

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **A Resource for Parents & Families Whose Students Are Interested in Joining a Fraternity or Sorority**

Office of Student Programs & Engagement, Bentley University

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*This resource is intended to serve as an educational guide to frequently asked questions and terminology about fraternities and sororities at Bentley. We encourage parents and family members to review the other resources located on the Bentley Greek Life website and to contact University staff members if they have additional questions or concerns.*

#### **What is a “chapter”?**

A chapter is an organization, a group of men or women on campus who are members of the same fraternity or sorority. Some chapters belong to a national or international organization with similarly named chapters on other college campuses. Other chapters are “locals” meaning they do not belong to a national or international organization.

#### **What are Bentley’s fraternity and sorority chapters?**

Fraternity & Sorority Life (“FSL” or Greek Life, as it is commonly called) at Bentley is made up of 10 recognized campus-based chapters. There are currently 6 campus-based fraternities and 4 sororities recognized by Bentley University. Alpha Gamma Pi (AGP) and Sigma Gamma Delta (SGD) are local chapters, meaning they do not have a national or international organization with which they affiliate.

Bentley University also supports membership in city-wide chapters (chapters made up of students from Bentley and area colleges and universities). City-wide chapters are denoted below; all other chapters are campus-based. Chapters interested in obtaining Bentley recognition are also outlined; all other chapters listed in the table are recognized by Bentley.

InterFraternity Council (Fraternities) Chapters	Panhellenic Council (Sororities) Chapters	Culturally-Based Chapters
Alpha Gamma Pi (AGP)	Alpha Phi (A Phi)	<a href="#">Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (Epsilon Chapter)</a> <i>city-wide chapter; interested in obtaining Bentley recognition</i>
Delta Kappa Epsilon (DKE)	Gamma Phi Beta (G Phi)	<a href="#">Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. (Xi Tau chapter)</a> <i>recognized city-wide chapter</i>
Kappa Sigma (Sig Chi)	Kappa Delta (KD)	<a href="#">Hermandad de Sigma Iota Alpha, Inc. (SIA)</a> <i>campus-based chapter interested in obtaining Bentley recognition</i>
Sigma Chi (Sig Pi)	Phi Sigma Sigma (Phi Sig)	<a href="#">Latinas Promoviendo Comunidad/Lambda Pi Chi Sorority, Inc. (Nu chapter)</a> <i>city-wide chapter; interested in obtaining Bentley recognition</i>
Sigma Gamma Delta (SGD)		
Sigma Pi (Sig Pi)		

### ***What is the difference between a recognized chapter and an unrecognized chapter?***

Recognized chapters have gone through a University approval process and are expected to uphold requirements of University recognition. They are educated on and accountable to Bentley policies, receive oversight and support from the Office of Student Programs & Engagement (SP&E), and are responsible for complying with the Fraternity & Sorority Life Community Standards Program. Specifically, recognized chapters and their members receive support from SP&E during recruitment and new member education processes and participate in required risk management trainings. These chapters host on-campus events, engage in philanthropic causes to benefit charities, and have access to professional staff in the SP&E office to promote chapter success.

Unrecognized chapters may be previously recognized groups that lost their university recognition, or they may be loosely organized social clubs that may use Greek letters in their name but are not recognized, approved, or supported by the University. In either case, unrecognized chapters are not subject to the recruitment, new member education, risk management, academic, and other standards and policies that apply to recognized chapters. Unrecognized chapters are not monitored by the University, do not share membership rosters with SP&E, and operate outside of University expectations. Groups that do not appear in the above table of chapters do not meet the University's standards for recognition and/or have lost recognition for failure to adhere to Bentley's policies. These include the following unrecognized chapters:

- Alpha Sigma Phi (ASP or Alpha Sig) Fraternity had its charter revoked by its national organization in Summer 2019, resulting in the chapter's closure at Bentley. The chapter previously had its university recognition suspended in Spring 2019. The chapter is no longer recognized, approved, or supported by the University.
- Kappa Pi Alpha (KPA) Fraternity is an unrecognized group that is not recognized, approved, or supported by the University. This group was expelled from the campus and lost its university recognition in 2013.
- Alpha Epsilon Pi (AEPi) lost its recognition in May 2021 for a period of one year. Alpha Epsilon Pi will have the opportunity to petition for re-entry into the FSL community for Fall 2022; however, unless and until its suspension expires and recognition is restored, the chapter does not have university recognition or permission to operate. This means the chapter cannot recruit new members during this time.

