



Standards of Excellence 2025 - 2026

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Introduction

What are the Standards of Excellence?

The *Standards of Excellence* initiative at Sacred Heart University seeks to recognize member chapters of the fraternity & sorority community for outstanding commitments in a variety of value-aligned areas. Academic excellence, leadership & membership development, civic engagement, diversity, equity & inclusion and risk prevention/management are core to an enlightened and full fraternity & sorority experience. By setting standards for chapters to meet, the fraternity & sorority community will continue to grow and develop together while reaching for excellence in each pursuit. These standards were developed by the Office of Fraternity & Sorority Life to unleash the potential of students within the fraternity & sorority community and encourage chapters to promote their own accomplishments.

What is the purpose of this packet?

This packet serves as a resource for chapters looking to achieve excellence on the various standards outlined within. While outlining the standards, providing resources to meet and exceed the standards and detailing the criteria for assessment, this packet will be each chapter's essential handbook to promoting success throughout the year in the established categories. This process will allow chapters to: 1) Complete a self-evaluation of the academic year; 2) Help the University recognize those high-achieving organizations while also identifying those who may need additional support; and 3) Measure the overall impact of the FSL community.

What will chapters gain from taking part in the Standards of Excellence?

The *Standards of Excellence* initiative will allow students within in the fraternity & sorority community to...

- Critically examine the membership experience and improve or build upon it.
- Analyze the operations and practices of one's chapter through core values of Fraternity & Sorority Life at Sacred Heart University.
- Enhance the experience of members within chapters based on continuous innovation and goal setting.
- Create a fraternal experience rooted in excellence and community-set standards and the values of respective national organizations.
- Develop individual members and chapters through various opportunities for leadership and growth.
- Be eligible for awards at either the Fraternity & Sorority Life Awards and the annual Campus Life Leadership Awards Ceremony.

Incentive

- Each Spring semester, before the Fraternity & Sorority Life Awards and the Campus Life Leadership Awards ceremony, chapters will conduct a presentation of no longer than 20-minutes to a panel of three (3) Sacred Heart staff members to highlight their accomplishments and to be awarded a score based off the criteria listed within this document.
 - There should be no more than three (3) chapter members conducting the presentation.
 - Chapters will be required to submit their presentation by an assigned date TBD by FSL. Once the presentation is submitted, no changes will be made to ensure fairness to all chapters.
- The two (2) *Chapter of the Year* awards will be given to the fraternity and the sorority who achieve the highest score through the presentation as part of this initiative.
 - If there is a tie between two chapters, the tiebreaker will be determined by a simple majority vote of the three Sacred Heart staff member panel hearing the presentations.
- Through the completion of these initiatives and its corresponding score, paired with member nominations, chapters will be given greater consideration for other chapter- and individual-based awards at the annual Fraternity & Sorority Life Awards.

Standards of Excellence

Scholarship

Academic achievement is the most noteworthy accomplishment a chapter can make. Therefore, it is vital for chapters to have systems in place to acknowledge and support the academic goal(s) of each member. Knowing this, chapters are encouraged to:

- A. Complete and implement their own Academic Success Plan. **See Appendix A as a guide.** All Academic Success Plans must:
 1. Be presented to the chapter at a formal meeting.
 2. Set a minimum *cumulative* GPA standard of no lower than a 2.0 for each member
 - i. It is up to the discretion of each chapter to determine the minimum cumulative academic requirement for each of its members.
 - ii. **Note:** Per NIC standards, the cumulative GPA requirement for each student to be eligible to register for fraternity recruitment is still 2.5.
 3. Create GPA goals for the chapter as a whole to achieve.
- B. Consider creating incentive plans for those who academically excel and provide additional support for those who fall below their designated cumulative GPA requirement.

- C. Meet or exceed the all-men's or all-women's average GPA, respectively. Chapters who fail to meet or exceed this set GPA should include measures to improve the chapter's GPA in the Academic Success Plan.

