

Valparaiso University

Standards and Expectations for Fraternities and Sororities

Established 2001; Amended 2021

“Valparaiso University, a community of learning dedicated to excellence and grounded in the Lutheran tradition of scholarship, freedom, and faith, prepares students to lead and serve in both church and society.”

—Valparaiso University Mission Statement

Fraternities and sororities provide interested students the opportunity to become part of a group which shares common ideals and promotes community service, scholastic excellence, and philanthropic endeavors, as well as opportunities for leadership development and social activities. Sorority and fraternity life at Valparaiso University can offer training, guidance, friendship, and lasting inspiration to their members, to the campus and to the Valparaiso community.

As recognized organizations, fraternities and sororities are responsible to the University. They are expected to regulate their own lives within standards which apply to all students, to retain a quantity and quality of membership to insure their continued success, and to maintain their own internal discipline at a level to assure continued recognition as a social organization and a recognized housing unit. The University reserves the right to remove this recognition at its discretion. The fraternities and sororities govern themselves through their own constitutions and policies and collectively through the Interfraternity Council and the Panhellenic Council.

Sororities and fraternities are responsible for a positive contribution to the primary functions, mission and goals of the University, and therefore are under an obligation to encourage the intellectual, physical, social and spiritual development of their members. In this regard, the University has established the following norms and expectations for fraternities and sororities:

- Objectives and activities that are in accord with the goals and purposes of the University.
- Conduct consistent with Christian morals and civil laws.
- An atmosphere which stimulates substantial intellectual progress and achievement.
- Maintenance of safe, sanitary and wholesome physical conditions in their housing areas.
- Sound business practices both in Chapter finances and business relations of their members.

As members of the Valparaiso community, fraternities and sororities are directly subject to civil and criminal laws. The University expects them to function responsibly in the community and to obey civil and criminal laws.

—Valparaiso University Student Handbook

Overview

The *Valparaiso University Standards and Expectations for Fraternities and Sororities* was established in 2001 in a cooperative effort between the University and fraternity and sorority leaders. The *Standards and Expectations* went through a comprehensive review and revision in 2013 and 2020, is reviewed annually for changes and edits. The *Standards and Expectations for Fraternities and Sororities* provide the framework for the continued positive interactions and relationships between the University and recognized fraternities and sororities.

Valparaiso University has established a set of expectations for all fraternities and sororities in each of the following areas:

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Annually, fraternities and sororities will be recognized for excellence in each of the areas included in the *Valparaiso University Standards and Expectations for Fraternities and Sororities*. Chapters will be evaluated on the following scale:

- **Vasi Level** (Greek word for Base) minimum expectations for all fraternities and sororities
- **Arete Level** (Greek word for Excellence)
- **Acme Level** (Greek word for Peak)

The three performance levels within *Standards and Expectations* outline a pathway to success for chapters. There are minimum expectations that all fraternities and sororities must fulfill annually (Vasi Level), and there are three levels of growth that will lead to award and recognition opportunities.

Academic Development

Vasi Level

1. **Chapter Officer:** The chapter will elect/appoint an individual who will coordinate all academic excellence and scholarship activities. Due by September 15.
2. **Academic Development Plan:** The chapter will annually develop and submit a copy of its academic development plan. Due by September 15.
3. **Academic Performance:** The chapter will maintain a minimum of a 2.80 semester GPA per the expectations stated in the Interfraternity Council and Panhellenic Council Constitutions. No submission required.
4. **Faculty Advisor:** The chapter will secure a member of the teaching faculty to serve as the Faculty Advisor. Due October 1.

Arete Level

1. **Academic Recognition Plan:** The chapter will annually develop and submit a copy of its academic recognition plan, which should include any and all ways in which the chapter recognizes members for academic performance and progress. Due by September 15.
2. **Academic Programming:** The chapter will host a program or workshop that involves a member of the Valparaiso University teaching faculty. Due by April 1.
3. **Academic Performance:** The chapter will achieve at least a 3.00 semester GPA for both the spring and fall semesters prior to the annual evaluation. No submission required.
4. **Academic Accountability:** The chapter will have an expectation that all executive board officers perform at a higher level than the minimum for membership. Due September 15.

