

# How to Join a Virginia Tech Fraternity in 2014

## *Process Description*

In the United States, college fraternities date back to the 1770's. These societies were formed for social as well as literary purposes and held regular meetings in which members discussed controversial subjects such as taxation and freedom. Over 200 years later, the American fraternity system is made up of 123 national fraternities with almost 5 million total members. Why are so many college students attracted to joining a fraternity? It is because a fraternity helps young men learn to work together, whether it is to achieve good grades, build the best homecoming float, or conduct a community service project.

Virginia Tech fraternity recruitment is a series of social events and gatherings that allow prospective and current fraternity members to get to know each other. The main purpose of recruitment is to allow prospective members to decide if they want to join a fraternity, and which organization fits them personally. Formal recruitment takes place once every semester, usually in early February and late September. The recruitment events are usually held around the Blacksburg area to provide convenience to those interested. The events are hosted by each fraternity's recruitment committee and are attended by the brotherhood. The fraternity recruitment process at Virginia Tech is intended to allow participants to be able to consider every fraternity. This is done by listing all active chapters on the Virginia Tech Interfraternity Council website and by conducting Greek 101, which showcases the chapters at Virginia Tech. Prospective members are allowed to go to as many, or as few, chapters as desired. Likewise, each fraternity's recruitment events are entirely optional, so prospects aren't required to attend every event. The principle steps to joining a Virginia Tech fraternity include registering for fraternity recruitment on HokieSpa, attending Greek 101, compiling a schedule of fraternity recruitment events, attending the events, attending closed recruitment, being available to receive a bid to pledge on a designated date, and finally, accept the bid through the Virginia Tech Fraternity and Sorority Life office.

## *Glossary*

- ↓ **Formal Recruitment** - A series of social events and gatherings that allow prospective and current fraternity members to get to know each other.
  
- ↓ **Informal Recruitment** - An ongoing, open recruitment period with no specific activities of recruitment and pledging.
  
- ↓ **Bid** - A formal invitation to join a Greek organization.

- ↓ **Interfraternity Council (IFC)** - A student organization working with the Fraternity and Sorority Life Office to be a resource to the Virginia Tech Greek system.
- ↓ **Alumnus** - An initiated member of a Fraternity who is no longer in college.
- ↓ **Chapter** - A term used to describe the individual collegiate section of a fraternity.
- ↓ **Closed Recruitment** – An invite-only event held towards the end of formal recruitment. Usually includes a formal presentation by the fraternity.
- ↓ **Pledge Class** - Potential members of a certain chapter who accept their bids to join the fraternity in the same semester.
- ↓ **Unaffiliated** - A student not in a fraternity or sorority.

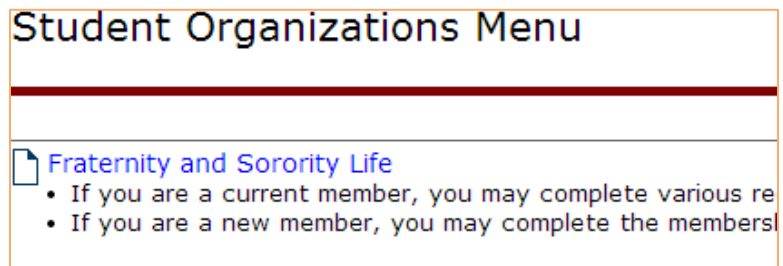
## Step-by-Step Guide


**Step 1:** Register for Fraternity Recruitment on HokieSpa.

All students interested in recruitment must first register with Virginia Tech Fraternity and Sorority Life through HokieSpa. This is necessary in order to participate in recruitment and potentially accept a fraternity’s bid. The registration page is available throughout the year, but must be filled out by a certain date, usually a couple days before bids are handed out. Check out the Virginia Tech IFC website for exact deadlines. The first step for students interested in joining a fraternity is to complete this registration to prevent missing the deadline.

The process to register only takes a few steps:

- 1) Browse to <http://hokiespa.vt.edu/> and login using your PID and password.
- 2) Select “Hokie Spa”
- 3) Select “Student Organizations Menu”
- 4) Select “Fraternity and Sorority Life”
- 5) Complete the required forms



 **Warning:** You aren’t able to accept a bid to pledge unless you have filled out the registration.

## Step 2: Attend Greek 101.

Greek 101 is an event hosted by the Virginia Tech IFC and is open to all unaffiliated students. The main purpose of Greek 101 is to provide interested students with an overview of all fraternities on the Virginia Tech campus. There is sometimes an initial presentation by Virginia Tech IFC introducing the various chapters. Each fraternity has a booth set up showcasing various aspects of their organization. The booths usually have two or three members who are available to talk or answer any questions. Greek 101 typically lasts only two hours and has been held at Owens Food Court for the past three semesters. Visit the Virginia Tech IFC website for details concerning time, date, and location. Attendance is not required in order to participate in fraternity recruitment. Greek 101 is an excellent opportunity to learn more about Virginia Tech's fraternities.



