
Stetson University Greek Life

Foundations of Excellence

Created and adopted in September 2008 by Fraternity & Sorority Involvement in conjunction with the Office of Student Involvement in order to enhance the quality and success of the Greek community at Stetson University



Introduction and Background

The Foundations of Excellence system was created in 2008 and has been revised minimally since its creation. Foundations of Excellence serves to set the basic expectations for our Greek chapters and to help chapters strive for excellence. The previous format did not uphold set expectations for chapters and allowed chapters who failed to meet minimal standards to avoid necessary consequences. In addition, the previous grading system lacked consistency and transparency, leading to disappointment and indifference towards Greek life in general. Moreover, the current awards format does not recognize all chapters, thus marginalizing most chapters' achievements. Overall, the whole community is displeased with the previous system and called for an overhaul of the program.

Justifications for Revision

The system is in dire need of an overhaul to match peer institutions and to catch up with advancements in national Greek life practices. Nationally, there is a movement to connect intangible aspects of Greek life to tangible learning outcomes. This will help in justifying the relevance of Greek life on campus. Additionally, we need to collect quantitative and qualitative data about Greek students to help track trends and provide concrete reasoning for Greek life decisions.

It is critical for the new Foundations of Excellence to match Stetson's established core values and strategic map goals. Including criteria in the Foundation of Excellence program that matches or supports Stetson core values or strategic goals helps Greek life support University initiatives.

Fraternal Relevance at Stetson University

For fraternities and sororities to remain relevant at Stetson, we must guide the Greek experience in a way that enhances the individual's success at the University and ties in University strategic goals. We also need to help demonstrate positive trends among Greeks, thus, collecting data from Foundations of Excellence submissions will help in making our case for relevance. Finally, creating a new Foundations of Excellence system gives us an opportunity to tie in Greek student involvement and University/departmental learning outcomes, demonstrate the quality of Greek life on Stetson's campus, and make obvious the relevance of Greek life and the overall achievements of Stetson's undergraduate students.

Connections to Strategic Goals and Core Values

There are 9 Foundation areas included in the new Foundations of Excellence.

- Campus Involvement
- Community Engagement
- Scholarship and Intellectual Development
- Member Development
- Alumni/ae and Advisors
- Ritual and Values Integration
- Chapter Operations
- Risk Management
- Recruitment, Retention, and Persistence

Each of these foundations is critical to the overall success of a Greek organization. Moreover, the requirements within each section are intrinsically connected to a University core value or strategic goal.

For *campus involvement*, the components within this foundation help support the University goals of increasing campus vibrancy, fostering engagement, developing a culture of lifelong relationships with Stetson, and providing curricular and co-curricular programs to attract and retain students.

The *community engagement* foundation supports Stetson's core value of community engagement, which calls for a lifelong commitment to social responsibility through community service and volunteering. In addition, the foundation of community engagement promotes the strategic goals of fostering civic and community engagement as well as increasing campus vibrancy seven days a week.

Next, *scholarship and intellectual development* supports ethical decision-making, providing curricular programs, and assessing significance and academic excellence.

In the *member development* foundation, there are requirements that encompass all of Stetson's core values and also help to support deepening the way we live our core values. Additionally, this foundation promotes curricular and co-curricular programming, articulating and promoting distinctiveness internally and externally, and increasing leadership development opportunities.

The *alumni/ae and advisors* foundation supports Stetson's strategic goal of developing and solidifying a culture of lifelong relationships with Stetson as well as increasing professional development and leadership opportunities for faculty, especially those who serve as a chapter advisor.

For *ritual and values integration*, the requirements endorse the strategic goal of deepening the way we live Stetson's, as well as our own, core values.

As for the *chapter operations* foundation, the components including leadership, housing, and finances help uphold the core values of ethical decision making and health and wellness while supporting the strategic goals of increasing professional development and leadership opportunities.

Within the *risk management* foundation are requirements that support the values of ethical decision making as well as health and wellness.

Finally, the *recruitment, retention, and persistence* foundation supports the overall goal of retaining the best students at Stetson.

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- Elon University
- Bowling Green State University
- Indiana University
- Virginia Tech University
- Case Western Reserve University
- Lehigh University
- Colorado State University
- Iowa State University
- Ohio State University
- University of South Carolina
- Rollins College
- University of South Florida
- Syracuse University