



SUBJECT	Update on Greek Life at UBC
SUBMITTED TO	PCI Committee
MEETING DATE	June 15, 2022
SESSION CLASSIFICATION	Recommended session criteria from Board Meetings Policy: OPEN
REQUEST	For information only - No action requested

LEAD EXECUTIVE	Ainsley Carry, Vice-President Students
SUPPORTED BY	Hubert Lai, Q.C., University Counsel Samantha Reid, Executive Director Office of the Vice-President Students Janet Mee, Managing Director Student Affairs, Office of the Vice-President Students Mark Crosbie, Associate University Counsel

PRIOR SUBMISSIONS

The subject matter of this submission has not previously been presented to the PCI Committee.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of British Columbia's relationship with Greek-letter organization is unique. UBC has the largest Greek-letter community in Canada. The purpose of this document is provide an update to the Board of Governors regarding UBC's existing relationship with Greek -letter organizations.

APPENDICES

1. Memo to Board re- fraternity system



Memorandum

Date: June 2022

To: Board of Governors

From: Ainsley Carry, VP, Students

Subject: Update on Greek Life at UBC

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update to the Board of Governors regarding UBC's existing relationship with Greek-letter organizations. Many schools in the U.S. spend millions per year in staff and facilities to oversee fraternities and sororities. Yet, the extensive oversight has not prevented accidents and serious injuries from happening. Since the inception of Greek-letter organizations at UBC, the administration has played a supportive, but not controlling role with these organizations. They reside in private property and they are independently advised.

UBC student organizations have a long history of independence. More than 350 student clubs (333) and societies (12) are affiliated with the University of British Columbia. These groups operate independently from the University, but under the umbrella of the Alma Mater Society. UBC also supervises 26 Varsity athletic teams on the Vancouver campus and 8 Varsity athletic teams on the Okanagan campus. That is, nearly 400 student clubs, societies, and varsity sports teams are recognized by UBC; only 18 of them are Greek-letter organizations. With the exception of varsity sports teams, none of UBC student clubs and organizations are overseen by "the administration."

Background

The University of British Columbia's relationship with Greek-letter organization is unique. UBC has the largest Greek-letter community in Canada, with most other universities having little to no engagement with Greek-letter organizations. At Queens University, the Alma Mater Society introduced a ban on Greek-letter organizations on campus in 1933 due to their exclusivity and external affiliations; this ban continues today. There are currently small pockets of Greek life on campuses in Canada (e.g. McGill, Dalhousie, Carleton, Concordia, University of Western Ontario, University of Toronto) but none as large as UBC. UBC is the only Canadian University with a Greek Village and the only University with a long-term ground lease agreement with Greek-letter organizations.

There are 10 fraternities and 8 sororities active at UBC recognized by the Interfraternity Council (IFC) or the Panhellenic Council. There are other Greek-letter organizations which operate on campus but they are not recognized by the IFC. These are Alpha Phi Omega, a mixed gender service fraternity, the Engineering fraternity, Sigma Phi Delta, and the sorority, Alpha Omega Epsilon.



Table 1 Recognized Greek-Letter Organizations Affiliated with UBC

Fraternities	Sororities
Alpha Delta Phi	Alpha Delta Pi
Alpha Epsilon Pi	Alpha Gamma Delta
Beta Theta Pi	Alpha Omicron Pi
Delta Kappa Epsilon (DEKE)	Alpha Phi
Phi Gamma Delta (FIJI)	Delta Gamma
Kappa Sigma	Gamma Phi Beta
Phi Delta Theta	Kappa Alpha Theta
Psi Upsilon	Kappa Kappa Gamma
Sigma Chi	
Zeta Psi	

Alma Mater Society

All Fraternity Chapters are governed by the Interfraternity Council (IFC). Until November 2019, the IFC was affiliated with UBC through their relationship with the AMS. However, the AMS deconstituted – withdrew recognition – IFC as a student club in 2019. Recognition was withdrawn by the AMS based on a report that cited non-compliance with AMS bylaws and Operations Committee Policy Manual. Specifically, the AMS cited IFC restrictions to male-identifying individuals, collection of membership fees, and allows use of controlled substances as AMS bylaw violations.

The IFC currently has a membership of about 1,500 men (accordingl to the IFC website). New members pay a fee to join, ranging in cost from \$800-\$1200. Seven fraternities are located in a chapter specific house in Greek Village while the other 3 have houses close to campus which they own or rent entirely independently of UBC.

