



Dear Parents and Family Members,

As a parent or family member of a Wittenberg student, it is important for you to be educated about the development opportunities Wittenberg's fraternity and sorority community provides. We know you and your student come to fraternity and sorority life with a range of knowledge. Some of you may have perceptions of fraternity and sorority based on information shared in the media, while others of you may have a student who is a legacy to one or more of the groups on our campus. Either way, we want to put your mind at ease about the fraternal experience should your student choose to pursue membership in an organization at Wittenberg University.

The fraternity and sorority experience can be one of the most enriching experiences a student can have. Our office strives to educate fraternity/sorority members and the greater community about how they can continue to challenge and support one another to move fraternity and sorority life in a new direction. Fraternity & Sorority Life at Wittenberg University is dedicated to creating a co-curricular living and learning experience that enhances the educational mission of the university. Through active participation in sorority and fraternity chapters, students will develop leadership skills, compassion, and the wholeness of the person. In an average year, approximately 35% of Wittenberg students are affiliated with a sorority or fraternity. Whether your student is currently a member or is thinking about joining a chapter, the information below will help guide a conversation about the experience here at Wittenberg.

Membership in a fraternity and sorority may not be ideal for everyone. However, it is important to encourage students to learn more about the fraternity and sorority community by attending recruitment events to gain an understanding of membership before making their own decision. For parents and families of current members, I ask that you lend your encouragement and support to your student's experiences. I encourage you to review the "Information for Parents & Family Members" page of the Wittenberg Greek Life website. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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### **About the Wittenberg fraternity & sorority community**

Fraternities and sororities are not just social student organizations. Members strive for excellence in scholarship, leadership, service to the community, and loyalty to lifelong friends. They expect their members to make a commitment of time, resources, and talent to the organization, campus, and community. Members receive regular training on a variety of topics including hosting safe events, hazing prevention, leadership development, interpersonal violence prevention, healthy eating, and business etiquette, just to name a few. There is a social aspect which can range from hosting philanthropic fundraisers to supporting friends competing on varsity and club athletic teams to forming connections with members from other chapters. Members build confidence and a support system while finding a sense of belonging which contributes to a higher graduation rate in addition to continued involvement with Wittenberg University after graduation. Following graduation, fraternities and sororities have active networks of alumni to assist with career information and ways to become connected in new cities.

### **Joining the fraternity and sorority community**

Wittenberg's fraternity and sorority chapters and the Office of Student Involvement recognize that students need time to establish themselves on campus and observe the community prior to joining. First-year students are not eligible to join until the spring semester of their first year. Students are eligible to join a sorority or fraternity if they have achieved at least a 2.50 cumulative GPA (Grade Point Average) and 16 completed credits or a 2.75 cumulative GPA with 12-15 completed credits at Wittenberg University. Special exceptions can be made for transfer students after confirming eligibility from their previous institution(s). Spring semester recruitment is ideal for many students to consider joining as they often know more about the members, values, and responsibilities of the various chapters. Schedules and other information regarding the recruitment process can be found on our website.



## Common Concerns

As a family member of a student who has joined or is considering joining a fraternity or sorority, you might have some reservations; hazing and the financial cost of membership are two of the most common concerns.

**Hazing:** First and foremost, no student should ever be subjected to hazing, whether as part of a sorority, fraternity, or any other group. Wittenberg University and every national fraternity and sorority headquarters have strict policies prohibiting hazing. This behavior is inconsistent with Wittenberg's mission, all inter/national organization values, and policies, and Wittenberg investigates all hazing reports and responds in a fair and just manner. If you suspect hazing, [click here](#) for information to learn more about options for reporting. The sooner our staff knows of concerning behavior, the better our ability to stop the problem early. For more information on our Anti-Hazing Policy please visit our [website](#).

**Finances:** Being a member of a sorority or fraternity requires paying dues, just as being a member of an athletic team or civic organization requires a financial commitment. When considering what sorority and fraternity members receive for the money they spend, we can attest the investment is worth every penny. Dues cover most activities the chapter does: brotherhood and sisterhood events, informational programs, movie nights, meals, snacks, socials, and other fun activities. Also, most chapters have leadership retreats, conferences, or other programs that members can attend. Members of chapters with houses may be expected to live in the house for one or more years during their time at Wittenberg, the cost to live in a chapter house is comparable to that of living in Wittenberg-owned housing.

## How can I support my student?

If your student is considering participating in recruitment, here are a few tips to be supportive throughout the process:

- Do some research – [Review end-of-semester reports](#), chapter websites, and other information on the Wittenberg Greek Life website. Review the organizations' local and inter/national social media accounts.
- Ask your students questions to help them navigate their interest in a sorority or fraternity. Knowing what your student hopes to gain from membership, how their personal values will be supported by that of a fraternal organization, and how your student will benefit from membership are great starting points.
- Encourage your student to ask questions about the time commitment, finances, and housing obligations.
- If your student is a current member, here are some tips to support their experience:
  - Learn the terminology – Fraternity and sorority membership comes with their own unique culture and terminology. Some words you might hear can be found on the "[Information for Parents & Family Members](#)" page of the Wittenberg Greek Life website.
  - Stay involved – ask your student about their experience, attend events hosted by the organization, and/or read the organization's magazine or newsletter.
  - Encourage your student to be transparent about expectations such as financial and housing obligations or time commitments.