

# FRATERNITY & SORORITY WILL ENDURE

IMMEDIATE GROWTH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ENTIRE  
FRATERNITY/SORORITY INDUSTRY TO WEATHER THE STORM OF  
COVID-19 IMPLICATIONS

## WORKSHEETS

a joint resource from





## *RECOMMENDATION 1: Understand + Communicate the Reality*

Fewer people will join our organizations this year. How many fewer will be based on what we do next. College enrollment dips, economic concerns, new social norms and fears around group gatherings, fewer in-person classes, and more factors will certainly impact our experience. Our window of opportunity to adapt, respond, and change is very small. We must be honest about this challenging reality and communicate it to those we lead and influence.

What are the projected membership, financial, and other implications this situation will have on your fraternity/sorority community? What sources are you getting your information from?

Which stakeholders need to be immediately involved and informed about the implications this situation could have on the fraternity/sorority experience on campus?

What will be the best way to communicate the implications we're facing?



## *RECOMMENDATION 2: Give Permission for Innovation*

Students are smart, responsive, resilient, and creative. They must be at the center of our solution. This generation wants a modern fraternal experience. This generation is also perfectly built to be empowered to save fraternity, sorority, and higher education itself. Now is the time for us to:

1. clearly give students permission to invent solutions
2. stay out of students' way and give them space to innovate
3. make student leaders' roles easier by understanding what matters to them and helping them solve their problems

The last few decades of appropriate health and safety focus have unintentionally trained too many students that they don't have power, authority, or permission to solve problems. We must be unequivocal in our empowerment of student leaders.

**Where do we need innovation? How do we create space for it?**

**What are the roadblocks to moving forward in a new way? What is our plan to address them?**

**Where will we need most support?**





### *RECOMMENDATION 3: Remove Barriers to Joining*

Creating an easy path for the right students to find, join, and engage with fraternities and sororities should be a focus for everyone at every level of the experience. This requires a critical analysis of barriers (seen and unseen) that currently may impede students from having the chance to consider membership (and chapters from having the chance to consider potential members).

Some barriers include:

- Financial barriers
- Process-oriented barriers
- Policies that impede thoughtful students from finding safe and healthy fraternity/sorority experiences
- Structure, rules, regulations

We must quickly and critically analyze and reconsider all of these issues. This might require modified policies for when students can join and/or live in chapter facilities. This might require new dues and fees models that provide economic accessibility. This might require a short-term approach followed by new long-term models. We must remove barriers to membership that might worsen the already significant challenges we face.

What rules, regulations, process obstacles, or scheduling standards can be responsibly altered (even in the short term) to create greater opportunities for people to join?

Are these barriers self imposed or externally imposed? How will you navigate either?

Why do you need to advocate to remove these barriers? Who are you presenting your argument to?



## *RECOMMENDATION 4: Teach Digital Marketing & Recruitment Techniques*

Digital recruitment sounds futuristic, but many organizations have used these principles and tactics for years. There are resources available and forthcoming to help students, volunteers, and professionals navigate this new digital joining landscape. We must advocate for modern techniques for attracting, selecting, and securing new members.

Resources: [Phired Up Blog](#)

What conventional wisdom do we need to let go of in order to shift to a more digital experience?

How can we help our community make this shift?

What other relevant education, training, coaching, and support can we provide to chapters as they prepare for a very different upcoming school year?





## *RECOMMENDATION 5: Centralize Lead Generation + Storytelling*

The two biggest ways we can support chapter growth is through lead generation (getting more people to indicate interest in sorority and fraternity life) and a clear, compelling narrative about

1. the value proposition of fraternity/sorority
2. the expectations of what it means to be a member of a fraternity/sorority

We can't leave this entirely in the hands of the undertrained, underfunded, and underprepared who have many other priorities in their daily lives. This is central to the health of our experience right now. We must help centralize the process of lead generation and storytelling in our communities.

**Who is the gatekeeper of the information we seek?**

**What initiatives can we put in place to drive more leads to chapters, especially if summer orientations look fundamentally different?**

**What is the powerful story of fraternity/sorority that communicates a clear value proposition that resonates with modern students?**



## *RECOMMENDATION 6: Address Affordability Immediately*

The cost of membership has been a problem for years. The economics of our experience over the past several decades has resulted in inflated dues, fees, and hidden costs thrust upon students (and their families). Addressing this massive challenge will not be easy, especially as many work hard to maintain staff, programs, and membership benefits that have become expected. But this will continue to linger as the biggest threat to the experience until we creatively seek new financial models. We must address affordability both in the short term and the long term.

**For whom does our current cost structure create a barrier to joining?**

**What are any measures you can take to reduce the cost of fraternity/sorority (especially for the next year)?**

**What are long-term strategies you can start to advocate for that would make fraternity/sorority more affordable for those without the current means to join?**





## *RECOMMENDATION 7: Deploy Assets to Top Priorities*

Direct volunteers, professionals, and student leaders to prioritize two things for the short term: membership growth and health/safety. Headquarters staff and volunteers, campus-based professionals, and students should know that for right now our entire fraternal community is focused on

1. proactively and creatively attracting, selecting, and securing more of the right people for our organizations,
2. operating responsibly within the “non-negotiables” of health, safety, and maturity

The very future of fraternities and sororities depends upon it. We must deploy all available assets to focus on responsible membership growth.

