Hi everyone,

I know the recruitment process can seem confusing, especially compared to the fraternity recruitment process. Both processes have strengths and weaknesses. Sororities focus on the entire sorority community succeeding and growing using parity, or having a similar size for all organizations. However, it leads to a more structured process. Fraternities, on the other hand, focus on individual chapter success and are more…survival of the fittest. You may have one chapter with 10 members and another with 150. It can work great for some, and be a challenge for others. The sorority process is dictated by its national governing board, the National Panhellenic Conference, and although it may seem overcomplicated at first glance, it’s very similar to another process you all went through, college admissions.

**Slide 1 - Intro**

Think of our 6 NPC sororities as 6 colleges. Each has their own personality and areas of foci, but overall, operate similarly. Each wants an ideal sized first year class full of individuals who align with their goals and values, but who provide a unique perspective to help their community grow. Although in theory it sounds great and easy to have recruitment be a free for all, where chapters could take in everyone interested in their org, in practice it wouldn’t work.

**Quota/Total**

For example, if next year, Gettysburg had 2,000 people in their First Year Class, we would run out of beds; you would be in line for an hour at SERVO; and classes would be huge. In other words, it wouldn’t be good for the campus or any of you. It’s the same for sororities. If a chapter here had 200 members, everyone would not fit in the sorority suite, sisters would not be able to form the close relationships, and leadership opportunities would be limited for the number. Thus, as mentioned before, the process aims to get all chapters to a realistic and successful size, called total.

**Selection Process**

So how do people end up in different chapters? Through a mutual selection process, just like with college admissions. In the admissions process, you submitted an application with objective information like GPA or test scores as well as subjective information like an essay or letters of recommendation. In the recruitment process, chapters also look at information such as gpa, conduct points, or letters of recommendation from alumni (though that’s at a very small scale here), but instead of using essays to get to know you, they utilize the formal recruitment rounds. Thus, if you feel like you’re not getting to know them well or they’re not getting to know you well in conversations, change the conversations and bring up information you think is important in knowing who you are. It’s also important to note that, like college admissions, there are some non-negotiables, such as GPA requirements for the overall process and for specific chapters.

**Mutual Selection**

However, just as chapters are getting to know you, you’re getting to know them as well. Many of you in the room likely visited multiple institutions before deciding which one to attend. That’s the concept of keeping an open mind. For some, visiting the institution, or learning more, may not have changed your initial thoughts. For others, you may have left the campus visit with a completely different perspective.

We likely all know someone who only applied to one college or university, or one internship, or one job. For some, it still worked out successfully. For others, it didn’t. By going in with interest in only one or two organizations, you limit your potential to join an amazing sorority community.

**Bid Promising**

On that note, I want to speak to something incredibly important, Bid Promising. Although we try to work with all our chapters to be intentional in their language and not bid promise, I also want to be realistic and prepare you. Some of you will tune me out as I say the next piece because you feel you’re the exception; however, many of the women who wanted to be in a sorority and are not, also viewed themselves as the exception.

Do not trust any promised bids. Chapter members cannot guarantee you will end up in their chapter, especially now, a semester before formal recruitment. An easy way to demonstrate this is a comparison between the number of chapter women and the average number of new members. Last year, there were about 60 sorority women per chapter going into formal recruitment. If each of those 60 women told one person that they were guaranteed admission into their sorority, you would have 60 new members per sorority. Last year, average new member class size was 26.

I can’t say how the recruitment process will work for each of you, and ultimately it’s up to you to decide how you want to approach the spring and fall. What I can say is that we really don’t lose people because they don’t make a connection with any chapter. Instead, we lose people because they aren’t open to exploring membership in a group they didn’t know as well going into the process.

I’m not going to go into great detail about the ranking process right now, because I don’t want to overwhelm you with information that’s not relevant this semester. However, we will talk about it at the mandatory meeting in the Fall. The main things I want you to understand about the recruitment process leaving here today are: you lose nothing from going into this process open to the idea of membership in any of our chapters, instead you increase your likelihood of ending up in the right place for you, and that, you are not just considering joining an individual chapter, but a greater sorority community. As most, if not all, our sorority women can tell you, their friendships are not limited to their chapter sisters, and their involvement on campus is not just limited to their chapter. Don’t feel like your process should be either.

Fall notes

**Preferences/Ranking**

I do want to mention that although it is mutual selection, your preferences will be ranked slightly higher than the chapters’. So, using college admissions as an example. If you applied to 3 colleges who each offer you acceptance letter, you’d end up at the one you’ve developed a greater connection with. However, if you apply three, with differing levels of connection to each, if your top choice hasn’t felt as deep a connection and doesn’t offer you an acceptance letter, your preferences would then be ranked against the two who did offer you an acceptance letter. In sorority language, if you get asked back to a chapter you didn’t score as highly instead of one you did score highly, it means the chapter you ranked at the top, didn’t feel the same level of connection with you at this time. The system did not fail you or mess something up. However, I encourage you to focus on the fact that this other organization wants to develop your connection with them more.

**COB and Snap Bids**

Another question I get often relates to COB’ing or snap bids. These are bids distributed outside of the formal recruitment process. A snap bid happens between preference round and bid night, while Continuous Open Bidding, COB’ing happen after bid night. Both are like wait lists for college admissions. If a spot opens up, you would be eligible for a COB or snap bid as long as you did not single intention preference. However, as with college admissions, these options are often few and far between.

**Social Media and One on One Interactions**

So why are we so picky around social media rules and hanging out with sorority women? For the reasons we’ve mentioned multiple times before, to help you and chapter women come into formal recruitment with a greater open mind. Both social media and one on one interactions between PNM’s and Chapter Women have historically strengthened pre-existing relationships without helping new relationships to develop. This hurts chapters in that they are less likely to be exposed to new people and hurts you all in that you are less likely to engage with new groups.