UBC Sororities remain recognized by the AMS as a student club and act as an umbrella organization for the 8 individual chapters which form the UBC Panhellenic Association. AMS is currently reviewing its relationship with UBC Panhellenic Council. New members pay a fee to join, ranging in cost from \$1100-\$1500 (active continuing members pay \$960-\$1160 per year). Currently they have a membership of about 750 women (according to their facebook page). Sororities do not have chapter-specific housing but rather one Panhellenic House, Vancouver Alumnae Panhellenic Association (VAPA), located on land subject to a long term lease from UBC, which provides space from which all sororities operate and offers rooms to any female UBC undergraduate student.

Current Liaison Approach

The Managing Director, Student Affairs, in the VP, Students portfolio, acts in a liaison role with the Fraternities and Sororities. The liaison role serves as a bridge and connect the Greek Community with the



University. Specifically acting as a conduit for information and consultation bringing to the Greek community information on behalf of the University and bringing back opinions, ideas, concerns from the Greek Community. The liaison role also serves to connect the community to resources, services and programs, and acts as a first point of contact for individuals, answer questions, make referrals, and gather information. Their engagement with the sororities and fraternities includes regular monthly meeting with the heads of UBC Sororities and IFC.

Since the creation of Fraternity Village in 2003, it was not the practice of Campus Security to patrol the area, because it is private property and the Fraternity Houses are private dwelling houses. Nothing in UBC's agreements with the Housing Corporations or the Strata Corporation empowers members of UBC Campus Security, or any other representatives of UBC, to directly control the activities of the Fraternities or persons in the Fraternity Village.

However, starting in March 2018, the University began to patrol the public areas surrounding the perimeter of the Greek Village, after working with the IFC, Graduate Student Society (GSS), and Acadia Park Residence Association (APRA). The complaints regarding noise from the surrounding community had become too significant and the GSS had taken a position on Greek Life as a result of a petition from the APRA. Through the discussions, this became a welcomed action as it helped to establish an alternate route for complaints from neighbours, helped the residents in the Greek Village monitor themselves, relieved the RCMP as the only form of enforcement, and was communicated in a way that was transparent to all parties. Noise violations in the form of Misconduct Notices under the Conduct Agreement can and are issued as a result of such patrols.

History

The question of jurisdiction over fraternities and sororities was raised by Senate in February 1926. In November of 1926, a Senate Committee presented data and information on the relationship between the institution and the student fraternity and sororities and recommend actions to be taken including:

- (1) *"That the letter of the University Solicitor with respect to Fraternities and Sororities be received and filed for future reference."*
- (2) *"That, in view of the expressed wish of several fraternities that the University exercise a measure of control over their respective organizations, the secretary being instructed to write these fraternities and invite them to make an application for official recognition."*
- (3) *"That Senate recommend that the President take such action as he deem advisable with respect to leasing of lands to fraternities and sororities."*

As a result, fraternities and sororities applied for recognition from UBC on December 16th, 1926 and were officially recognized by Senate February 16th, 1927 with the following noted in Senates minutes from that day:



“That sororities and fraternities which are members in good standing of the Inter-Sorority Board and Inter-Fraternity Council respectively, and through such Board and Council, are responsible to the Students’ Council of the University of British Columbia, be granted official recognition, Senate making thereby formal acknowledgment of their existence and consenting to admit them as lawful student organizations.

That official recognition of any or all of these organizations may be withdrawn in the event of any sorority or fraternity withdrawing or from being refused membership in, the Inter-Sorority Board of the Inter-Fraternity Council, respectively. And further –

Understanding that the constitutions of the Inter-Sorority Board and the Inter-Fraternity Council have made provisions for faculty representation on such Board and Council, your committee would recommend that the above action become operative beginning at and continuing for such time as suitable arrangements have been made for such faculty representation.”¹

In the 1960’s the AMS became a legally distinct autonomous body no longer under the authority of the University. At this point, any link that was established in Senate between the University and the Fraternities and Sororities was transferred with the relationship to the AMS.

Construction of the Fraternity Village

Prior to the construction of the current Fraternity Village, the Fraternities were leasing houses located on land outside the boundaries of the UBC Point Grey campus, some owned by UBC and some owned by the Province. UBC Properties Trust was formed to assist UBC with residential and other property development matters in respect of land owned by UBC. UBC Properties and a third party real estate developer, Polygon, were involved in a series of business transactions whereby UBC acquired ownership of the lands owned by the Province subject to the fraternity leases, and each Fraternity agreed to surrender the remaining term of their existing lease in exchange for a 99 year lease of a Strata Lot in the Fraternity Village plus a significant amount of money to put toward the construction costs of their respective Fraternity Houses.

