Panhellenic Diversity and Inclusion Task Force
Recommendations and Action Plan

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The Task Force was formed in September as a means to assess and analyze the current state of diversity and inclusion in regards to Vanderbilt Panhellenic Council. We spent the first semester creating recommendations as well as action steps for Panhellenic Council focusing on increasing, promoting, and supporting diversity and inclusion on campus and in our sororities. In simple terms, this task force served as a think tank of diversity and inclusion within Panhellenic and consultants to Panhellenic surrounding this specific topic.

These recommendations and action steps serve as a first step in furthering diversity and inclusion for the Panhellenic community. We realized the complexity of the issue due to the various intersections of communities, factors, and agents and therefore, worked to think deeply and patiently about why, how, and where the current state of diversity and inclusion stands in Panhellenic Council. We understand each chapter is unique, and there is no single and quick solution to addressing the state of diversity and inclusion in Panhellenic Council. Thus, the recommendations and action steps range is specificity and timeline. We wanted to leave room for future actors of the Panhellenic Council to add, create, and innovate.

We consulted and collaborated with various external resources and met in person as well as sent electronic feedback forms to campus partners relevant to the recommendations and plan. Resources we contacted included: chapter recruitment teams, chapter presidents, past and present Panhellenic Executive Board members, the Dean of The Ingram Commons, Vice Chancellor George Hill, VUcept Executive Board, the Multicultural Leadership Council Executive Board, the National Pan-Hellenic Council Presidents, and the Office of Inclusion Initiatives and Cultural Competency. Although we had 10 representatives, one from each sorority, we could not create a comprehensive and accurate plan without external insight, advice, and expertise. In order to fully and properly assess the state of diversity and inclusion in Panhellenic, outside experts were necessary in providing guidance to this charge.

The Task Force approached this charge with a mission of focusing on the root of the problem and addressing the issues with long-term solutions. We do not expect the plan to immediately take action nor expect each recommendation to be a solution. We do expect this plan to begin discussion and dialogue as well as give Panhellenic Council and the Office of Greek Life actionable solutions and steps they can take to further diversity and inclusion in Panhellenic Council.
I. OVERALL THEMATIC GOALS

These goals can be seen as larger themes of recruitment, internal, and external.

1. Engage with organizations and communities outside of Greek Life
2. Increase accessibility, knowledge, and education regarding recruitment
3. Encourage dialogue within chapters surrounding diversity and inclusion
4. Create sustainable structures to foster and further feelings of inclusion for current and future Panhellenic sorority members
5. Aim to reflect diversity statistics of Vanderbilt at large

II. MISSION STATEMENT

We, as Panhellenic members and as part of the greater Vanderbilt community, pledge to make sustainable efforts to engage with, learn about, understand and value the multitude of backgrounds, experiences and identities both within and outside of the Panhellenic community.

III. STRATEGIC PLAN

A. Recruitment
B. Internal
C. External
A. RECRUITMENT

1. First-Year Students

Vanderbilt displays an intentional effort to build and strengthen community for its first year students. While there are some students who are familiar with the processes and culture of Greek life, students remain unfamiliar with the formal Panhellenic recruitment process. The first year serves as an important time for women to continue strengthening their identities. In order to be proactive in challenging stereotypes, to provide accurate information, and to ensure that each student has the knowledge and opportunity to find their place, it is increasingly important to provide students with clear and transparent information concerning all aspects of Greek life. This transparency and information should be presented and available both in person, such as the Greek life fair and Panhellenic info sessions, as well as in informal areas such as social media. By focusing on educating and engaging with first year students, we can ensure that all students, whether they have previous knowledge of the process or not, have access to and are knowledgeable of Greek life, specifically Panhellenic sororities.

