

Middle Tennessee State University

# Strategic Plan for Fraternities and Sororities 2018 - 2022

Advancing the MTSU Fraternity and Sorority Community

## Background and History

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Middle Tennessee State University has been home to fraternities and sororities since the 1960's. Originally, governing councils were advised by three different university staff members: Dean of Women Students, Dean of Men Students and Office of Multicultural Affairs. In 1994, an initiative for on-campus Greek housing and a full-time Greek Affairs Director were successfully implemented.

The new Office of Greek Affairs set a standard of expectations for fraternity/sorority members. Councils began to take on governing responsibilities. There were new opportunities for collaboration, leadership development and student empowerment. A more consistent and measureable evaluation process was implemented.

In 2003, Tom Jelke was hired to assess the community. He identified several themes for focus and made specific recommendations for improvement. His evaluation was the foundation for the 2007 and 2009 Greek Task Forces.

In 2007, a task force was convened to address current issues in the Greek community. The result was a detailed relationship statement that was lengthy and difficult to read, identified no consequences or rewards, and lacked a strategic and implementation plan. The fraternity/sorority community has struggled to live up to expectation and its' potential. Weaknesses in our community are due, in part, to a lack of values congruence and high turn-over rate in the Office of Greek Affairs. The potential for future success is limitless.

In the fall of 2009, the first meeting of the Greek Task Force 2009 was held. The task force was composed of fraternity/sorority students, advisors, National organization officers, and university staff. The charge was *"to examine the existing structure and practices of the Greek community on the Middle Tennessee State University campus and, when appropriate, recommend enhancements to the system; and, to redefine the partnerships that exist among our students, alumni, administrators and national organizations to insure the long-term health and stability of the Greek community."*

A preliminary review of Jelke's 2003 assessment showed limited improvement. The task force identified and prioritized relevant themes, wrote a vision and a mission statement, and identified shared core values. This groundwork guided the development of the strategic plan and a new relationship statement. The Task Force identified five target areas for strategic focus: Vision and Values Education, Academics, Recruitment/Intake, Risk and Crisis Management, and Public Relations.

The fraternity/sorority community is defined as collegiate members, governing councils, the University, fraternity alumni and sorority alumnae, advisors, and inter/national organizations. Currently, there are three governing councils acting as a liaison between chapters and the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life and the University. There are 11 IFC chapters, 7 NPHC chapters and 7 CPH chapters on campus. Also of note, is the Office is now referred to as The Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life.

## Direction and Results

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As of 2016, the old Strategic Plan has expired. While the vision, mission statement and shared core values still are relevant today, the Gold Standard, the formal assessment criteria identified in the plan, is no longer utilized at MTSU. The Gold Standard did not recognize groups of different ages, sizes and strengths in a fair and consistent manner. Today, the Office utilizes the True Blue Accreditation system which allows chapters to set goals in 6 identified areas of learning, growth, service, health and safety, respect for diversity, and engagement in the community.

Additionally, the best practices and other information held within the Relationship Statement needed updating.

