



Standards of Fraternal Excellence

Rolled out in Fall 2018, the Standards of Fraternal Excellence (SOFE) are a way to 1) establish a standard for fraternal organizational operations at Upstate, 2) provide chapters with semester goals 3) hold each chapter to the same standards and 4) to qualify for recognition for campus awards.

Chapters are “graded” in 9 different areas that have been identified as important aspects of fraternal operations that contribute to establishing fraternities and sororities as relevant, needed and desired parts of the USC Upstate community.

Please note that while late submissions are accepted for some categories, once the final SOFE report goes out to the community, no adjustments will be made unless there was a mistake made on the part of the Assistant Director or other University agent/entity.

Graded Areas

1. Workshop Attendance

There will be one workshop hosted by the Office of Student Involvement (OSI) - Fraternity and Sorority Life (or other university department) each semester during the academic year (October for fall semester and February for spring semester. Some years, a March workshop may replace the January workshop). Each workshop will focus on different topics that are pertinent to fraternity/sorority leadership and/or membership.

There may be times when another university event may be designated as a workshop in lieu of an Office of Student Involvement - Fraternity and Sorority Life sponsored workshop or added as an additional opportunity to gain workshop attendance points.

Points Distribution:

- Points in this category will be determined by the percent of chapter participation at these workshops. The percent listed on the SOFE matrix corresponds to the percentage of chapter attendance at all workshops over the course of the semester by unique members*, NOT at each event. So, to earn 40 points in this category, 50% or more of your chapter membership must have attended at least one workshop.

For example, if a chapter has 50 members, 25 of those members have to have attended a workshop in each graded semester in order to receive 40 points for this category.

* Unique member participation means that each member contributes to the overall percentage of attendance on their first workshop attendance.

Things to turn in:

- None, attendance at Office of Student Involvement – Fraternity and Sorority Life will be

kept by the Assistant Director. It is the responsibility of the chapter members to make sure they sign in at the beginning of the workshop. Showing up more than 5 minutes late to a workshop count as having **NOT** attended.

2. Bi-weekly 1-on-1 Attendance: President

Presidents will meet with the Assistant Director (AD) for Fraternity and Sorority Life once every two weeks for a one-on-one. Presidents may reschedule their bi-weekly one-on-one without consequence, where the AD's schedule permits.

By the second one-on-one of the term, Presidents are expected to submit 3 SMART goals for their chapter using the [Chapter Goal Setting Form](#). Failure to submit these goals by that time will count as one unexcused absence.

Tip:

- Use the FSL Leadership Summit as an opportunity to develop your Chapter Semester Goals

Points Distribution:

- Organizations will receive 40 points for attending all chapter President one-on-ones
- Organizations will receive 20 points for missing 1 one-on-one without rescheduling
- Organizations will receive 10 points for missing 2 one-on-ones without rescheduling
- Organizations will receive 0 points for missing 3 or more one-on-ones without rescheduling

Things to turn in:

- 3 SMART Chapter Semester Goals by the second President one-on-one of the semester

3. Participation at FSL Leadership Summit (Fall) and All Presidents' Meeting (Spring)

Full attendance (by those requested by the AD) and active participation is expected by all chapters wanting to be a part of the USC Upstate fraternity/sorority community. It is imperative that you and your delegates are ON TIME for these events.

Points Distribution:

- Organizations with full requested attendance and participation at FSL Leadership Summit (Fall) and All Presidents' Meeting (Spring) will receive 20 points if they arrive on time
- Organizations with full requested attendance and participation at FSL Leadership Summit (Fall) and All Presidents' Meeting (Spring) will receive 10 points if they arrive tardy by less than 5 minutes
- Organizations either without full requested attendance and participation at FSL Leadership Summit (Fall) and All Presidents' Meeting (Spring) OR arriving more than 5 minutes tardy to either of these events will earn an organization 0 points

Things to turn in:

- NONE; however, active participation is expected for full participation points.

4. Educational Programming

Each organization will be expected to host at least one open-to-the-public educational program each semester.