Panhellenic Information Sessions

- Continue to host Information Session on Commons in September / October to introduce the idea of “Going Greek,” providing information on what that means and entails.
  - Representatives from Vanderbilt Panhellenic (including associate members) should be present at these information sessions.
  - All Panhellenic attendees should have the same Panhellenic attire to promote unity.
    - Invite Gamma Chis to participate as neutral members and provide general information regarding Panhellenic.
  - There should be a panel and/or question and answer discussion. Format dependent on Panhellenic Executive Board and Diversity and Inclusivity Team input.
  - Each chapter should include the same themes in their visual presentation and information presented.
    - e.g. Philanthropy, Sisterhood, Costs.
  - Focus on the themes of “get to know Greek life” and “go Greek” rather than distinguishing recruitment by individual chapters.
- Gamma Chis should refer to resources such as the new online network system.

Larger Presence on Social Media

- Gamma Chis should encourage PNMs to follow Panhellenic social media accounts
- Panhellenic Executive Board as well as the Diversity and Inclusion team should utilize Facebook
  - Status updates including FAQs about the recruitment process should be posted as needed
  - Promotion of Greek-wide events on campus should be shared and posted as they pertain to Greek participation
- Panhellenic Executive Board as well as the Diversity and Inclusion team should utilize Instagram
  - Use Instagram language and images to promote Greek life as a larger unit.
    - e.g. “Members of Panhellenic participate in Relay for Life as a team”
    - Keywords: members, Panhellenic
• Panhellenic website should be updated so that it highlights all houses and has all information compiled regarding each house in one place.
• Panhellenic Executive Board as well as the Office of Greek Life should ensure that website is easy to navigate for those not familiar with Greek Life
  o I.e. Be thoughtful of language and terms
  o Create a “Recruitment” or “Greek Life” dictionary on the website

Increase Physical Presence of Panhellenic on Campus
• Panhellenic should be at any event at which other campus-wide organizations are present
  o i.e. organization fairs or student involvement fairs
  o Represented as Panhellenic Council versus individual chapters
  o This presence increases awareness and would not be specific houses.
• Members should promote unity of Panhellenic by wearing “Go Greek” or general Panhellenic t-shirts monthly to highlight Panhellenic Greek members rather than exclusively separating members by sororities via their individual chapter recruitment shirts.

2. Greek Transfers and Upperclassmen

Currently, the only program in place for transfer and upperclass students to hear about recruitment is the “Upper Class Information Meeting” where students are expected to sign up immediately and attend open houses a few days later. Transfers and upperclassmen do not receive Gamma Chis until they officially register for recruitment. An informal meet and greet would give transfer students interested in recruitment opportunities to ask any questions they may have regarding Greek Life, the recruitment process, and to hear more about Vanderbilt Greek Life specifically, given the reality that their former schools may have had a different Greek Life culture.

Additionally, Greek Life typically has its separate events, so there is no guarantee that transfer students, who may not feel that they can go through recruitment because of minority background or socioeconomic status, will understand and be knowledgeable of the opportunities for membership that exist in Panhellenic. Thus, students who attend general student organization fairs will obtain information on the first steps for getting involved with Greek Life without going to a separate, Greek-specific event. Panhellenic will serve as an approachable organization alongside the other student organizations.

The presence of Panhellenic at both Transfer and Upperclassman Meet and Greets and Student Involvement Fairs ensure that information surrounding Greek life is distributed to this population and that all students, regardless of year, feel as if they are knowledgeable of the Panhellenic system. We hope that with this knowledge, students can have all the information needed to make an educated decision about their future in regards to Panhellenic.

Transfer and Upperclassmen Student Greek Life Meet and Greet
• The event should take place one week prior to informal fall recruitment in Sarratt 220.
• Similar to events such as Pumpkins with Panhellenic, one transfer or upperclassman representative from each sorority should be in attendance, not wearing their letters.
• The event should begin with a short 1-2 minute talk from each sorority woman about their recruitment process so that those in attendance will know which girl pursued which option available to them (informal fall rush, spring recruitment, COB etc.).
• The remainder of the hour should be an opportunity to mingle, get to know other transfer students going through recruitment, and get more information about the process if the potential new members have more questions.