Leadership

Involvement in a fraternity or sorority provides one of the greatest opportunities to offer and sustain a greater sense of belonging to a college community. A strong, positive image of a chapter comes from a group of strong and committed leaders. Knowing this, chapters are encouraged to:

- A. Collect an involvement roster to reflect at least 70% of chapter members as actively involved in any other extracurricular activity (club, organization, work study, club/D1 sport, etc.) in addition to their chapter.
- B. Implement an intentional and in-depth officer transition program. ***See Appendix D as a guide.***
Note: If your HQ provides you with their own transition forms or materials, please use those instead.
- C. Participate in leadership programs, at least once per academic year, with at least 50% of membership in attendance, sponsored by Fraternity & Sorority Life, SHU, national organizations' headquarters or by national governing bodies (NIC, NPC, etc.)
 - 1. Chapters are also encouraged to host their own leadership programs for members and the Sacred Heart student body. ***See Appendix C as a guide.***
- D. Incorporate leadership development opportunities into the new member education process for new members to pursue leadership development information and/or experiences.
- E. Compile a list of chapter goals to be completed throughout the academic year.
- F. **Bonus Point:** Chapters will receive +1 point in Leadership for every member that opts into the *Emerging Leader Institute* in the spring semester.

Civic Engagement

Philanthropy and community service enable members of a fraternity and sorority to leave a greater, lasting impact on the local, national and global communities, thus creating a larger sense of fulfillment. Knowing this, chapters are encouraged to:

- A. Set a minimum number of service hours per member completed by at least 70% of members every semester.
- B. Host their own **community service** event to give back to the community every semester.
 - a. **Note: FSL discourages counting hours completed during table times towards community service hour totals.**
 - b. Chapters are encouraged to work with *Community Engagement* (HC 109) to seek out service opportunities in the local communities.
- C. Host their own **philanthropy** event to raise money for charitable causes every semester.

- D. Keep track of philanthropic dollars raised and community service hours completed at the end of each semester. **See Appendix H as a guide.**
 - 1. **Note:** If your HQ provides you with their own tracking form, use that document instead.
 - 2. **Note:** Membership participation in other philanthropic and community service events not sponsored by your own chapter is encouraged to maintain strong community relations.

Membership

A fraternity or sorority member feels the most fulfilled when the chapter provides opportunities to sustain and enhance the brotherhood/sisterhood experience. Knowing this, chapters are encouraged to:

- A. Submit an updated roster by the designated dates (provided on page 11) before and after the recruitment seasons for each semester, when applicable, in *SHU Engage*.
- B. Implement its own Member Retention Plan. **See Appendix E as a guide.**
- C. Hold at least one (1) brotherhood/sisterhood event each semester.
- D. Actively engage with chapter alumni at least once per semester. This can include but is not limited to:
 - 1. Newsletters—digital or in print
 - 2. Networking events
 - 3. Annual brotherhood/sisterhood events where alumni are specifically invited
- E. Submit the required *New Member Education Plan* and meet with either the Director or Assistant Director by designated date and receive approval. **All plans must include:**
 - 1. Date, time and location of each education session
 - 2. Date, time and location of **every new member-specific activity**. This includes but is not limited to: Pre-Initiations, Inductions, Big/Little Reveal, Initiation, etc.
 - 3. A brief description of what will be reviewed and/or taking place at every education session or activity
 - 4. Names of any general members or external guests in attendance and why
- F. Submit the *Initiation Confirmation Form* within two business days of the last member's Initiation to FSL with all required signatures and corresponding advisor email.
- G. Retain an average of 90% of new members from all recruitment periods during the academic year.
 - 1. **Note:** Membership participation in other Sacred Heart-sponsored events is encouraged to enhance connection to the Sacred Heart Community.

Bonus Point: Chapters will receive +1 point in Membership for every IFC, Panhellenic, and Order of Omega executive board officer represented from their chapter. (Points awarded based off those currently holding positions.)