The actual, physical design and construction of the Fraternity Village was undertaken by Polygon Construction Management Ltd., as well as architects and others Polygon engaged and instructed. Each Fraternity had input into and approved the design of its Fraternity House. Each Fraternity paid for the construction of its Fraternity House through the transactions that resulted in their relocation from their former houses and, in some cases, their own financial resources.

UBC Properties and Polygon took the lead in negotiating for the relocation of the Fraternities to the Fraternity Village. UBC itself played a largely passive role in the business transaction, with its involvement limited to the extent it was necessary to become involved as the legal owner of the land. UBC did,

¹ See Appendix A for image of meeting minutes gathered from UBC’s Open Library:
<https://open.library.ubc.ca/collections/ubcpublications/senmin/items/1.0115822#p13z-5r0f:fraternity>



however, take an active role in concluding the Conduct Agreement and in fulfilling its land use governance mandate, which was limited to reviewing applications and related documentation and issuing development and building permits, pursuant to its authority.

The Fraternity Village was constructed at its present location on 2880 Westbrook Mall in the early 2000s.

There are seven separate fraternity houses comprising what is commonly known as the “Fraternity Village” at 2880 Westbrook Mall. Each Fraternity House is located on one of seven strata lots that were created by the filing of Strata Plan BCS571 on October 24, 2003.

In or about 2003, UBC entered into long-term lease agreements for the Strata Lots with housing corporations associated with each of seven fraternities ([Alpha Delta Phi](#), [Delta Kappa Epsilon](#), [Phi Gamma Delta \(FIJI\)](#), [Kappa Sigma](#), [Phi Delta Theta](#), [Psi Upsilon](#), and [Sigma Chi](#)) whose members were intended to use and reside at the Fraternity Houses.

The only other relevant agreement UBC has entered into with the Strata Corporation is called the “Conduct Agreement” and was entered into by UBC and the Strata Corporation as of October 24, 2003. The Conduct Agreement was put in place primarily to address noise issues related to the Fraternity Village due to its close proximity to other UBC housing. It enables UBC to issue fines the Strata Corporation for the Fraternity Village for breaches of the agreement. The residents of the fraternity houses are not party to the Conduct Agreement. UBC has no contractual relationship with the residents of the Premises regarding accommodation there. Each Fraternity has set up a Housing Corporation that enters into agreements for living accommodation at the Premises. As a result, UBC does not know who the fraternity members are that reside in fraternity houses and does not have any way of ascertaining their identities.

When the Fraternities relocated to the Fraternity Village site on 2880 Westbrook Mall in approximately 2003, they expected to retain the autonomy they enjoyed in their former houses. It was acknowledged and understood among UBC, the Fraternities, the Housing Corporations, and the Strata Corporation that UBC would not have any management control over the Fraternity Village, individual Fraternity Houses or the individual fraternity members. This is reflected in the agreements that were entered in respect of the Fraternity Village. For example, section 2.1 of the Conduct Agreement states that, “The Fraternity Village will be occupied by the Fraternities over whose members and activities UBC has no direct control”.

APPENDICES

[Appendix A: Official Senate Recognition of Fraternities and Sororities](#)

Senate Meeting Minutes from February 16th 1927, with official recognition of fraternities and sororities.



Wednesday, February 16th, 1927

From Victoria College

1055 Report of Christmas Examinations

Dean Coleman)
Dr. Brown) That this report be received
and filed.

Carried

1056 Report of Senate Committee on Fraternities and
Sororities

Dr. Williams)
Dr. Clark) That the report be received and
adopted.

Clauses 1 and 2 were combined and changed to read
as follows:-

- 1.) That sororities and fraternities which are
- 2.) members in good standing of the Inter-Sorority Board and Inter-Fraternity Council, respectively, and through such Board and Council, are responsible to the Students' Council of The University of British Columbia, be granted official recognition, Senate making thereby formal acknowledgment of their existence and consenting to admit them as lawful student organizations.
3. (As in original report):
That official recognition of any one or all of these organizations may be withdrawn in the event of any sorority or fraternity withdrawing from or being refused membership in, the Inter-Sorority Board or the Inter-Fraternity Council, respectively. And further,-
4. (As in original report):
Understanding that the constitutions of the Inter-Sorority Board, and Inter-Fraternity Council have made provision for faculty representation on such Board and Council, your Committee would recommend that the above action become operative beginning at and continuing from such time as suitable arrangements have been made for such faculty representation.