### ***What are "non-social," "business," "service," or "theatre" fraternities? Are they recognized?***

Bentley University recognizes a variety of types of fraternities. The term "Greek Life" generally refers to *social* Greek letter organizations (those listed above); however, there are a number of recognized *non-social* fraternities on campus. These include two recognized professional business fraternities, one service fraternity, and one theater fraternity – all of which have members of all genders. In general, this FAQ document and Fraternity & Sorority Life policies apply to social fraternities and sororities rather than non-social fraternities, although there is some overlap in the structures of these organizations and the University's expectations for them. Recognized non-social fraternities are listed among Bentley's other student organizations on the Student Organizations page of the Bentley website.

### ***What is "recruitment"?***

Recruitment is the process by which interested Bentley students attend events to learn more about Bentley's chapters and chapters have the opportunity to meet potential new members. The process ends with chapters extending invitations to join, or "bids," to potential new members to whom chapters would like to offer membership. The recruitment process is supported and overseen by the student-led Panhellenic Council (sororities) and InterFraternity Council (fraternities) as well as professional staff in the Office of Student Programs & Engagement. Sorority Formal Recruitment is comprised of successive rounds of events where potential new members visit all the chapters over the course of a weekend in January or early February. Through a process of mutual selection, students and chapters participating in Formal Recruitment narrow their choices after each round. Mutual selections are unfortunately not guaranteed for every student or chapter participating in any recruitment process. Aside from this process for sororities in the Spring semester, the InterFraternity Council's Fraternity Recruitment each semester, and Sorority Recruitment each Fall semester, are Informal Recruitment processes that are more de-centralized and take place over a number of weeks.

### ***What is "deferred recruitment"?***

Bentley University utilizes a deferred recruitment process, whereby first-year students at Bentley are not permitted to join a chapter until their second semester at the University. Colleges and universities that have Greek Life on their campuses generally either allow first-year students to join a chapter during their first semester or require students to wait until they have completed a full semester of coursework before going through the process. Bentley, like many other campuses, feels it is important for new students to have some time to acclimate to campus and coursework before taking on a Greek Life commitment. This model for recruitment allows new students to fully explore the campus, adjust to the academic rigor of

the institution, and learn more about Bentley's Greek Life community prior to going through the recruitment process in the spring. We believe it also makes for more informed, thoughtful decisions related to joining a fraternity or sorority and better prepares students to understand their own needs prior to joining.

### ***What are the requirements to join?***

In general, any student interested in going through the recruitment processes for either IFC (for fraternities) or Panhellenic (for sororities) chapters must meet the following requirements.

1. Be enrolled full-time with a cumulative GPA of at least 2.7 and designated as at least Class Code 2 (have earned 15 credits at Bentley or be a transfer student)
2. Completion of the Anti-Hazing Agreement & Grade Release
3. Completion of the online *Hazing Prevention 101: It's Everyone's Responsibility* training
4. Attendance at a Recruitment Information Session

Any student interested in participating in recruitment who either does not have a 2.7 minimum GPA and at least 15 completed Bentley credits or is not a transfer student must contact the Office of Student Programs & Engagement to learn about the academic appeals process prior to participating in any recruitment events.

### ***What is "new member education"?***

New member education is a process that takes place immediately following recruitment. Students who are invited to join a chapter receive bids from that chapter. If a student accepts a bid, they are considered a new member. The new member education program varies from chapter to chapter, but in general new members learn the mission, history, and values of the organization while building relationships with current members of the chapter over the course of multiple weeks. The Office of Student Programs & Engagement has policies in place regarding what chapters may and may not do during new member education, and the office keeps new member education schedules on file for all chapters. In general, these processes last no more than six weeks. At the end of new member education, students who complete the requirements of the process are initiated into the organization through a formal ritual event known as initiation. New member education is also sometimes referred to as "pledging."

### ***When do recruitment and new member education take place?***

Each semester, fraternity recruitment will begin on or after the Monday following the first day of class and will conclude on or before the third Sunday following the first day of class. In the fall semester, sorority recruitment will begin on the same date and will continue through the end of the semester through the C.O.B (Continuous Open Bidding) process. In the Spring semester, Sorority Formal Recruitment is held over the course of a weekend in January or early February, and the C.O.B. process follows.

New member education begins immediately following recruitment and generally lasts no more than six weeks. The duration of the process may vary slightly depending on the specific chapter.