What kind of members are we trying to attract?

What key students, volunteers, and professionals can you train and deploy to help attract, select, and secure the “right members” for our chapters?

What preparation do you need to be ready to be an effective marketer and recruiter for fraternities and sororities this year?



## **RECOMMENDATION 8:** *Challenge the Conventional Wisdom of Joining*

Events, rounds, informationals, house tours, bid day, “Meet The Greeks,” rush week, in-person PNM orientation, traditional structure—tradition itself—all of these “conventions” of the fraternity/sorority joining process must be deprioritized.

Our top joining process priority as leaders is simple and clear. Actively create trust-filled, relationship building moments between current members and potential members however make sense in today’s world.

Fraternity and sorority is a relationship business. People join people. We must create new ways for those relationships to form and take shape. We must challenge the conventional wisdom related to the joining experience and allow for innovation to flourish.

**Why do we do it the way we do it?**

**What conventional wisdom of joining do you have influence over? Which of those needs to be immediately challenged in preparation for a very different summer/fall 2020?**

**What assumed traditions of the joining experience would it be unwise to part ways with?**





## *RECOMMENDATION 9: Partner or Perish*

Now is the time for partnership. Set the politics aside. If we do not choose to partner, there will be no recognizable experience to serve, no jobs to have, and no politics to negotiate in the future.

After all, despite our varying positions on particular topics, we are a small group of caring humans who are being personally impacted by all of this. We need to care for each other. We need to share the spirit of interfraternalism in our interactions.

This is an opportunity to transform the interpersonal culture of the experience into a more caring, more loving, and more empathetic culture. This set of recommendations offers a single strategy that we are asking everyone to promote.

If we can partner around this plan in the short term, we can weather this storm. We must work together right now for the future of fraternities and sororities.

**Which partners can you call upon right now to discuss mutually beneficial action plans?**

**What issues might need to be set aside during this unique situation?**

**Who do we need to create new relationships with in order to remain viable?**



## *RECOMMENDATION 10: There is Still Time to Make Big Decisions*

During this uncertain time, there may be an instinct to regain control by making major decisions to cancel, delay, or defer joining processes. It's a completely understandable instinct, but it's important to understand the unintended consequences in taking a premature action, especially one which would add another barrier to joining.

We don't need to panic right now; we just need to be flexible and adaptable with a solution-oriented mind. Don't make decisions with incomplete information and try to get comfortable with the gray area we all need to navigate through at this moment.

We must use good information, patience, and adaptability to make big decisions about the structures, plans, and processes that influence fraternity/sorority joining.

**How can you keep as much flexibility, adaptability, and lack of panic at the center of our strategy?**

**What are the big decisions you foresee having to make?**

**What are the consequences of making those decisions too early? Too late?**





## *RECOMMENDATION 11: Identify + Communicate the Non-Negotiables*

We all must name our collective and easy-to-understand non-negotiables of what we will not accept in fraternity/ sorority and in the joining process. When we have named our non-negotiables, we can stay out of the minutiae of the joining experience and stay focused on the things that matter most right now.

- The health, safety, and well-being of all students must take precedence over everything else.
- The fraternity/sorority experience and the experience of joining must be safe, inclusive, healthy, and a benefit to each student's academic experience.
- Fraternities, sororities, and individual members must follow local, state, and federal laws.
- We will not accept new member experiences or chapter experiences that are physically or emotionally dangerous.
- We will not accept physical or sexual assault in our fraternities and sororities.
- We will not accept drugs and alcohol in the joining process.
- We will not accept dishonesty in the joining process.
- We will not accept discrimination in the joining process or in chapters.

We must name our non-negotiables and allow our members to operate creatively within them.

**What would you add to the non-negotiables offered in this document?**

**What's the value of communicating our non-negotiables to potential members?**

**How will you communicate clear, non-negotiable expectations?**



## *RECOMMENDATION 12: Inspire a Hopeful Future*

Much of our attention will be on the challenges we face, the crises of the day, or the emergencies of the moment. Leaders must consistently share promises of a hopeful future with sorority and fraternity members. This generation of students was already dealing with extraordinary levels of anxiety, pressure, and fear. Their worlds have been upended again.

We must be solution oriented. We must be hopeful. We must help sorority and fraternity members see the positive future they're helping to build. We know you are concerned too. We know you, alone, don't have the power to address all of this. We know you'll try your best to help. We also know you might not fully agree with these recommendations. We hope you will receive them in the full-hearted spirit they were written.

We are concerned, yet we are hopeful. We believe in our collective ability to overcome any obstacle. Fraternity and sorority will endure. We must take this moment seriously. We must serve our students and ensure the future of our organizations for future students. Now is the time to act, innovate, and respond.  
**Fraternity and sorority will endure.**

**What opportunities does this moment create for the fraternity/sorority experience?**

**Why is fraternity/sorority relevant in this moment and in the lives of modern students?**

**How do we ensure we remain hopeful during uncertain times?**

