

**TO:** FRATERNITY & SORORITY GOVERNING COUNCIL AND CHAPTER LEADERS

**FROM:** OSL STAFF

**DATE:** 6 FEBRUARY 2017

**SUBJECT:** 2017 Greek Leadership Retreat Report

The purpose of this memo is to summarize what was discussed at the Greek Leadership Retreat (GLR) on January 28-29, 2017 among the Office of Student Life staff (OSL), the council leaders (College Panhellenic Council—CPC, the Historically Black and Latinx Greek Council—HBLGC, the Interfraternity Council—IFC, and the Multicultural Greek Council—MGC), and the presidents, or chapter representatives, from each active, recognized, social fraternity and sorority at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB).

During the course of GLR, constituents within the fraternity and sorority community at UCSB addressed topics pertinent to the continued success of fraternity and sorority life (FSL). This memo condenses these subjects in to six overarching categories as well as outlines the action items thought of by student leaders to provide guidelines and standards for sustained betterment of the community. The retreat provided the platform to brainstorm areas FSL can improve upon and how to best go about making consequential, positive change.

Note: check marks indicate multiple groups endorsed idea

### **Perception**

Challenge: Absence of positive PR, lack of substance in social media postings, and minimal promotion/awareness

Resolutions:

- Stop negative sensationalism in the local news—share the positive contributions
- Avoid negativity when discussing other chapters and councils: a united community is easier to perceive positively than one that talks down about itself ✓ ✓
- Remember the “always wearing your letters” mentality—so be on your best behavior (minimize risk and the perception of risk) ✓
- Take a positive role in the community and get involved outside the chapter (provide incentives for members) ✓
- Address the standards members are held to: more than just socially
- Make a combined philanthropy to bring together more than one chapter (ex: council philanthropies)
- Highlight what philanthropies are actually about (more than social competition)
- Create council newsletters and distribute

### **Engagement**

Challenge: Combating group mentality and complacency/apathy, addressing over programming, and increasing alum relations and retention of members/new members

Resolutions:

- Keep things fun, new, and interesting (be innovative) ✓ ✓
- Educate members, new members, and potential new members about the expectations of joining ✓

- Be proactive with younger members—focus on the future ✓
- Give each class level equal responsibility in the chapter
- Combine events that chapters are doing separately to increase interfraternal relations (brotherhood and sisterhood between chapters) ✓ ✓
  - Greek Week, joint community service projects, game nights, sister-sorority nights
  - Build relationships between new member classes (ex: fall quarter new member events) ✓
  - Focus on quality of events, not quantity of events—add meaning to events ✓ ✓
- Invite alum back to Santa Barbara to cultivate relationships ✓
  - Host career days, collect contact information, encourage alumni advisors
- Recognize/incentivize involvement (ex: senior gifts)
- Spend time and effort on people that will actually contribute positively instead of the lost causes

## Collaboration

Challenge: Lack of cross-council and intra-council collaboration and lack of communication between councils and chapters

Resolutions:

- Active participation in community wide events: Greek Week, inter/intra-council socials, inter/intra-council IMs, inter/intra-council study sessions to get to know people in the same major outside of your chapter ✓ ✓ ✓
  - Adjust structure of events like Greek Week to center around all four councils
- Increase knowledge on council procedures
- Utilize the Inter Greek Council
- Effectively use/listen to delegates
- Increase presidential bonding— promote sharing advice among chapters
- Find a common philanthropic cause the community can fundraise for
- Host events for unaffiliated population
- Host a panel to answer other students questions on fraternity & sorority life: break down the barrier between affiliated and unaffiliated students
- Bridge the cultural divide ✓
  - Multiple culturally based organizations partner to share and celebrate each other's cultures
  - Mutual support for organizations—extending invitations to events and actually going to said events ✓

## Creating Buy-In

Challenge: Creating a culture of change and helping new members/initiated members see the big picture

Resolutions:

- Council involvement by the chapters
  - Relaying the information clearly and effectively to new members
  - Utilizing councils' executive officers within the chapter
- Incorporate big picture message into new member education ✓
- Have more events with other chapters ✓
- Motivate the middle members in your chapter (stop wasting time of lost causes)
- Take policy seriously
  - Show/educate members about the consequences

- Demonstrate impacts of membership (adding meaning behind activities) ✓
  - Choose community service projects of interest/that members are passionate about
  - Emphasize the intent behind philanthropy ✓
  - Appreciate leadership development opportunities ✓
  - Focus on the “why” behind the “what” (why we do what we do)
- Incorporate unifying elements to new member education and recruitment practices ✓
- Use chapter meetings to talk about the success of the entire community not just the chapter
- Make sure competition between organizations is healthy and not the sole focus
- Encourage open-mindedness and adaptability
- Innovate to keep things interesting
- Be clear on expectations early on and have reward/punishment systems in place to hold members accountable

### **Exclusivity/Inclusivity**

Challenge: Founded with rituals and a history that promotes exclusivity, so how can we make fraternity and sorority life accessible and inclusive for all Gauchos

Resolutions:

- Be welcoming and respectful to everyone ✓ ✓
- Remain mindful of people’s identities
  - Check our language and actions because it might be derogatory/triggering ✓ ✓
  - Allow everyone an equal opportunity throughout the recruitment process ✓ ✓
- Collaborate with unaffiliated entities (AS and other organizations for local philanthropy/outreach “SIRRC”) ✓ ✓
  - Reach out to the LGBTQ community to collaborate and educate members about inclusive language, transgender community, and ways to celebrate multiple identities ✓
  - Promote safe zone training and other diversity workshops (teach members what was learned at different trainings) ✓
- Present yourself by your values, not just your letters
- Bridge cultural divides—highlight cultural diversity in the chapter’s PR
- Make it known why social events are not open events (due to risk, safety hazards, liability, etc.)
  - LOTP education refresher

### **Safety**

Challenge: Mitigating risk and holding our chapters/members accountable

Resolutions:

- Create new accreditation workshops focusing on risk management policies
  - Specialize ADP program for fraternity/sorority members
  - Provide real life examples of what could happen—past mistakes ✓
  - Liability exercise for everyone, “every 15 minutes” activity
- Enforce existing policies on risk management through self-regulation ✓
- Educate all members about the policies, not just leadership ✓ ✓
  - Focus on new members ✓
  - Peer-to-peer conversations ✓ ✓
  - Prioritize the conversation within the council and chapters ✓
- Facilitate intentional relationship development with IV law enforcement (more face time, less intimidation, ride along program for Presidents and Risk Managers) ✓

- Participate in Green Dot/green shirt day to show unity and take a stand condemning interpersonal violence ✓
- Emphasize **safety**, not how to get away with things
  - Accept the culture, and actively work to make it safer
  - Take a stand on how to pregame safer
- Elect effective risk managers—be intentional when electing/appointing this position
  - But remind the chapter that risk management is everyone’s job ✓
- Utilize a buddy system when you go out—be your brothers’ and sisters’ keeper

Moving forward, chapters and councils can use this report as a base line to evaluate the progress of the fraternity and sorority community. It is important to note that culture change is a slow process; however, the change has to start somewhere. The retreat not only helped student leaders to identify areas in which the community can improve, but provided the foundation and the relationships necessary for students to be the agents of change. This memo should serve as a reminder to what the fraternity and sorority community is trying to accomplish.

### Survey Results

At the date of publication, over 80% of survey takers strongly agree that GLR fulfilled their goals and expectations, and almost 90% believe that the materials provided will help them apply the concepts learned and assess chapter and/or council development. As a result of the retreat, over 90% agree that the experience allowed them to not only better understand the fraternity and sorority community, but also felt they left the retreat having created relationships and connections with other fraternity and sorority leaders that will help them during their terms.