Tabling at Student Organizations and MOSAIC Fair
• Panhellenic should set up a booth that student of all grades can visit at the Student Involvement Fair.
  ○ Panhellenic Executive Board members and task force members should be educated, so they can engage in conversations about the different opportunities that Greek Life has to offer, and also how Greek Life has addressed diversity, inclusivity, and financial challenges over the past year.

3. Gamma Chis
Gamma Chis are a potential new member’s best resource of information regarding Panhellenic Greek life. Recognizing that each PNM is a unique individual, we suggest that Gamma Chis be trained on how to discuss topics of diversity and identity with their groups. The goal of this training is to ensure Gamma Chis are resources for PNMs who feel hesitant about embracing any aspect of their identity during rush and as a Greek member. Current Panhellenic members will be encouraged to share their stories, which will help normalize the process for any PNM with reservations about feeling accepted in Greek life. In this proposed framework, all PNMs will be exposed to the importance of diversity and identity, which will have a trickle down effect in recruitment for years to come.

Create a Module on Diversity, Inclusion, and Identity
• This module should be used to train Gamma chis.
• This training should be in collaboration with the Inclusion Initiatives & Cultural Competence Office and should attempt to include as many aspects of diversity, inclusion, and identity as possible (race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, SES, disability etc.) as it relates to Greek life.
• This training should emphasize the importance of starting a dialogue about diversity, inclusion and identity within Gamma Chi groups of PNMs.

Diversity and Inclusion Meeting
• Gamma Chis should dedicate one meeting to discussing different identities and diversity with PNM groups
• Gamma Chis should do an exercise discussing one’s own identities and understanding of diversity.
• Gamma Chis should present a video where existing chapter members discuss their rush and Greek Life experiences.
  ○ These women should represent a variety of identities.
• There should be no mentioning of which sorority each woman is in, but an email list of their contact information will be provided if a PNM should wish to contact them individually.
• Gamma Chis should converse with their group about the topic and encourage PNMs to reach out to these Gamma Chis if they have any concerns or questions.

Gamma Chi profiles on Panhellenic Website
• Gamma Chi profiles should be publicly available on the Panhellenic website.
● Each Gamma Chi should provide their contact information, campus involvement, and photos.
● This will be modeled after the Tour Guide section of the Office of Undergraduate Admissions website.
● These public profiles will allow students to reach out to these members for advice and mentorship before and while they are at Vanderbilt.
● These mentors can offer guidance to students deciding whether or not to register for Panhellenic recruitment.

4. Chapter

Central to fostering diversity and inclusivity in Greek life is ensuring that every chapter member has an appreciation of what these concepts mean and how to engage in meaningful conversations surrounding these topics. Consequently, we propose that chapter-wide changes be made which include a presentation to the chapter where members are encouraged to share stories and to think critically about how various aspect of a person’s identity may affect their daily life. Additionally, along with the Panhellenic Council’s move to create values-based recruitment, we encourage recruitment teams to emphasize the importance of diversity and meaningful, inclusive conversations in the recruitment process. As a result of these internal changes, it is our hope that each chapter member will value and respect diversity and inclusion and make efforts to be inclusive to all potential new members and current members.

Chapter Presentation on Diversity and Inclusion

- Diversity and Inclusion Council Team Members create and present information to their individual chapters in collaboration with the Office of Inclusion Initiatives and Cultural Competency
- The chapters should split into groups and do interactive exercises.
- This activity should encourage chapter members to share their experiences and should touch on inclusive language, importance of diversity, potential uncomfortable moments for PNMs, and how to mitigate those situations.
- See “Training Section” of Recommendations for more details.
- These trainings should allow chapter members to discuss ways that the chapter can internally increase inclusion amongst current members.

Recruitment Team Trainings

This ensures members will be aware of systemic issues such as “matching” as well as interpersonal interactions such as promoting meaningful and thoughtful conversations throughout the semester and during recruitment with PNMs on campus.