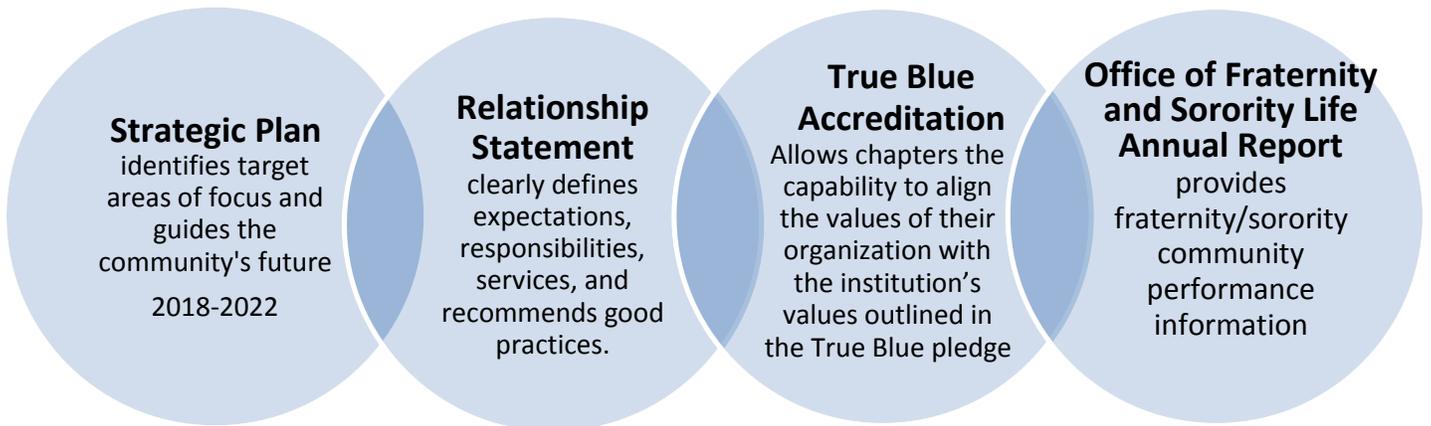
A Strategic Plan committee was formed in 2017 composed of fraternity/sorority students, advisors, National organization officers, and university staff. The purpose of the committee was to evaluate the previous Strategic Plan and create the next integration of it to move the FSL community at MTSU forward through 2022.

The committee identified the following as target areas for strategic focus: Public Relations/Communication with Constituents, Recruitment/Retention, Academic Success, and Leadership.

## **Design and Implementation**

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The committee agreed that all complementary documents that guide the strategic process should be easy to read, understand, and use for all constituents. Much of the 2011 documents needed updating to reflect today's practices and to be further simplified.



## Vision

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The Fraternity/Sorority Community of Middle Tennessee State University will create and promote an environment conducive to members learning, teaching, living and upholding our shared core values.

## Mission

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The mission of the Fraternity/Sorority Community is to:

- Promote excellence in academics, leadership and service
- Foster lifelong friendship and responsible citizenship
- Engage in a collaborative partnership with Middle Tennessee State University

## Shared Core Values

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The Shared Core Values for students, staff and advisors of the fraternity/sorority community at Middle Tennessee State University are:

**Education/Academics** – We demonstrate academic excellence and life-long learning.

**Leadership** – We practice ethical leadership and empower students to positively impact the University and campus community.

**Service/Philanthropy** – We give selflessly for the betterment of the campus, local, and global communities.

**Brotherhood/Sisterhood** – We foster life-long relationships and unity through respect, trust, and the ideals of the Greek Community.

**Integrity** – We endorse ethical standards and exemplary character, accountability, and values congruence.

**Diversity** – We embrace the deeper understanding and appreciation of all persons.

**Collaboration** – We cultivate inter-organizational, campus, and community partnerships.

## Target Areas

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**Public Relations/Communication with Constituents**

**Recruitment of New Members**

**Retention of Current Members**

**Academic Success**

## **Goal 1                      Public Relations/Communication with Constituents**

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*Build a strong fraternity/sorority community brand that communicates our vision and values to our many constituents.*

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Objective 1.1 Create new marketing campaign to be used for outreach to incoming freshman students, transfers, parents, and alumni.

- Institute campaign through CUSTOMS sessions, Preview Days, etc.
- Regularly contribute to the Office of New Student Programs Parents and Family Monthly Newsletter.
- Create monthly “Did You Know” posts on class pages and family pages.
- Create new promotional materials for display year round.

Objective 1.2 Develop a strong, working relationship with the MTSU Office of Development and Office of Alumni.

- Work with Development on a yearly giving campaign through the university’s True Blue Give.
- Create programming for alumni/donors by collaborating between the three offices.
- Fully utilize Development funding and begin recognizing donors in programming.

Objective 1.3 Continue to promote a vision and values-based educational program for all fraternity/sorority constituents.

- Incorporate vision/values into Presidents’ Summit, FSL Academy and Executive Officer Work Days.
- Continue to align New Member Education Modules to our values and vision.
- Host trainings for officers responsible for values congruence (i.e. New Member Educator, Conduct and Social).

Objective 1.4 Encourage chapters to plan philanthropic events that provide outreach to the Murfreesboro community.