Acme Level

1. **Academic Accountability:** The chapter will academically suspend all members that have not achieved a 2.0 semester GPA for 3 consecutive semesters. Documentation of the suspension will be submitted to the Assistant Dean following the accountability process.
2. **Academic Performance:** The chapter will perform above the all-male/all-female grade point average for both the spring and fall semesters prior to the annual evaluation. No submission required.

Accountability

Vasi Level

1. **Chapter Conduct Board:** The chapter will annually develop and submit a copy of its Chapter Member Conduct process. Due by September 15.
2. **Chapter Conduct Board:** The chapter will provide evidence of members being held accountable for violations of membership expectations through the Member Conduct Board. To be reported on the Monthly Report.

Arete Level

1. **Chapter Accountability:** The chapter will have no violations of council, university, or City of Valparaiso policies. No submission required.
2. **Programming:** The chapter will annually host or participate in a program that engages members in a discussion about organizational and/or fraternity/sorority community values. Due by April 1.
3. **Member Code of Conduct:** The chapter will develop and implement a member Code of Conduct, which will include the annual signing of the contract by all members and new members. A copy of the contract will be submitted no later than October 1.

Acme Level

1. **Member Accountability:** The chapter will have no members with a finding of responsible for violation of the *Valparaiso University Student Handbook* policies on Alcohol Use, Drug Use, or Nondiscrimination, Harassment and Sexual Assault or City of Valparaiso policy violations. No submission required.

Alumni/ae Relations

Vasi Level

1. **Chapter Officer:** The chapter will elect/appoint an individual who will coordinate all communication and programs for alumni/ae. Due by September 15.
2. **Alumni/ae Communications:** The chapter publishes a chapter newsletter or sends an electronic communication to alumni/ae once a year. Due April 1.

Arete Level

1. **Alumni/ae Programming:** The chapter will host one (1) program annually, which may include an event on Homecoming weekend, which involves alumni/ae. Due April 1.
2. **Alumni/ae Communications:** The chapter publishes a chapter newsletter or sends an electronic communication to alumni/ae once a semester. Due December 15 and April 1.

Campus Involvement

Vasi Level

1. **Campus Involvement:** A minimum of 75% of the chapter membership will be involved in another student organization, on-campus employment, or university program. Due April 1.
2. **Unity Development:** The chapter will host one event or program with a chapter outside of their governing council. Due April 1.
3. **Governing Council Involvement:** The chapter will participate in all required Interfraternity Council and/or Panhellenic Council hosted programs, events and meetings. No submission required.
4. **University Involvement:** The chapter will be involved in one (1) University sponsored program. Examples of programs may include Welcome Week, Homecoming, MLK Day, Day of Giving, Songfest, etc. Due April 1.

Arete Level

1. **Unity Development:** The chapter will host one event or program with a chapter from within their governing council. Due April 1.
2. **Campus Involvement:** A minimum of 85% of the chapter membership will be involved in another student organization, on-campus employment, or university program. Due April 1.
3. **Intramurals:** The chapter will be involved with at least one intramural sport each semester. Reported on the Monthly Report Form.
4. **University Involvement:** The chapter will be involved in two (2) University sponsored programs. Examples of programs may include Welcome Week, Homecoming, MLK Day, Day of Giving, Songfest, etc. Due April 1.

Acme Level

1. **Unity Development:** The chapter will attend (60% of members) one event or program sponsored by a non-fraternity or sorority organization. Due April 1.
2. **Athletics Involvement:** The chapter will attend one on-campus athletic game/match per semester and submit a photo of the chapter in attendance via email. Due April 1.
3. **Campus Involvement:** 95% of the chapter membership will be involved in another student organization, on-campus employment, or university program. Due April 1.
4. **Intramurals:** The chapter will be involved with at least two intramural sports each semester. Reported on the Monthly Report Form.