- Chapter Recruitment Teams must participate in a diversity and inclusion training in August.
- These trainings should emphasize the importance of being sensitive to people’s identities through value-based conversations during Rounds.
- VP & Assistant VP of Recruitment should hold a meeting before Rounds Plans are finalized discussing topics that are inappropriate or exclusive and should not occur at any Round and also discuss ways to make current plans more inclusive for active and potential new members.
- Recruitment Teams should ask chapter members whether or not they would like to be paired with PNMs of their same race, ethnicity, etc. during recruitment to avoid feelings of tokenization.
• If chapters choose to “match,” Recruitment Teams should consider pairing chapter members who participate in diverse organizations with PNMs who are involved in similar activities.
• See “Internal” section for more details on *Diversity and Inclusivity Trainings.*
B. INTERNAL

1. Diversity and Inclusion Training
The purpose of Diversity and Inclusion Training within Panhellenic Council sororities is to allow for continued education, engagement, and awareness surrounding issues, topics, and conversations of diversity and inclusion. Through hands-on trainings we can begin to “engage with, learn about, understand and value the multitude of backgrounds, experiences and identities both within and outside of the Panhellenic community,” as stated in the Mission Statement. We see racial, ethnic, gender, sex, and identity training as a mechanism in which chapters can expand their understanding of diversity and create inclusive spaces for current and future sorority members. These trainings will be relevant to recruitment procedures as well as commonplace chapter experiences and events.

Various Chapter Trainings
- Chapters should have yearly diversity and inclusion trainings focused on identity, stressing race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and identity.
- These trainings will stress the impact, awareness, and importance of language usage and sensitivity during recruitment as well as in everyday interactions as Vanderbilt Greek members.
- These trainings will be collaborated between the Diversity and Inclusion Council members, Panhellenic Council, individual chapters, and the Office of Inclusivity and Cultural Competence.
  - A training module should be created and designed specific to the Panhellenic community in collaboration with the Office of Inclusion Initiatives and Cultural Competency.
- These trainings will be mandatory for officers but optional and highly recommended for entire chapters.
- These trainings should be conducted on a yearly basis considering new members become affiliated with chapters in the Spring.
- These trainings will focus on inclusion initiatives and awareness for current members.

2. Mentorship and Alumni Engagement
Members of the Greek community who have participated in the recruitment process can serve as an invaluable resource to Potential New Members (PNMs). These active members can help shape the ways in which PNMs view recruitment and the Greek system at large, as they can act as a resource and answer any questions the PNMs may have. Current members will be able to match with PNMs based on similar experiences (e.g. international students, women seeking Panhellenic scholarship opportunities, etc). Moreover, Alumni members of various Greek organizations can serve as an additional resources for these PNMs.

Resource Database for Alumni
- Gamma Chis should connect this alumni network with PNMs
- The Diversity and Inclusion Team members should also be introduced as a resource at the first mandatory recruitment event as well as via social media.
● Panhellenic Executive Board and the Diversity and Inclusivity Team should seek out various alumni from different Greek organizations and invite them to speak at Panhellenic sponsored events.

● The Diversity and Inclusivity Team should host periodical conversations (similar to Ted Talks) featuring these Alumni to exemplify the diverse experiences of the Greek community, to illustrate how members are represented, and to share how alumini navigated these spaces during their time at Vanderbilt.
  ○ e.g. being Greek and person of color, being Greek and LBGTQI+, being Greek and an international student, etc.

Resource Database for Active Members

● The Diversity and Inclusivity Team should create and develop a network of current members with personal experiences and knowledge regarding the Greek experience who can guide current Greek members.

● When creating this network, the Diversity and Inclusivity Team should look for different types of identities and diversity: race, economic, international students, etc.

● Applications for these types of mentors should be opened the start of the school year and should include 2- general body trainings.

● This role should be presented as a desirable position, such as “Inclusivity Ally.”

● Applicants will have the option to be mentors for all of Panhellenic via the Panhellenic website (open to the public), or they can choose to be mentors to only members of their own sorority.

● Gamma Chis can and should use this Resource Database to connect PNMs in their respective groups to mentors if requested.

● The Diversity and Inclusion Team would monitor the application process and database.