Tip:

- Utilize the resources on campus to build out your educational programming. The Assistant Director for FSL can help connect you to resources that fit the theme of your desired program.

Points Distribution:

- Organizations will gain points based on how many open-to-the-public educational programs the organization hosts
 - Organizations will receive 20 points for hosting one open-to-the-public educational program
 - Organizations will receive 30 points for hosting two open-to-the-public educational program
 - Organizations will receive 40 points for hosting three open-to-the-public educational program
- Organizations that host more than 3 educational programming events in a given semester will earn an additional 5 points per program up to an additional 10 points
 - You will be rewarded for hard work and service to the community; however, the focus should be on creating a well-rounded chapter and member experience.
- Organizations have the opportunity to gain bonus points for each educational program hosted
 - For each event that is co-hosted with another organization WITHIN your council, your organization will earn an additional 5 points for each org inside of your council
 - For each event that is co-hosted with another organization OUTSIDE of your council, your organization will earn an additional 10 points for each org outside of your council
 - For each event that is co-hosted with a campus department OUTSIDE, your organization will earn an additional 10 points

For example: Alpha Omicron Pi (NPC sorority) co-hosts an alcohol consumption safety event with Lambda Upsilon Lambda Fraternity, Inc. (NALFO fraternity), but invites the Health Education Coordinator in to help facilitate the discussion and activities. Both organizations have satisfied the minimum requirements for educational programming in SOFE, but have both also earned an additional 20 points! 10 points for partnering with an organization outside of their respective councils (NPC and NALFO), but also 10 points for partnering with an Upstate department (Health Education).

Things to turn in:

- Completed [Educational Program Report template](#) is due 10 calendar days after **last** day of classes by 5pm in the “[General SOFE Submission Form](#)” on Agora
- In the spring, to be recognized at the awards ceremony, form must be submitted by April 1 by 5pm
- A new form should be submitted for each separate program and should be submitted by each chapter that is co-hosting the event

5. Academic Achievement: Semester

Fraternal organizations were founded to add value to a student's experience, not detract from their main purpose of acquiring an education. For that reason, academic achievement is an important staple of SOFE.

Tip:

- Read the “**Academic Importance**” section toward the end of this document for important clarification about the Academic Achievement graded category

Points Distribution:

- Chapters with a semester GPA of 2.85 – 4.0 will earn 40 pts
- Chapters with a semester GPA of 2.71 – 2.84 will earn 30 pts
- Chapters with a semester GPA of 2.70 will earn 20 pts
- Chapters with a semester GPA of 2.50 – 2.69 will earn 10 pts
- Chapters with a semester GPA below 2.50 will earn 0 pts

Things to turn in:

- [Roster Template](#) to the [General SOFE Submission Form](#), grade reports will be run by the Assistant Director for FSL based on the final roster submitted by the chapter
 - If the final roster is not submitted, the grade report will be run using the last received roster and used to calculate community averages, but will not be provided to the chapter.

6. Academic Achievement: Cumulative

Tip:

- Read the “**Academic Importance**” section toward the end of this document for important clarification about the Academic Achievement graded category

Points Distribution:

- Chapters with a cumulative GPA of 2.86 – 4.0 will earn 40 pts
- Chapters with a cumulative GPA of 2.76 – 2.85 will earn 30 pts
- Chapters with a cumulative GPA of 2.75 will earn 20 pts
- Chapters with a cumulative GPA of 2.50 – 2.74 will earn 10 pts
- Chapters with a cumulative GPA below 2.50 will earn 0 pts

Things to turn in:

- [Roster Template](#) to the [General SOFE Submission Form](#), grade reports will be run by the Assistant Director for FSL based on the final roster submitted by the chapter
 - If the final roster is not submitted, the grade report will be run using the last received roster and used to calculate community averages, but will not be provided to the chapter

7. Community Service Hours OR Philanthropic Dollars Raised

Please see the SOFE spreadsheet to see the points that are awarded for each level of achievement. For the calculation purposes, 1 service hour = Spartanburg minimum wage (\$7.25).