- Provide a planning guide on how to increase Murfreesboro community participation in philanthropic events.

## **Goal 2 Recruitment of New Members**

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*Increase the fraternity/sorority population 1% per year to reach 10% of the campus undergraduate population by 2023.*

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Objective 2.1 Develop a summer recruitment program to utilize FSL students to reach out to those who expressed interest in FSL through CUSTOMS session.

- Maintain an up to date contact list for those who express interest in FSL through CUSTOMS
- Develop a timeline and script for follow up calls to be placed
- Identify/Train FSL members who can make these calls
- Continue to build FSL Orientation Team to be reflective of the FSL community.

Objective 2.2 Build a spring-time inclusive event to help recruit unaffiliated students.

- Utilize the Greek Week committee to create an event.
- Have event placed on the Connection Point Calendar.

Objective 2.3 Develop a partnership with the Office of Admissions and have a presence at all university recruitment events.

- Begin by identifying events within a 100 mile radius of Murfreesboro, TN to attend
- Provide admissions recruiters with PR materials to share on visits.

### **Goal 3                      Retention of Current Members**

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*Provide a positive FSL experience that assists chapters in retaining their members. Retain FSL members at 90%.*

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Objective 3.1 Begin tracking member retention per semester utilizing chapter rosters.

- FSL Staff will review rosters in TBA meetings and identify the following
  - Class standing of members when they joined
  - How they left – graduation, 4 years served, membership terminated or suspended for financial, behavior or academic reasons, resignation, transfer, left school

Objective 3.2 FSL Staff will develop programming and resources to utilize when working with chapters who are unable to retain 90% of their membership yearly (not including members who graduate or serve 4 years).

Objective 3.3 Continue to organize IFC recruitment and provide specific training to IFC chapters regarding membership criteria and the mechanics of recruiting and conversation skills.

Objective 3.4 Provide skill development programs and resources for FSL members that will empower them with viable experiences and skill building that adds values to their membership.

- Leadership
- Risk Management
- Conflict Resolution
- Event Planning

## **Goal 4                      Academic Success**

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*Support FSL members' academic endeavors and continually achieve success inside the classroom.*

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Objective 4.1 Create a recognition program for groups and members excelling in academics.

- Provide awards at FSL Awards Program for the Highest GPA and Most Improved GPA.
- Sponsor a gift for the highest GPA each semester per council.
- Continually recognize faculty throughout the year.
- Reactivate chapter of Order of Omega.

Objective 4.2 Develop educational sanctions for all groups that do not meet academic expectations.

- Review all scholarship plans for those chapters earning below a 3.0 GPA each semester.
- Provide information regarding university academic resources to all FSL members below a 2.0 GPA.
- Mandate an academic workshop for the entire chapter if the chapter GPA falls below the All Women's Average (sororities) or All Men's Average (fraternities).

Objective 4.3 Work with the Development Office to consistently award FSL scholarships to high achieving members who are in need of financial aid.

- Create a document that outlines all scholarships available.
- Work with the Development Office on endowing future scholarships.

## 2018 FSL Strategic Plan Committee Members

Leslie Merritt, Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life, Committee Chair  
Colbe Wilson, Chapter Advisor, Alpha Delta Pi  
Laura Lightsy, Associate Dean of Student Conduct  
Hannah Leyhew, 2017 Panhellenic President, 2016 Alpha Chi Omega President  
Sara Elizabeth Young, 2016 Panhellenic President, Alpha Delta Pi  
Thomas Denney, 2017 Interfraternity Council President, Sigma Chi  
Jonathan K. Gandy, Chapter Advisor, Sigma Pi  
Rick Larue, Chapter Advisor, Lambda Chi Alpha  
Jake West, Alpha Tau Omega President  
Trish Starkey, Kappa Delta Alumna  
Monique Dixon, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. Member  
Gerald Hill, Pi Kappa Alpha Alumnus  
Jason Walker, Former Sigma Pi Executive Director

***A special thanks to the following individuals for their input, feedback and contributions to the development of the plan:***

Danny Kelley, Assistant Vice President, Student Affairs  
Dr. Deb Sells, Vice President, Student Affairs