Chapter Management

Vasi Level

1. **Chapter Membership:** The total chapter membership will be a minimum of eight members at the start of every semester. Confirmed with roster submission.
2. **Chapter Action Plan:** The Chapter Action Plan is completed annually. Due September 15
3. **Chapter Advisor:** The chapter has an active chapter advisor who attends at least two (2) chapter meetings a semester. Due September 15.
4. **Chapter Budget:** The chapter will submit a chapter budget annually. Due September 15.
5. **Chapter Reporting:** The chapter completes the Valparaiso University Fraternity/Sorority Monthly Report every month by the 1st of each month. No additional submission required.
6. **Officer Transition:** The chapter will host an officer transition retreat or meeting. Due February 1.
7. **Leadership Training:** The Chapter President or designee will attend the annual Fraternity and Sorority Leadership Retreat and other officers will attend the Officer Roundtables as required by the Panhellenic and Interfraternity Councils. No submission required.
8. **Inter/National Organization:** Chapter officers will attend all required inter/national organization trainings and programs. To be reported on the Monthly Report.
9. **Liability Insurance:** The chapter will provide a copy of the Certificate of Insurance with a minimum of \$1M of general liability coverage that also lists the University as an additional insured. Due October 1.
***Failure to submit the Certificate of Insurance will result in a non-approval of all chapter events until this is submitted.*
10. **Financial Management:** The Chapter will complete all required paperwork for the IRS 990 or other related tax forms. Due January 1.

Arete Level

1. **Membership Retention:** The chapter will have an membership retention rate of 85% from August to April annually. No submission required.
2. **Financial Management:** A member of the chapter advisory team, which may include a regional or inter/national officer or staff member, will review the finances of the chapter on an annual basis. A letter documenting the review will be provided to the University by May 1.
3. **Alumni Advisory Board:** The chapter will have an active group of alumni/ae or volunteers serving on an advisory board beyond the primary Chapter or Faculty advisor. Due September 15.

Acme Level

1. **Membership Retention:** The chapter will have an annual membership retention rate of 95% from August to April annually. No submission required.

Community Service

Vasi Level

1. **Chapter Officer:** The chapter will elect/appoint an individual who will coordinate all community service activities. Due by September 15.
2. **Community Service Reporting:** The chapter will have 80% of members reporting community service hours each semester. To be reported through the Volunteer Programs website. Reports will be finalized January 1 for the fall semester and June 1 for the Spring Semester.
3. **Individual Community Service:** The chapter will average a minimum of ten (10) service hours per member annually. To be reported through the Volunteer Programs website. Ongoing.

Arete Level

1. **Community Service Reporting:** The chapter will have 95% of members reporting community service hours. To be reported through the Volunteer Programs website. Ongoing.
2. **Individual Community Service:** The chapter will average a minimum of twenty (20) service hours per member annually. To be reported through the Volunteer Programs website. Ongoing.
3. **Community Service Event:** The chapter will hold one community service event per year, involving 80% of the chapter membership. Due April 1 to be reported on the Monthly Report Form.
4. **University Events:** The chapter will participate in one University wide service event per academic year. Examples of programs may include Valparaiso University Day of Caring, Walk Into My Future, Lutheran Basketball, Day of Giving Thank-a-thon, etc. Due April 1.

Acme Level

1. **Community Service Event:** The chapter will hold one community service event with a non-fraternity/sorority organization. Due April 1 to be reported on the Monthly Report Form.
2. **University Events:** The chapter will participate in two University wide service events per academic year. Examples of programs may include Valparaiso University Day of Caring, Lutheran Basketball, Day of Giving Thank-a-thon, etc. Due May 1.

Housing

Vasi Level

1. **Corporation Board:** The chapter has an elected/appointed Corporation Board Officer on file with the University. Due by September 15.
2. **Registered Agent:** The Corporation Board has completed the Registered Agent paperwork with the State of Indiana. Due December 15.
3. **Administrative Paperwork:** The chapter will complete all Valparaiso University housing paperwork provided by the Office of Residential Life and Housing. Due by date set by University.
4. **Fire Safety Inspection:** The chapter will complete and pass a Fire Safety Inspection every academic year (if applicable). Due by October 1. *Failure to submit the Fire Inspection Paperwork will result in a non-approval of all chapter events until this is submitted.*
5. **Fire Drill:** The chapter will complete a Fire Drill for the chapter facility or participate in the University managed Fire Drill for the facility annually. Due by October 1.
6. **Candle Policy:** The chapter will have a policy prohibiting the use of candles for events and ceremonies taking place within university buildings. Due by October 1.

Arete Level

1. **Educational Programming:** The chapter will conduct an annual Fire Safety educational program for all residents of the chapter facility (if applicable). Due by October 1.

Acme Level

1. **Financial Management:** The chapter Corporation Board files the IRS 990 forms applicable to the incorporated status. Due by May 15.