In order to not penalize organizations who utilize a mix of both, organizations will have the opportunity to submit data for both Community Service and Philanthropic Dollars. That means that while an organization may earn 80 points in this category, only 40 points will count towards base points that organizations are expected to earn.

Tip:

- Collecting goods to donate can contribute to philanthropic dollars raised. Below are some value guides for gentled used donations; however, the value of goods collected may be higher. For example, toys collected for Toys4Tots will probably be worth more because they are required to be new items.
 - [Salvation Army Value Guide](#)
 - [Goodwill Value Guide](#)

Community Service Hours

Points Distribution:

- Organizations will earn 40 points for performing an average of at least 6 service hours per member
- Organizations will earn 30 points for performing an average between 4 and less than 6 service hours per member
- Organizations will earn 20 points for performing an average between 2 and less than 3 service hours per member
- Organizations will earn 10 points for performing an average between 1 and less than 2 service hours per member
- Organizations will earn 0 points for performing less than 1 service hour per member or did not submit any data

Philanthropic Dollars Raised

Points Distribution:

- Organizations will earn 40 points for raising between \$43.50 or more per member
- Organizations will earn 30 points for raising between \$29.00 and less than \$43.50 per member
- Organizations will earn 20 points for raising between \$14.50 and less than \$29.00 per member
- Organizations will earn 10 points for raising between \$7.25 and less than \$14.50 per member
- Organizations will earn 0 points for raising less than \$7.25 per member or did not submit any data

Things to turn in:

- Completed [Community Service/Philanthropy Report template](#) is due 10 calendar days after **last** day of classes by 5pm in the "[General SOFE Submission Form](#)" on Agora

8. Semester Report

The semester report is an opportunity to reflect on the semester goals for each chapter. Semester Reports will be graded on completion and how thought out the report is.

Points Distribution:

- Organizations will earn 20 points for submitting the Semester Report on time
- Organizations will earn 10 points for submitting the Semester Report after the deadline
- Organizations will earn 0 points for not submitting the Semester Report

Things to turn in:

- Completed [Semester Report template](#) is due 10 calendar days after **last** day of classes by 5pm in the "[General SOFE Submission Form](#)" on Agora

9. Administrative Forms

These forms are to be turned in by the deadlines listed below.

Points Distribution:

- Organizations will earn 20 points for turning in ALL of the forms that relate to their organization on time
- Organizations will earn 10 points for turning in ALL of the forms that relate to their organization, but at least one is tardy
- Organizations will earn 0 points for failing to turn in at least one form

Things to turn in:

- **Student Organization Re-registration** – due by the deadline that is set by the Office of Student Involvement
 - Agora portal renewal
 - Attendance at /participation in mandatory student org training sessions
- **Semester Event Calendar** – 10 calendar days after **first** day of classes by 5pm
 - Your calendar should be plotted out using the.
 - Your calendar should include the following:
 - New member/aspirant education classes
 - Chapter meetings
 - Socials/Parties
 - Educational programs
 - Philanthropy weeks
 - Org weeks
 - Community service projects
 - Election
 - Initiation
 - Sisterhood/Brotherhood Event
 - **Be sure to mark if a date is tentative for an event**
 - **Be sure to include location and times**
 - Completed [Chapter Semester Calendar template](#) is due 10 calendar days after **last** day of classes by 5pm in the "[General SOFE Submission Form](#)" on Agora