3. Diversity and Inclusivity Team Member

An elected representative from each chapter will be responsible for maintaining, promoting, and providing education and guidance for issues of diversity and inclusivity by fostering communication between individual members, chapter leaders, and Panhellenic Council. With the previous and following recommendations to become action steps, the Panhellenic Council must create a structure of sustainability through creating a permanent working committee adjacent to the Panhellenic Council. The Diversity and Inclusivity Team Member will attend bimonthly meetings with representatives from other chapters to collaborate and discuss conflicts, issues, and resolutions in their chapter as well as Panhellenic-wide. All representatives are trained at the beginning of each year in a program that educates on specific diversity and inclusivity issues such as race and ethnicity, LBGTQI+, gender, mental health, disability, and socioeconomic status. In addition, the team member will provide potential courses of action to address and resolve concerns and to foster sensitivity in each chapter in regards to diverse and inclusive issues. Each Team Member will pledge to maintain confidentiality so as to create a safe environment where the chapter views the Team Member as a confidant and trustworthy spokesperson for specific issues regarding diversity and inclusion.
Liaison between Panhellenic and Chapter

- Representatives will serve as a communicator between Panhellenic and their individual chapters regarding larger Panhellenic diversity and inclusion initiatives and action steps.
- All chapters should be represented in the Diversity and Inclusion Team for purposes of communication between chapters and Panhellenic.

General Role Responsibilities

The Diversity and Inclusivity Team Member from each chapter should:

- Serve as an outlet for concerns related to diversity and inclusivity issues from the chapter and its individual members.
- Provide oversight of communication with chapter to foster inclusive language.
- Build and maintain a close and working relationship with recruitment chairs to guarantee inclusivity during formal recruitment processes.
- Be responsible for reminders, trainings, and presentations to the chapter about language or insensitivities regarding diversity and inclusion.
- Highlight cultural events occurring on campus, hosted by either Greek or non-Greek organizations.
- Maintain a documentation of chapter members who are comfortable discussing certain diversity and inclusivity issues with other members.
  - e.g. sending out Google survey at beginning of each semester or year to gauge which members would be comfortable talking to a member struggling with a certain issue regarding identity and inclusion.
  - Provides guidance to chapter members who would like to educate chapter or talk to individual chapter members regarding diversity and inclusion.
  - This list of internal chapter members is voluntary and confidential.
  - Monitor Resource Database for chapter including Alumni and current members willing to serve as mentors for the year.
- Maintain a high level of confidentiality with all personal issues and information.
- Lead and initiate diverse organizational programming with chapter.
- Have the option of bringing in leaders from diverse organizations on campus to talk to/educate chapter.
- Collaborate with VP of Education within individual chapters.
- Ensure that chapter events are not tokenizing or unnecessary.
- Work with Panhellenic on sponsoring Greek Member Experience events under the topic of Diversity and Inclusion.

Communication with Internal Chapter Executive Boards

- Team Member will work closely with chapter executive board, specifically standards representative, to solve problems related to diversity and inclusivity issues internally.
- Work with treasurer about socioeconomically inclusive solutions.

Campaigns

- We suggest the D/I Team hosts Greek-wide campaigns highlighting diverse identities, bridging gaps between groups, both non-Greek and Greek on campus.
- We suggest the D/I Team Member works to actively co-sponsor campaigns and meaningful programs with other campus organizations.
Recruitment Responsibilities

- The D/I Team Member should:
  - Offer advice to the Recruitment Team on “matching” if applicable to the chapter.
  - Serve as a liaison for Gamma chis for diversity and/or inclusivity issues.
    - Available if Gamma Chis or PNMs have concerns during recruitment and need a special advisor in-tune with Panhellenic diversity and inclusion initiatives and resources.
  - Serve as an informal monitor and facilitator of inclusivity and diversity concerns during recruitment meetings
  - Communicate with recruitment teams about issues that may arise regarding education and awareness of members throughout the process.

