHC), the University, and all other agencies on time. Failure to pay the respective Greek council will result in a ramifications meeting with council treasurer, president, and advisor.

**University Responsibilities:**

1. If a chapter’s executive officers and advisors cannot attest to the chapter’s financial well-being, the Assistant Director of Student and Community Engagement will request a meeting with the chapter in order to help resolve the issue.
2. At the request of the chapter, the Office of Student and Community Engagement may serve as a resource for the resolution of the chapter’s financial issues in regards to Student Government funding. However, we do encourage chapters to involve the advisors in any discussion regarding finances.