Member Development and Education

For all requirements in this section: If the required percentage of the chapter membership is in attendance for a University or organization sponsored program/event/lecture on one of the given topics, this can serve as the chapter programming on that topic. In-house chapter programs must involve the participation of members of the faculty, staff, administration, and/or an outside expert.

Vasi Level

- 1. Member Education:** The chapter will annually provide and/or attend programming for members on the following topics with 90% attendance from members.
 - Hazing – Due October 1
 - Alcohol and/or drug use and abuse – Due November 1
 - Sexual Misconduct/Sexual Assault/Sexual Harassment/Title IX – Due December 1
 - Diversity, equity and inclusion – Due March 1
 - Ritual Education – Due April 1
- 2. Sisterhood/Brotherhood Development:** The chapter will host a member only alcohol-free sisterhood/brotherhood event each semester. Due December 15 and April 1

Arete Level

- 1. Member Education:** The chapter will annually provide and/or attend programming for members on the following topics with at least 60% attendance from members. Due April 1.
 - Bystander intervention
 - Career Development
 - Mental Health
 - Personal Leadership Development
 - Personal Wellness
- 2. Chapter Retreat:** The chapter will plan and implement an annual Chapter Retreat, to be held on or off campus, with the intention to set goals, develop effective working relationships, and plan for the future. More than 75% of the membership must be in attendance. Due April 1.
- 3. Sisterhood/Brotherhood Development:** The chapter will host two member only alcohol-free sisterhood/brotherhood event each semester (4 total). Due December 15 and April 1

Acme Level

- 1. Member Education:** The chapter will implement a program to assist senior members in their transition from college to life after college, which also promotes lifelong membership. Due April 1.

NOTE: For award consideration, all member programming must be completed by April 1 of each year.

New Member Education

Vasi Level

- 1. New Member Education Program:** The chapter will submit the new member education plan to be implemented by the chapter any semester there are new members. A copy of the new member education plan must be submitted by September 1 for fall new member education and January 10 for spring new member education.
- 2. New Member Education:** The chapter will provide programming for new members on the following topics. These programs can be completed with the entire chapter or with other chapters. Due November 1 for fall new members and April 1 for spring new members.
 - Hazing
 - Alcohol and/or drug use and abuse
 - Sexual Misconduct/Sexual Assault/Sexual Harassment/Title IX
 - Appropriate conduct of fraternity and sorority members
- 3. Initiation Deadline:** The chapter will complete the new member education program and the initiation ceremony for all new members in no more than six weeks (not including Spring Break). This time period will also not exceed past one week prior to the academic exam period of that semester. Initiation date to be reported on the Monthly Report.
- 4. Academic Performance:** The new member class will maintain a minimum of a 2.80 semester GPA per the expectations stated in the Interfraternity Council and Panhellenic Council Constitutions. No submission required.

Arete Level

- 1. Academic Performance:** The new member class will maintain a minimum of a 3.0 semester GPA. No submission required.
- 2. Retention:** The chapter will retain a minimum of 90% of the men/women who have accepted bids per academic year. No submission required.
- 3. New Member Education Program:** The chapter will host a new member event with another fraternity/sorority new member class. Due April 1.
- 4. Parent/Guardian Letter:** The chapter will send a letter to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of all new members reviewing member expectations, financial commitments, and contact information for chapter officers and advisors. Due December 1 and April 1.

Acme Level

- 1. Retention:** The chapter will retain a minimum of 95% of the men/women who have accepted bids per academic year. No submission required.

Philanthropy

Vasi Level

1. **Chapter Officer:** The chapter will elect/appoint an individual who will coordinate all philanthropic activities. Due by September 15.
2. **Philanthropy Event:** The chapter will hold one philanthropy event per academic year. Due April 1 to be reported on the Monthly Report Form.
3. **Event Registration:** The chapter will register all events through the Fraternity and Sorority Event Registration Form and complete the Fundraising Request Form within 5 business days before the event. Ongoing.
4. **Philanthropy Reporting:** The chapter will report all funds raised through philanthropic activities on the Monthly Report Form. The chapter will provide documentation of the payment of the funds to the non-profit organization or submit a copy of the online fundraising portal total funds raised. Ongoing.
5. **Philanthropy Event Participation:** Chapter members will actively participate in at least two (2) other organizations' philanthropy events annually. Due April 1 to be reported on the Monthly Report Form.
6. **Dance Marathon:** The chapter will have a team participate in the annual Valparaiso University Dance Marathon, the official philanthropy event of the fraternity and sorority community. No submission required.