Selection Process

- Individuals and chapters can nominate representatives to the general application process.
  - Chapters can nominate multiple members
  - Chapters can conduct nomination processes internally as appropriate to chapter.
- Nomination ensures that chapter feels comfortable and familiar approaching this representative with sensitive issues.
- The Diversity and Inclusivity Team Leader should be selected before the general selection and interviews of the members.
  - Team Leader should be from the standing Diversity and Inclusivity Team.
- The Team Leader alongside appropriate Panhellenic Executive Representatives will select the following Team Members.
  - Applicants should be aware of the time commitment of the Diversity and Inclusivity Team prior to membership.
  - We recommend the Panhellenic President, Exec Member, Greek Life representative and Team Leader set a time for meetings before the applications are live.
- Application and recruitment process should occur in the Spring of the previous school year for the Team Leader and in August of the school year for team members.

Diversity and Inclusivity Team

- All representatives will meet as needed decided by VP of Community Outreach and Panhellenic Executive Board.
- The representatives must understand that the position reports to Vanderbilt Panhellenic Council first and chapters second.
- Members will discuss problems and issues from individual chapters.
- Members will collaborate with other community members and leaders.
- Members will receive continuous stream of education through various offices on campus
  - Office of Inclusion Initiatives and Cultural Competence
  - Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Committee

Topics to consider for Training:

- Race/Ethnicity sensitivity
- LGBTQI+ and Gender identity
- Disabilities
- Mental Health and Peer counseling (PCC)
- Socioeconomic (if available)
- Confidentiality Training

**VP of Community Outreach**
- This position will serve as a liaison between the Diversity and Inclusivity Team and the Panhellenic Executive Board.
C. EXTERNAL

As a Panhellenic Diversity and Inclusion Task Force, we realize that many issues of diversity and inclusion existing in Panhellenic are due to systematic and institutional ignorance. History greatly affects the present state and place of diversity and inclusion in Vanderbilt Panhellenic Council. Thus, to make changes externally, we must first make changes internally. When the internal systems that govern and run Panhellenic sororities align to goals of inclusivity and diversity, external changes will follow suit. Ultimately, internal changes affect external relations and interactions. Programming collaborative events is simply a short term solution to a long term issue. We must build the bridge between communities, and that bridge involves understanding internal causes of external problems. Therefore, the task force recommends the following two spheres of influence we believe will expedite the process of creating greater collaboration, inclusion, and diversity among organizations and individuals inside and outside of the Panhellenic communities:

Awareness
- Chapters should encourage their members to attend Multicultural Leadership Council member events throughout the year.
- Chapters should encourage their members to attend and participate in Diversity and Inclusion Greek Member Experience events and programs.
- Chapters should attend events regarding identity, diversity, and inclusion on campus and should make members aware of these opportunities by utilizing tools such as AnchorLink event pages.
- Officers and members should be encouraged to attend Multicultural Leadership Council meetings as observers to understand organizations, specifically culturally based organizations, outside of Greek life.

Communication
- Chapter officers should meet with the MLC Special Activities and Special Outreach Chairs to create meaningful programming and collaboration.
- Chapter officers should encourage programming that is purposeful and has investment from organizations inside and outside of Greek life.
- Chapters should actively advertise and publicize their events to organizations outside of the Greek community.
- Chapters should frame chapter events (philanthropy events etc.) so that non-Greek organizations feel as though they can attend and participate regardless of Greek affiliation.
  - E.g. if they involve “teams,” encourage teams to from all corners of campus life rather than simply from other Greek chapters.
Appendix: Suggested Training Materials and Resources

**Center for Teaching**
- Diversity and Inclusive Teaching (Archived) - [https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/diversity/](https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/diversity/)

**Dean of Students- Office of Inclusion Initiatives and Cultural Competence**
- Diversity Toolkit - [http://www.vanderbilt.edu/iicc/resources/diversity/](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/iicc/resources/diversity/)
- On-Campus Resources - [http://www.vanderbilt.edu/iicc/resources/on-campus-resources/](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/iicc/resources/on-campus-resources/)

**Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**
- Resources - [https://www.vanderbilt.edu/equity-diversity-inclusion/](https://www.vanderbilt.edu/equity-diversity-inclusion/)