Risk Management & Prevention

The overall health and safety of each chapter member should be the number one priority for all chapter events at all times. Knowing this, chapters are encouraged to:

- A. Abide by the guidelines set forth by their inter/national headquarters and Sacred Heart University for risk prevention and management. This includes abiding by the Student Code of Conduct, Student Handbook, Fraternity & Sorority Life Policies & Procedures and either the IFC or Panhellenic Constitution and Bylaws.
- B. Complete their own Statement of Risk Management and preventative Risk Management Goals. ***See Appendix G as a guide.***
- C. Provide opportunities for educational programs such as alcohol and other drug use, sexual misconduct and mental health with at least 75% of members in attendance. This can be provided by each chapters' Inter/National Headquarters, National Governing Councils, Sacred Heart University or another external partner.
- D. Provide educational opportunities within New Member Education (i.e., specifically for new members) on the topics alcohol and other drugs, sexual misconduct and mental health. This can be provided by each chapters' Inter/National Headquarters, National Governing Councils, Sacred Heart University or another external partner.
- E. Hold members accountable through appropriate procedures/standards when risk is increased at chapter-sponsored functions while also adhering to University policies that exceed the scope of the IFC and/or Panhellenic Judicial Processes. These are noted in the University Student Handbook.
- F. Maintain or fall below the all sorority/all fraternity average number of total student conduct cases per academic year.

Timeline

Submission Date	Item to Submit
<i>Fall 2025</i>	
Wednesday, August 27	Chapter Roster in <i>SHU Engage</i> (Pre-Recruitment)
Panhellenic – Friday, September 5 (last day to submit) IFC – Friday, 19 (last day to submit)	New Member Education Plan via email to FSL
Panhellenic – Monday, September 15 IFC – Monday, September 29	Chapter Roster in <i>SHU Engage</i> (Post-Recruitment)

***Chapters will not be permitted to resume operations until a complete and fully accurate roster is submitted.**

Submission Date	Item to Submit
<i>Spring 2026</i>	
Monday, January 20 (first day of classes)*	Chapter Roster in <i>SHU Engage</i> (Pre-Recruitment)
Before bid day/new member education begins	New Member Education Plan (if applicable)
Panhellenic – Rolling basis IFC – TBD	Chapter Roster in <i>SHU Engage</i> (Post-Recruitment)

Standards of Excellence Point Break Down

The *Standards of Excellence* initiative has an overall point total of one-hundred and twenty (120) points across its five categories—Scholarship, Leadership, Civic Engagement, Membership and Risk Management & Prevention. In order to meet the overall standard of excellence, each chapter must achieve at least eighty four (84) points and then at least seventy percent (70%) of points to meet the standard from each section.

It will be the responsibility of the chapter to provide documentation or verification at the end of the year presentation for any portion of the below metrics.

Note: Criteria below have been marked with a D to indicate there is a *document* to include in your handout to the panelists during the final presentation.

Scholarship: 25 Total Points

Score	Item
___/5	Chapter created and implemented an Academic Success Plan ^D
___/5	Chapter submitted GPA Goals (included in your Academic Success Plan)
___/5	Chapter created a plan to help aid those who fall behind in GPA (included in your Academic Success Plan)
___/5	Chapter created an incentive for those who academically excel (included in your Academic Success Plan)
___/5	Chapter is at or above the all men's or all women's average GPA

Leadership: 25 Total Points

Score	Item
___/5	Met the suggested 70% threshold of involvement in addition to the chapter and designated where members are also involved ^D

Score	Item
___/5	Members participated in at least one leadership development program hosted by SHU, FSL, HQ or other partner (can be completed either semester) with at least 50% of members in attendance
___/5	The executive board has identified a set of goals they would like to achieve for the year ^D
___/5	The executive board completed an effective transition process for incoming officers when officer transitions occur
___/5	Chapter implemented leadership development opportunities in its new member education process

Bonus Point(s)		Number of members who participate in the <i>Emerging Leader Institute</i> (1pt per member). ^P
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Civic Engagement: 25 Total Points

Score	Item
___/5	At least 50% of membership met or exceeded the minimum number of community service hours determined by the chapter.
___/10	Chapter hosted at least one community service event each semester. 5 pts. per semester.
___/10	Chapter hosted at least one philanthropic event each semester. 5 pts. per semester.