### ***How will I know if my student is going through the recruitment or new member education processes?***

We recommend asking your student if Greek Life is something they may be considering. We encourage students and their families to have proactive and honest conversations about this decision, as it is a significant one for many students. At the same time, the vast majority of Bentley students (80%) are not members of Greek Life, and some students participate in recruitment but ultimately decide not to join an organization. It all comes down to what is best for your individual student and what they want to get out of a Bentley and Greek Life experience. Our hope is that these FAQs provide some additional context about our Greek community so that you feel more informed when discussing this opportunity with your student. We encourage you to refer to our "Questions to Ask Your Student" resource with tips on how to have this conversation.

### ***What advice should I give my student about the recruitment and new member education processes?***

As a parent, guardian or family member, you likely have the opportunity to offer your student advice about the recruitment and new member education processes. Even if you do not have prior experience with these organizations and processes yourself, you can still positively impact your student's experience by encouraging them to keep an open mind, look for organizations that align with their values, and make the decision that is right for them. Student should make an effort to get to know members from multiple chapters, rather than settling on one chapter preference early on. You can also remind your student to be aware of their resources – the Office of Student Programs & Engagement being an important one – as they navigate the process.

### ***What happens if my student doesn't get invited to join a fraternity or sorority?***

Sometimes students do not receive a bid from the chapter they were interested in joining, and other times students do not receive a bid at all. This can be understandably disappointing. Before ruling out a chapter they previously did not prefer, students should weigh the option of giving that organization a chance and looking beyond their initial impressions. And for students who unfortunately do not receive a bid, this is often disheartening news. Bentley staff are always available to talk students through these situations and help them make a decision or identify alternatives that are right for them. Students should know that if they do not receive a bid, there is always the opportunity to go through the process again next semester. Oftentimes waiting one semester longer, while in the moment may feel far away, actually results in a more positive long-term experience. There are also countless other opportunities to be socially connected on campus if a student ultimately decides Greek Life is not for them.

### ***What are the benefits of joining a fraternity or sorority?***

Joining a fraternity or sorority chapter offers students the opportunity to build community within a group of people who share similar values, give back to the larger community, gain leadership skills, and enhance their Bentley experience. The Community Data section of the Bentley website includes an Academic Report that highlights the retention, graduation, and career outcomes of students in Greek Life versus unaffiliated students (pages 7 and 8 of the report). Your student can often get first-hand information from current members on what they have found to be beneficial relative to their experience in a fraternity or sorority.

We recommend reviewing the "Questions to Ask Your Student" resource available on the Greek Life website in order to get a sense for why your student is interested in a particular chapter and how that chapter might contribute to their success at Bentley.

### ***What is the financial commitment that comes with joining a fraternity or sorority?***

Each chapter charges membership dues to all active members each semester. Funds generated from dues support the chapter's operating budget as well as the resources chapters receive from their national or international headquarters (for those that have a headquarters). Dues per semester generally range from about \$400-700 depending on the chapter. Some chapters have additional fees for the first semester of membership. Many chapters offer payment plan options to make payment of dues more manageable. It is expected that chapters are transparent about dues and financial policies and our office helps to publish this information each year. It is also important that students going through the recruitment process ask about dues to ensure they have the information they need to make a decision that is best for them.

### ***Does joining a fraternity or sorority take away from the academic experience at Bentley?***

While our office works closely with the chapters to promote academic success for all members, we recognize that joining a chapter and taking on a Greek Life commitment is inherently time-consuming. As such, we keep copies of all chapter recruitment and new member education schedules on file and work with chapters to ensure events and meetings conclude at a reasonable hour. Many chapters offer study hours throughout the week during new member education to ensure there is dedicated time to complete coursework during the process. New members often find that more senior members of the chapter serve as informal tutors and provide helpful peer support for their academic experience. Each chapter also has an officer dedicated to academic success within the chapter. These resources are available to new members in addition to the support services offered to all students by Academic Services and other departments.

Many Bentley students who are members of the fraternity and sorority community on campus cite their membership in their chapter as a major contributor to their academic success at Bentley. Our deferred recruitment model and minimum GPA for membership (elevated from 2.5 to 2.7 starting in Spring 2019) helps ensure students joining our Greek community have a baseline academic foundation before doing so. Once members have joined the community, the average GPA for students within Greek Life at Bentley is 3.42.

That being said, students who join a Greek organization may experience academic difficulty in their first semester of membership. This may result from a number of factors, ranging from poor time management to potential hazing concerns. The Community Data section of the Bentley website includes an Academic Report that has a section on new member academic performance for each chapter (pages 4, 5 and 6 of the report). We encourage students and their families to review the prior year new member academic track record for the organization they are considering joining.