Tip: Prepare a list of fraternities you are interested in and talk to them first. Then, continue around talking to everyone else, you never know who you might connect with!

## Step 3: Compile a schedule of recruitment events.

Using knowledge gained by attending Greek 101, compile an initial list of fraternities you are interested in. Each of these fraternities will be hosting different recruitment events at different times throughout the next two weeks, so it is important to figure out a schedule which allows you to go to as many as desired. A good place to start when finding event schedules is visiting [www.vtIFC.com](http://www.vtIFC.com). Select "Chapters" at the top of the page, then select "Chapter List". Next, select the fraternity of interest, and then scroll down to the "Local Website" link. This link should be the Virginia Tech chapter's website, and should include information pertaining to recruitment, including the recruitment event schedule. Compile a list of the events you plan on attending. Then, return to the Virginia Tech IFC website and continue to browse other fraternity's event schedules until you are satisfied. Having an event schedule prepared will help you manage your time over the next week.

## Step 4: Attend fraternity recruitment events.

It is now time to attend fraternity recruitment events. Refer to the event schedule created in the previous step. The recruitment events are a series of social events and gatherings that allow prospective and current fraternity members to get to know each other. There have been a wide range of events held by Virginia Tech fraternities, sometimes including barbecues at their fraternity house, bowling at the BreakZone, basketball at War Memorial Gym, or paintballing in Christiansburg. These events are intended to give prospective



members an opportunity to enjoy an activity in an informal setting. The fall and spring recruitment periods normally last approximately two weeks, and the events are spread out accordingly. Each event is coordinated by the fraternity's recruitment committee, and they will be there to answer any questions. The principle steps to participate in a fraternity recruitment event are to arrive on time, engage in the event's activity, talk to as many current members as possible, and try to make a connection with one of these members before you leave.




Tip: This may be your first opportunity to make a good impression, so dress to impress!

#### Step 5: Attend closed recruitment.

By attending fraternity recruiting events, you are showing your interest in potential membership to the active brotherhood in attendance. Now it is the fraternity's turn to show interest in prospective members by inviting them to closed recruitment. Closed recruitment is an invite-only event held near the end of the recruitment period, and usually consists of a formal presentation by the fraternity to showcase the benefits of membership. Attending closed recruitment is not mandatory to receive or accept a bid, and not being invited doesn't guarantee you won't receive a bid. The event is typically held on campus in an auditorium on a weekend. Arrive at closed recruitment early, pay attention to the presentation, and ask any remaining questions you might have. Because this is the last recruitment event, it is your last opportunity to ask these questions.



 **Warning:** Dress for closed recruitment typically requires a shirt, tie, and sport coat. Make sure you have an outfit prepared ahead of time.

#### Step 6: Be available to receive your bid to pledge.

Closed recruitment is the final event of formal fraternity recruitment, and fraternities are now decided on which students they have decided to give a bid to pledge. The only responsibility this step requires is that you stay at home during the time designated by each fraternity. All fraternities hand out bids on the same night, usually within the same five hour window. The purpose of handing out bids is to surprise prospective members with a formal invitation to pledge. Traditionally, recruitment chairs call the prospect and tell them to come outside. Once outside, the fraternity members will be waiting to greet the prospective member and offer the bid. You will then be allowed to accept or deny the bid on the spot, or wait an additional 48 hours to decide and notify the Fraternity and Sorority Life office.



**Step 7:** Accept your bid to pledge through the Fraternity and Sorority Life office.

At the conclusion of bid handout, there is a 48 hour period where you may decide whether to accept the bid or not. At the conclusion of this period, regardless of whether you accepted your bid when you received it, you are required to officially accept your bid through Virginia Tech Fraternity and Sorority Life at their offices. The purpose of this is to let the university know if you are joining a fraternity, for record purposes. Accepting your bid only requires signing a few forms and making sure you have already filled out the fraternity registration on HokieSpa (see step 1). Exact date and location of bid acceptance can be found at the Virginia Tech IFC website toward the end of the formal recruitment period. Accepting your bid is the final step! The fraternity should get in contact with you about beginning to pledge.

## *Conclusion*

Fraternity membership can be an enjoyable and fulfilling experience for college men. You have now completed the step-by-step guide and have done everything necessary to join a fraternity. Don't worry if you didn't receive a bid, you are allowed to participate in recruitment every semester of your college duration. Additionally, informal recruitment occurs year-round. If you do accept a bid, it is time to meet your pledge class and embark on your pledging semester, which will allow you to learn about the values and inner workings of the fraternity.