Membership: 40 Total Points

Score	Item
___/5	Chapter submitted an updated roster before and after Recruitment in <i>SHU Engage</i>
___/5	Chapter submitted a complete New Member Education Plan and received approval
___5	Chapter created and submitted a membership retention plan ^D
___/5	Chapter hosted at least one brotherhood or sisterhood event each semester.
___/5	Chapter submitted Initiation Confirmation Form on time with all required signatures and advisor confirmation email

Score	Item
___/5	Chapter met the average of 90% (or showed improvement from previous year) new member retention rate over the course of the academic year.
___/5	Chapter actively engaged with alumni at least once per academic year

Bonus Point(s)		Officer representation on the IFC, Panhellenic and Order of Omega Executive Board (1pt per officer)
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Risk Management & Prevention: 25 Total Points

Score	Item
___/5	Remained in good standing with their inter/national headquarters and the Sacred Heart University student handbook for clubs/organizations P
___/5	Implemented a statement of Risk Management and goals ^D
___/5	Provided an educational program concerning the topic of alcohol and other drugs, overall well-being, sexual misconduct etc. for members each academic year with at least 50% of active membership in attendance. Can be provided by National Organization, SHU, FSL or other external partner.
___/5	Provided opportunities within New Member Education on the topics alcohol and other drugs, sexual misconduct, well-being, etc.
___/5	Chapter is at or below the all sorority or all fraternity average for number of total conduct cases per academic year.

Standards of Excellence Level Recognition

Points	Level	Result
120-140 points	Gold	• \$500 programming credit • Brought to top of the list for recruitment date/space selections • Recognition at FSL Awards • Opportunity for 24 hour take over on FSL Instagram • Certificate of recognition • Letter to HQ and area advisor(s) that chapter meets Standards of Excellence • Recognition on FSL Chapter Dashboard
109-119 points	Silver	• \$250 programming credit • Certificate of recognition • Letter to HQ and area advisor(s) that chapter meets Standards of Excellence • Recognition on FSL Chapter Dashboard
98-108 points	Bronze	• Letter to HQ and area advisor(s) that chapter meets Standards of Excellence • Recognition on FSL Chapter Dashboard
97 points and below	Below Standard	Chapter does not meet Standard of Excellence and will be considered Not in Good Standing • See next page for accountability measures

Accountability Measures

Participation in the Standards of Excellence initiative is optional should a chapter not meet or exceed 1 full year of establishment at SHU. If a chapter is considered a colony, they will not have to participate until they are fully chartered. If a chapter does not meet the minimum threshold within the *Standards of Excellence*, the following accountability measures will be taken to get the chapter back on track:

- Notification to National Organization and area advisor(s)
- Chapter will be invited to create an action plan with Director or Assistant Director of Fraternity & Sorority Life
- Chapter president and FSL staff will review chapter operations of areas requiring most improvement and look for improvements
- Chapter will not be eligible for FSL chapter-specific awards

A loss of Good Standing recognition with the University may lead to the Loss of Campus Privileges and/or Chapter Probationary Status. Please reference SHU FSL's Policies & Procedures for more information (pg. 22).

Appendix A: Academic Success Plan

Complete the following with information regarding your chapter's specific efforts to promote academic success and scholarship with members. All areas should be completed with accurate information and we recommend goals follow "**WOOP**" (**wish**, **outcome**, **obstacle**, **plan**).

1. Identify a **wish** that seems challenging but attainable
2. Identify the best **outcome**
3. Identify the greatest internal chapter **obstacle(s)** that could prevent the outcome
4. Make a "if...then" **plan** on how to overcome obstacle(s) so it cannot get in the way

This plan should be submitted in *SHU Engage* by the designated date. ***To be used as a guide.***

I. New Members

1. How will your chapter incorporate academic success and importance into the recruitment process?
2. How will your chapter actively encourage academic success and importance among new members?
3. How will your chapter hold new members accountable to their academic goals during the new member process?
4. How will your chapter transition new members to the rigor of Fraternity & Sorority Life's academic commitments and standards?

