

Greek Life and Club Checklist

Use this before your student commits to any chapter or organization.

1. Questions to Ask Before Pledging

These questions reveal chapter culture better than the recruitment pitch. Your student should be able to get honest answers from current members.

ABOUT CULTURE

- ☐ What does a typical Thursday night look like during the pledging period?
- ☐ What happens if a pledge decides to quit at week three? Can they still be friends with members?
- ☐ Can you connect me with someone who dropped and stayed on good terms?
- ☐ How does the chapter handle a member who breaks the code of conduct?
- ☐ Has the chapter had any conduct violations in the last three years? (This is often public record.)

ABOUT COMMITMENT

- ☐ What is the minimum weekly time commitment during pledging? After initiation?
- ☐ What events are mandatory versus optional?
- ☐ What is the chapter's policy on academics? Is there a GPA floor to maintain membership?
- ☐ What happens to a member's standing during midterms or finals?

ABOUT FINANCES (STUDENT ASKS THE CHAPTER TREASURER, NOT THE RECRUITMENT CHAIR)

- ☐ What is the first-semester cost, itemized: dues, housing/meal requirements, social event fees, philanthropy donations, and apparel/ritual materials?
- ☐ What is the ongoing annual cost after the first year?
- ☐ Are there payment plans? What is the penalty for late payment?
- ☐ Are there scholarship funds available within the chapter?

What I heard / what did not add up:

2. Red Flags During Recruitment

These are calibrated to what student affairs professionals actually watch for.

RED FLAG	WHAT IT MAY SIGNAL	WHAT TO DO
Pledging involves sleep restriction or late-night mandatory events	Hazing, illegal in most states	Report to Dean of Students and the national organization hotline
You cannot visit during the pledging period	Isolation tactic	Ask to speak with a current member privately, outside chapter events
No straight answer on annual cost, or "you'll figure it out"	Financial pressure ahead	Require a written itemized cost estimate before committing
Multiple recent conduct violations in public records	Culture of non-compliance	Research chapter history specifically, not just the org broadly
Members speak disparagingly about women, LGBTQ students, or other groups	Hostile chapter culture	Trust this signal completely. Leave.
"You can't quit now, you'd be betraying us"	Coercive pressure	This framing is a recruitment tactic. Leaving is always allowed.
Visible fear or anxiety in current members during recruitment events	Ongoing hazing culture	Walk away. No chapter is worth this.
Social media shows members making light of hazing or "traditions"	Chapter culture problem	Conduct violations that are not in official records still matter

Greek Life and Club Checklist (continued)

3. Cost Worksheet

Your student should sit with the chapter treasurer, not the recruitment chair, and fill this in with real numbers.

Chapter Name

School

COST CATEGORY	FIRST YEAR (ESTIMATE)	ONGOING ANNUAL
Membership dues	\$	\$
Housing or meal plan requirement	\$	\$
Social event fees	\$	\$
Required philanthropy / service donations	\$	\$
Apparel, ritual materials, gear	\$	\$
Other (specify): _____	\$	\$
TOTAL	\$	\$

How does this compare to what the recruitment materials said?

Is there anything in this budget we had not planned for?

REAL-WORLD RANGES

The ranges vary enormously by chapter. Dues alone can run from \$400 to \$2,000 per semester. A chapter with a house and mandatory meal plan can add \$800 to \$1,500 per month. Get every number in writing before signing anything.

4. Chapter History Research Guide

Before your student commits, spend 30 minutes on this.

- 1 **Search public conduct records at your university.** Many universities are public institutions subject to state sunshine laws. Search "[university name] student organization conduct records" or "[university name] Greek life suspension." Some schools publish this on their Greek Affairs or Dean of Students page.
- 2 **Check the national organization's chapter status.** Most national organizations (IFC, NPHC, Panhellenic, and NIC member orgs) maintain a public list of suspended, closed, or probationary chapters. Search "[national organization name] chapter sanctions" or call the national organization's headquarters directly.
- 3 **Ask upperclassmen who are not in the chapter.** Specifically ask: "What's the chapter's reputation on campus for how they treat their pledges?" Upperclassmen outside the chapter often have direct knowledge of incidents that did not make official records.
- 4 **Read StopHazing.org.** It tracks hazing-related deaths and serious incidents by school and organization. This is not alarmist reading. It is factual.
- 5 **Search the chapter's social media.** Look for photos or posts from the last 12 months. What does the chapter celebrate? How do they talk about members and pledges?
- 6 **Attend an open event if the chapter allows.** Watch how senior members interact with pledges and new members. Is the dynamic respectful? Is there visible social pressure?

What I found / what to ask about:

For club sports and non-Greek organizations: The same research approach applies. All registered student organizations are subject to the university's student conduct code. Hazing is prohibited across all registered organizations, not just fraternities and sororities. The same red flags in Section 2 apply to any organized student group.