

Commonwealth University to Launch Revamped Fraternity & Sorority Life Program at Bloomsburg Campus

BLOOMSBURG, Pa. — For decades, Fraternity and Sorority Life has been a meaningful part of the undergraduate collegiate experience at the Bloomsburg campus, providing students the opportunity for leadership, camaraderie, and personal growth.

After careful deliberation – and following a comprehensive analysis and review of best practices in higher education – Commonwealth University is pleased to announce the relaunch of Fraternity and Sorority Life at the Bloomsburg campus, bringing this program back in a reimagined, responsible, and impactful manner.

In 2023, a comprehensive study of Fraternity and Sorority Life was spearheaded by Stephen J. Jones '83, Bloomsburg University Foundation (BUF) Chair and a Sigma Iota Omega (SIO) brother.

In collaboration with several Bloomsburg fraternity and sorority alumni working alongside a professional consultant and the university's administration, the work included an analysis of best practices nation-wide, measures to reinstate Fraternity and Sorority Life while mitigating issues experienced prior to disaffiliation, staffing needs, and the implementation of a robust annual reaccreditation process on a chapter-by-chapter basis to ensure student success, safety, and ongoing compliance with university and community expectations.

Drawing on the results of that study and implementing best practices emulated by institutions with thriving and well-managed Fraternity and Sorority Life programs, Commonwealth University has developed this blueprint to reintroduce Fraternity and Sorority Life programs at Bloomsburg's campus in a modern, sustainable way.

The new program will include clearly stated benefits of university recognition, an annual accreditation review process for each affiliated chapter, membership roster verification, new member training, alumni advisor training, guidelines for social events off-campus, faculty / staff advisor training, and the annual publication of a report for each chapter detailing metrics.

“Throughout the conversations I have had with alumni, donors, and university supporters, it is clear that Greek Life has been a valued and positive component of the Bloomsburg experience for so many,” said Steve Jones, BUF Chair. “At the same time, I recognized that we can't do the same thing and expect different results. That's why I am proud of having had the chance to work with alumni and university administration to put into place a plan to bring back a program thousands of students have benefited from over the years but in a way that ensures it is safer, more sustainable, and more impactful than it ever was before.”

In order to ensure the program is well-supported by professional staff in a financially sustainable way, the University, the Community Government Association (CU-Bloomsburg's affiliated student government), and the BUF are partnering to fund three dedicated full-time Fraternity and Sorority Life positions – one Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life and two Assistant Director lines. All three will be based at the Bloomsburg campus.

“I am grateful to Steve Jones, the alumni who worked with him on the task force, the entire BUF, and most importantly our students through the Community Government Association for their partnership on this relaunch,” echoed Dr. Bashar W. Hanna, Commonwealth University President. “It has been a long road for Greek Life at our Bloomsburg campus, but I am excited and hopeful for the future of the reimagined program. By modeling the new program off nationally recognized examples of success and investing in it from the on-set through partnerships with donors and the student government, we are laying a much stronger foundation for a program that will be accountable, and create a positive student experience and alumni engagement.”

The relaunch of the program will begin immediately in 2025 with the advertisement and hiring of the Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life position followed by outreach and engagement with existing chapters, training on the updated program structure, and provisional accreditation.

Formal affiliation will begin with the 2025-26 academic year with access to campus resources and University-funded training on hazing prevention, harassment, and leadership development. Annual, continuous accreditation will begin in 2026-27 and continue thereafter to determine impact, sustainability, and success against key metrics.

The currently existing Fraternity and Sorority Life programs at Commonwealth University's Lock Haven and Mansfield campuses will continue uninterrupted, ultimately benefiting from the implementation of these same best practices.

###