II. General Members

1. How will your chapter actively encourage academic success and importance among general members?
2. How will your chapter support those in need of additional academic assistance in order to meet established goals?

III. Programs & Resources

1. What programs will your chapter offer to new members on academic success?
2. What programs will your chapter offer to active members on academic success?
3. How will your chapter recognize members for academic achievements?
4. How will your chapter make new and active members aware of resources available to them in order to ensure academic success?
5. How will your chapter utilize resources outside of the chapter itself (on/off campus) to promote academic success?
6. If your chapter currently meets or exceeds the all men's or all women's average GPA, what systems will you maintain or put in place to ensure your chapter remains successful?
7. If your chapter currently does not meet the all men's or all women's average GPA, what systems will your chapter implement to ensure the GPA is met by the end of the current semester and academic year?

Appendix B: Leadership Program Topic Suggestions

Listed below are possible topics for leadership development programs as referenced by *bullet point C* under **Leadership**. Chapters are not required to provide a program on the following topics but chapters wishing to use one of the following topics may consult with Fraternity & Sorority Life, their (inter)national headquarters or another external partner for resources and additional information to help with execution of the program.

- Accountability
- Building Community
- Building Trust
- Career Development
- Communication
- Conflict Management
- Emotional Intelligence
- Ethics and Personal Integrity
- Goal Setting
- Leadership Styles
- Leading Change and Innovation

- Living Your Ritual
- Marketing Your Fraternity/Sorority Experience
- Motivating Groups of People
- Non-Positional Leadership (Leadership without an officer title)
- Teamwork and Unity
- Time Management/Stress Management
- Value Congruency and Identification

Appendix C: Membership Retention Plan

Retention is the continuous effort made to keep members engaged and a part of your organization from Bid Day to Graduation.

Please complete the following information in regards to how your chapter will retain members throughout the year and submit in *SHU Engage* by the designated date. ***To be used as a guide.***

Note: If your HQ provides their own document to help with membership retention, use that document instead of this form.

I. New Members

1. After distributing and accepting bids, how will your chapter make efforts to retain new members throughout the new member process AND in their first semester as an initiated member of the chapter? (talking about time-commitments in interviews, setting up studying schedules, etc.)
2. What will your chapter do to ensure an environment of **inclusivity** for new members?
3. How will your chapter incorporate its values into the new member process?

II. General Members

1. How will your chapter make efforts to retain general members from semester to semester; year to year?
2. What will your chapter do to incorporate its values into regular chapter proceedings?
3. How will your chapter encourage participation from senior members looking toward graduation?

III. Goal Setting

1. What goals does your chapter have for retaining all members (new and general) for the coming year?

Appendix D: Chapter Leadership Goals

Please provide the goals your chapter's executive board has for the academic year. We recommend goals follow "**WOOP**" (**w**ish, **o**utcome, **o**bstacle, **p**lan).

1. Identify a **wish** that seems challenging but attainable
2. Identify the best **outcome**
3. Identify the greatest internal chapter **obstacle(s)** that could prevent the outcome
4. Make a "if...then" **plan** on how to overcome obstacle(s) so it cannot get in the way

With each goal, please also include:

1. The timeline to complete the goal
2. Why the goal is important to the chapter

All goals should be submitted in *SHU Engage* by the designated due date. It is not a requirement that you have four (4) goals nor is the chapter limited to this number.

Goal #1:

Goal #2:

Goal #3:

Goal #4:

Appendix E: Statement of Risk Management & Prevention

Please provide a statement in 100 words or less about your chapter's commitment to evaluating, managing and preventing risk throughout the year. Please think **beyond** your preparation leading up to formal.

Please state three goals you have set for evaluating, managing and preventing risk for this year. Please think **beyond** your preparation leading up to formal.

1.

2.

3.

Appendix F: Community Service Hour Log

Chapter: _____

Date	Hours Completed	# of Members	Location of Service	Duties Performed	Supervisor Signature