

Membership Recruitment Policy: Legacy Considerations

Current Policy

A legacy, defined as a, “*daughter, sister, niece, aunt, granddaughter* or, through marriage, the *daughter, sister, niece* or *granddaughter* of a Phi Sigma Sigma” is regularly acknowledged during the membership recruitment process with special consideration. When a chapter is aware of a verified (by the chapter membership recruitment chairman contacting Headquarters) legacy participating in the recruitment process, the legacy must be accorded *special consideration*, as a courtesy. If the chapter makes the determination not to consider the legacy for membership, that decision must be approved by the executive director or designee.

Special Consideration: In Practice

Special consideration varies from chapter to chapter. In practice, consideration may range from a conversation amongst the membership selection committee before invitation lists are submitted to an automatic invitation into the first invitational round and preferential treatment during bid matching. Despite the varied interpretation of this policy across our chapters, continuing to offer any preferential treatment perpetuates and upholds a system of White privilege within our membership and does not meet our responsibility to promote inclusivity and access.

A Call for Systemic Change & Equality

The *intention* of the policy, to make a connection between the Fraternity and women who have prior knowledge of our values; and its current *impact*, *prioritizing the interest of those connected to educated, primarily White alumnae members*, need to be reexamined and dismantled. Access and consideration offered to a participant that is not earned or associated with their individual merit, disadvantages certain groups of people by furthering the inequity in our communities.

Resources:

[Consider intent vs. impact](#)

[Explore systems of systemic oppression](#)

[Learn more about inequality, equality, equity and justice](#)

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Who Does the Legacy Policy Benefit and What is its Impact?

Benefit	Who is Excluded/Negatively Impacted	The Impact
Legacies: Students who had the privilege of being related to and raised by college educated women who had the opportunity to pass along Phi Sigma Sigma values.	First-Generation College Students	First-generation students may not have been exposed to Greek Life/Phi Sig but could significantly benefit from the social support Phi Sig can provide. Prioritizing legacies due to unearned privileges may minimize an opportunity to engage first-generation students who align with the organization's mission and values.
	Black, Indigenous and Women of Color	BIPOC students have a lower likelihood of being legacies due to the predominantly White alumnae population. This is not at the fault of the alumnae, but BIPOC potential new members may look at an already predominantly White organization and struggle to find representation or feel welcomed as a minority.
	Chapters	Chapters who offer "courtesy invitations to legacies risk utilizing an invitation on a legacy potential new member who may be released later in the process, which essentially occupies a wasteful invitation that could have been utilized to engage non-legacy potential new members who align with the organization's mission and values.

Resources:

[First to Go to College and First to "Go Greek:" Engagement In Academically Oriented Activities By Senior Year First Generation Students Who Are Fraternity/Sorority Members](#) (Ahren, Bureau, Grace Ryan, Torres)

[The Paradox of Participation: Non-Whites in White Sororities and Fraternities](#) (Hughey)

[White Clauses in Two Historically White Fraternities: Documenting The Past And Exploring Future Implications](#) (Ryan P. Barone)