Arete Level

1. **Philanthropy Event Participation:** Chapter members will actively participate in at least two (2) other organizations' philanthropy events each semester. Due December 15 and May 1 to be reported on the Monthly Report Form.
2. **Dance Marathon:** The chapter will have a team participate in the annual Valparaiso University Dance Marathon, the official philanthropy event of the fraternity and sorority community, with less than 25% no shows of registered dancers. No submission required.

Acme Level

1. **Philanthropy Reflection:** The chapter will host a Philanthropy Reflection program with Student Philanthropy Programs in an effort to engage members in a deeper understanding of the purpose of the chapter's philanthropy initiatives. Due April 1 to be reported on the Monthly Report Form.

Public Relations

Vasi Level

1. **Chapter Officer:** The chapter will elect/appoint an individual who will coordinate the communications, marketing and public relations for the chapter. Due by September 15.
2. **Public Relations:** The chapter will develop a chapter website that is updated quarterly. No submission required.
3. **Public Relations:** The chapter will use appropriate social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, TikTok) that comply with the risk management guidelines. No submission required.
4. **On-Campus Promotion:** The chapter will promote events through a University advertising resource ie: Chapel View Lounge, display case, table topper, etc. No submission required.

Arete Level

1. **Public Relations:** The chapter will obtain coverage in *The Torch* or other local media for an event or activity. No submission required.
2. **Founders Day / Charter Day:** The chapter will host a program or online celebration for the national founding day or the local chapter charter day. Due by April 1.
3. **Public Relations Education:** The chapter will provide programming for members on the importance of appropriate social media usage. Due by October 1.

Acme Level

1. **Family Weekend:** The chapter hosts an event or program for parents of current members during the Valparaiso University Family Weekend. To be reported on the November Monthly Report.

Recruitment and Membership Intake

Vasi Level

1. **Chapter Officer:** The chapter will elect/appoint an individual who will coordinate all recruitment/intake activities. Due by September 15.
2. **Recruitment/Intake Rules and Regulations:** The chapter will have no violations of the stated recruitment/intake guidelines. No submission required.
3. **Financial Requirements:** The chapter will provide complete and comprehensive financial information regarding the costs of membership. Due September 15.

Arete Level

1. **Recruitment/Intake Schedule:** The chapter will provide a public list of recruitment/promotional events that are included on the Fraternity and Sorority Life Calendar. Ongoing.
2. **Training:** The chapter will conduct a recruitment training workshop with members each semester. Due December 15 and April 1.

Risk Management

Vasi Level

1. **Chapter Officer:** The chapter will elect/appoint an individual who will coordinate the risk management/harm reduction. Due by September 15.
2. **Event Registration:** The chapter will register all events through the Fraternity and Sorority Event Registration Form within 5 business days before the event. Ongoing.
3. **Risk Management Guidelines:** The chapter will submit a copy of the inter/national organization guidelines for risk management annually. Due September 15.
4. **Crisis Management Plan:** The chapter will develop a crisis management plan and educate each member about this plan. A copy of this plan is due by September 15 and the education will take place by October 1.
5. **Emergency Contact Information:** The chapter will post emergency contact information in the chapter facility or chapter room. Due September 15.

Acme Level

1. **Third Party Vendor Events:** The chapter will host a social event at a third party vendor location. Due April 1 to be reported on the Monthly Report.

Awards, Recognition and Accountability

1. All chapters are expected to complete all items at the Vasi level in all 13 areas on an annual basis. Chapters that do not complete all of the Vasi level criteria will be referred to the Valparaiso University Fraternity and Sorority Judicial Board for failure to comply with the *Valparaiso University Standards and Expectations for Fraternities and Sororities*.
2. Awards and Recognition will be presented in the following manners:
 - a. **Area Excellence Award:** chapters that complete all Vasi and Arete level criteria, and have the most value points from the criteria in Arete and Acme, will receive the Area Excellence Award for that category.
 - b. **Pillar of Excellence:** chapters that complete all Vasi and Arete criteria in all 13 categories will receive a Pillar of Excellence.
 - c. **President's Award for Fraternity and Sorority Excellence:** chapters that complete all Vasi and Arete criteria in all 13 categories and have the most value points from the criteria in Acme will receive the President's Award for Fraternity and Sorority Excellence.