- **First Semester Roster** – Due 10 calendar days after **first** day of classes by 5pm
 - Submit the following information
 - First and Last Name
 - Middle Initial
 - Upstate email (**including @email.uscupstate.edu**)
 - Upstate Classification
 - Expected Graduation Semester and Year
 - Leadership Position in Organization, if any
 - New Member? (if they were or will be initiated at any point that semester, they should be listed as a new member)
 - Semester Graduate? (you will mark either Y/N for the members that are scheduled to graduate that semester)
 - **Members graduating that semester should be listed on **BOTH** your First Semester Roster AND Final Semester Roster**
 - Completed [Updated Roster template](#) is due 10 calendar days after **first** day of classes by 5pm in the “[General SOFE Submission Form](#)” on Agora
- **Final Semester Roster** – Due 10 calendar days after **last** day of classes by 5pm
 - Please see “First Semester Roster” above for further clarification. Same guidelines apply.
 - Please note that if an updated roster is not provided by the time grade reports are ran, you will receive a report based on the last roster we have on file and this may include members who have disaffiliated from your chapter. Once the reports are ran, the grades will not be changed or adjusted unless there was a mistake made on the part of the Assistant Director or other University agent/entity.
- **NM Grade Releases (if conducting membership recruitment/intake that semester)**– Due 10 calendar days after **last** day of classes by 5pm
- **Chapter Community Service/Philanthropy Report Form** - Due 10 calendar days after **last** day of classes by 5pm
 - **For spring hours to be counted towards awards, Chapter Community Service/Philanthropy Report Form is due April 1 by 5pm**
 - Completed [Community Service/Philanthropy Report template](#) is due 10 calendar days after **last** day of classes by 5pm in the “[General SOFE Submission Form](#)” on Agora
- **COB MRABA forms (Panhellenic only - If applicable)** – Due by 5pm the following day bid was distributed
- **Intake packet documents (NPHC only - If applicable)** – Dates are in packet
- **Aspirant List (NPHC only)** – Due by 5pm the following business day official decision was made to accept those members
- **Bid List (IFC only - If applicable)** – Due by 5pm the following business day bid was distributed

Extra Points

Throughout the semester, there are typically opportunities to additional points towards SOFE. For more information about upcoming opportunities, please be sure to read the monthly newsletter, The Golden Pillar. If you do not receive the newsletter, please email the Assistant Director for Fraternity and Sorority Life to ensure that you are added to the mailing list.

Overall Point Distribution

There are a total of 300 base* points possible. Chapters are expected to meet AT LEAST a 3-star chapter standing. The point distribution for chapter classification are as follows:

5-star: 270 – 300+ points

4-star: 240 – 269 points

3-star: 210 – 239 points

2-star: 180 – 209 points

1-star: Less than 179 points

*Within some categories, there are opportunities to gain extra points. These extra points are not factored into the number of points possible for the sake of chapter standing classification.

Chapter Standings

Chapters listed as a 3-star, 4-star or 5-star chapter are considered in good standing and are eligible to be considered for University recognition and awards if they have attained **at least** a 3 star rating for the previous two semesters.

Accountability Measures

Developmental Level – First semester after not earning at least 3 star rating

Organization will be required to work with the appropriate Assistant Director within the Office of Student Involvement to develop an improvement plan. Organization advisor and regional/headquarters representative will be notified with copy of the improvement plan.

Warning Level – Second consecutive semesters after not earning at least 3 star rating

The organization advisor and/or regional representative and the headquarters organization will be involved in the coordination and implementation of a new performance improvement plan. It will be recommended that organizations in this category self-impose social and programming restriction(s) on any event other than those assessed in the Standards of Fraternal Excellence. During a mid-year check in with the Assistant Director, it is requested that the advisor and/or regional representative and/or a representative from the headquarters organization participate in the mid-year check in.

Unsatisfactory Level – Third consecutive semester after not earning at least 3 star rating

An organization unable to meet minimum standards for three consecutive semesters will be under review with the University of South Carolina Upstate and an intentional discussion will be had involving advisors, student leaders, and Headquarters staff regarding the organization's relevancy at USC Upstate. The review committee will consist of the following members; Assistant Director for Fraternity and Sorority Life, Director for Student Involvement, Dean of Students, appropriate Council president and/or council delegate, alumni/a representative from organization under review and/or general Upstate alumni/a representative and a "friend of the division" staff member.

Academic Importance

Sorority and fraternity members are students first. For this reason, chapters are expected to hold their members to their organization's academic standards. Chapters are expected to encourage/reward success, while also holding accountable those that do not meet standards set by the chapter/organization.

Please note the SOFE will be assessed each semester and the standards listed and described above may be amended or added to depending on the performance of the chapters.