### ***Who is in charge of fraternities and sororities?***

Individual chapters elect student officers from among their membership to manage the day-to-day operations of the chapter. These officers are often assisted by fraternity/sorority alumni who act as volunteer advisors. Each chapter is also

accountable to their national or international organization (if applicable), which offers support, advice and direction through paid professional staff; it is important to note that the level of involvement of national or international headquarters personnel in individual chapter management varies across each fraternity/sorority. Additionally, staff in Student Programs & Engagement meet regularly with chapter officers, educate members on Bentley policies, measure chapter achievements through our FSL Community Standards Program, and are available as resources to all members of Greek Life on Bentley's campus.

***What are Bentley's expectations of fraternities and sororities on campus?***

Bentley's Fraternity & Sorority Life Community Standards Program is designed to set consistent expectations for all chapters at Bentley and promote chapter success. The Standards Program measures each chapter's (and individual member) completion of a variety of risk management, educational, and other requirements. These requirements include online and in-person trainings among other expectations tracked each academic year. The program is designed to provide incentives for positive indicators of student and chapter success, such as high GPAs, community service, training participation, and campus involvement. To view the full Standards Program, as well as the most recent Standards Report Card where each chapter is scored, please visit the Fraternity & Sorority Life page of the Bentley website.

***What is Bentley's approach to hazing education and prevention?***

Given the national news about Greek Life and tragic hazing incidents on other campuses over the past several years, we understand you may have questions about Bentley's culture when it comes to these issues. While our Greek Life community on campus has much to be proud of and students often report their membership in their chapter to be the best part of their Bentley experience, we also know how important it is to continue to provide our students with the knowledge and skills to make smart and safe decisions.

A key cornerstone of the Standards Program— which tracks chapter and member compliance with a variety of requirements — is hazing prevention. Per the Standards Program, all members of Greek Life on campus are required to complete a one-hour online hazing prevention course prior to joining a chapter. In their second semester of membership, students are required to complete an online follow-up module that builds on the content from the hazing prevention course they completed when they joined. Outside of these individual trainings, chapter members are required on an annual basis to complete an in-person educational training. The topics covered each year vary based on identified needs within the community, but hazing prevention has been a focus previously and will continue to be offered in the future. These trainings are facilitated by a combination of students leaders within the chapter and Bentley professional staff. Additionally, each semester, the Office of Student Programs & Engagement hosts a required new member educator workshop to do an in-depth training with the chapter officers responsible for the new member education (aka "pledging process") process. A component of this workshop is training on hazing prevention and related policies. The University invests significant financial and staff resources into these risk management programs to promote student understanding of expectations, risks, how to prevent and address these issues, and University resources for support. Assessment data from our hazing prevention trainings has shown that as a result of participating in these sessions participants have a stronger awareness of how Bentley defines hazing, what activities may be considered hazing, and how students can report their concerns.

In addition to these training requirements, all members of Greek Life are required to review and agree to comply with Bentley's Hazing Policy when they join a chapter. We also require chapter presidents and new member educators to re-commit to this agreement every semester. The core components of the policy are incorporated into the hazing prevention trainings. The policy can be found in the Student Handbook on the Bentley website.

The potential signs of hazing are outlined in our resource "How to Identify Potential Concerns" which can be found on the Greek Life website. This document also details steps to take if you have concerns about hazing.

***Do fraternities and sororities have houses?***

Bentley does not offer any dedicated on-campus or off-campus housing options specifically for Fraternity/Sorority chapters. Individual members of chapters may elect to live together, either in on-campus residence halls or by renting privately owned apartments off-campus in the local community. However, there is no official chapter or Greek Life housing.

***What is "philanthropy"?***

Each fraternity and sorority chapter at Bentley serves different philanthropic and charitable causes throughout the year, generally through service hours and fundraisers. Each chapter's philanthropy events vary slightly, depending on the

chapter's mission and history. Organizations served by our chapters include Boston Children's Hospital, Girls on the Run, Making Strides Against Breast Cancer/American Cancer Society, Home For Our Troops, Humane Society, and other groups. Philanthropy is a major value of the Greek community at Bentley; prior to the pandemic, the entire fraternity and sorority life community raised a total of anywhere from \$75,000-\$100,000 each year.

***Who should I contact if I have any questions or concerns or if I would like more information?***

Please feel free to contact Nicole Chabot-Wieferich, Associate Dean of Student Engagement/Director of Student Programs & Engagement, at [nchabotwieferich@bentley.edu](mailto:nchabotwieferich@bentley.edu) or 781-891-2700, if you have any questions or concerns.