

2025 Fraternity & Sorority Life Awards Process and Criteria

Approved by the Interfraternity and Panhellenic Councils on 12/16/2024

The following criteria and expectations are in their eleventh year of use. They were determined after a consultation process that was open to representatives from all chapters in the MSU Fraternity & Sorority Community in Spring 2015. It represents a shift from how the Chapter of the Year process had been viewed for several years. This version represents a revision that is now in effect and which will be used for the next assessment/evaluation process in Fall 2025 for 2025 calendar year programming.

The intent has been to simplify the application and documentation process and to better recognize chapters achieving overall excellence. This makes public recognition, via our social media outlets, websites, and printed materials easier and more meaningful to both our chapters and to external stakeholders who may view the information or find it helpful and informative.

Three main forms of recognition may be achieved by chapters:

1. Chapter Achievement Awards

Chapter Achievement Awards may be achieved in each of 7 categories. In order to receive a Chapter Achievement Award in a given category, a chapter may miss no more than one of the criteria listed under the column for “Purple Circle Recognition.” In order to receive a Chapter Achievement Award With Honors, a chapter must meet all of the criteria listed under “Purple Circle Recognition” and may miss no more than one of the criteria listed under the column for “Gold Circle Recognition.”

2. Overall Recognition Circles

Any number of chapters may be recognized for an overall level of excellence. A chapter will be considered a “Purple Circle Chapter” if the chapter receives Chapter Achievement Awards in every category. A chapter will be recognized as a “Gold Circle Chapter” if it receives Chapter Achievement Awards With Honors in every category.

3. Chapter of the Year

One fraternity and one sorority may be recognized as the Chapter of the Year for the Respective Council. In order to be considered for the Chapter of the Year Award, chapters must meet the following three minimum requirements:

- a. The chapter must apply for recognition in all 7 categories for which Chapter Achievement Awards are offered.
- b. The chapter must receive a minimum of 5 Chapter Achievement Awards, whether Purple Circle, Gold Circle, or a combination.
- c. The chapter must prepare and deliver a presentation before a panel of judges.

Pending available funding, organizations receiving the Chapter of the Year Award will be eligible to receive up to \$300 in funding to assist with on-campus programming or conference travel.

Scoring for the overall Chapter of the Year Award will be done in the following manner:

Category	Chapter Achievement Award	Chapter Achievement Award With Honors	Max Points
Campus Involvement	1 point	2 points	2 points
Community Service & Philanthropy	1 point	2 points	2 points
Fraternity & Sorority Community Involvement	1 point	2 points	2 points
Member Education & Development	1 point	2 points	2 points
Recruitment & Retention	1 point	2 points	2 points
Risk Management	1 point	2 points	2 points
Scholarship	1 point	2 points	2 points
Presentation			6 points
TOTAL POINTS			20 points

Specific award criteria can be found beginning on page 5 of this document.

2-5 judges will evaluate every category in the awards notebook. If judges do not agree about whether or not a chapter has sufficiently documented a level of achievement, the average of the resultant scores shall be considered. For example, if Judge A has found that a chapter is deserving of the “Chapter Achievement Award With Honors” in a given category, and if Judge B has found that a chapter is deserving of the “Chapter Achievement Award” in that same category, the chapter will receive 1.5 points. Sufficiently proving that they have met criteria is the sole responsibility of the chapters applying for awards. Judges will not work together.

Tip: Chapters should understand that not all judges will have a background in Fraternity & Sorority Life, and they may not be 100% familiar with our processes and procedures. It is advisable that chapters use language that makes sense to those not familiar with all FSL-related terms.

Separate from judging presentations based upon pre-determined categories, scores of which are averaged, the panel of judges will be asked to simply rank chapters in the order in which they believe the chapters should be named “Chapter of the Year.” They will be asked to consider both the presentation and the results of the judging of the Chapter Achievement Awards. The rankings will only be used if a tie score has been reached after the previous methods mentioned.

Ensuring that proper documentation is included in application materials is the responsibility of chapters, and thus, judges’ scores/determinations are final and will not be adjusted by FSL staff.

Application Instructions

1. Applications must be submitted by **11:55 p.m. on Friday, December 19, 2025**. Late applications will not be accepted.
2. All applications must be submitted online in the appropriate form/page on Presence/Involve U.
3. Documentation must clearly identify which section and criterion it is intended to support. Chapters may list the criteria wording, directly, or they may refer to the criteria number, which is in the left column of the table below.
4. Documentation for various criteria must appear in the order in which it is listed in this awards packet.

5. Provide only the documentation required. For example, if asked to provide evidence that an officer position exists, include the page of the chapter's Bylaws or Constitution that includes the position description, and highlight the pertinent information. Do not include the entire document unless requested.

Notes and Clarifying Points

1. The term "award period" refers to calendar year 2025.
2. If a percentage of member participation is required in order to receive points, and if the neither the criterion nor event is semester-specific (RSO involvement, for example), the semester roster with the largest number of members will be used to determine the percentage of participation achieved.
3. If a person was on the official/final grade roster during the time period of this application, they may be included in the membership for the given semester. If they were not included on the official/final grade roster, they will not be considered members, and their "participation" will not assist the chapter.
4. The term "members" refers to dues-paying new members or initiated members. These members must be considered active members by the national organization. Members who are "inactive" or on "alumni status," or for whom the chapter was not assessed dues by their respective governing council will not be considered.
5. Specific award criteria can be found beginning on page 5 of this document.

Presentation (6 points, 30% of possible points)

In addition to having each application category scored by two judges, chapters will have the opportunity to give an in-person presentation for a panel of 2-5 judges. During the presentation, chapters should discuss their applications and present evidence of going above and beyond the normal, making a case for why the organization should be named Chapter of the Year. Chapters should be prepared to stand for questions from judges. Keep in mind that the panel of judges evaluating presentations will not be the same judges who reviewed the notebooks. The panel will not have seen the notebooks prior to chapters' presentations, either.

In addition to summarizing accomplishments and making the general case for being selected as Chapter of the Year, the presentation will need to address a separate question which will be made available to chapters one week prior to the beginning of the presentations. This additional question is likely to address a big-picture aspect of fraternity/sorority life or chapter operations.

Presentations will be scored based on the following:

1. Adherence to all presentation guidelines (1-5 points)
2. Presentation creativity (1-5 points)
3. Ability to respond to questions from judges (1-10 points)
4. Quality of response to presentation question (1-10 points)
5. Quality of case made for Chapter of the Year designation (1-10 points)
6. Overall impression (1-10 points)

Presentation Guidelines and Notes

1. No more than four members may represent the chapter during the presentation. One presenter must have been a new member during either semester during the award period. The additional three presenters may be any members the chapter chooses.
2. Presentations, including question and answer time, must not exceed 20 minutes in length.
3. Presentations may include PowerPoint, Flash, or other media.
4. Black and white copies of handouts or slides may be provided to judges at the beginning of the presentation. Handouts are not required.
5. Dates of presentations will be determined and released at the beginning of the Spring 2026 semester. Chapters have the responsibility of selecting a time at which members are available.
6. The chapter shall be responsible for its own computer or other device needed for presentations. The presentation room has HDMI connection, projector, and screen.

Staff cannot be held responsible for media or media equipment malfunctions. Having presentations saved in multiple places (flash drive, e-mail, OneDrive) is recommended.

Specific award criteria can be found beginning on the next page of this document.

Category	Chapter Achievement Award/Overall Purple Circle	Chapter Achievement Award With Honors/Overall Gold Circle
	<p><i>To receive a Chapter Achievement Award in a single category, a chapter may miss no more than one of the criteria points listed in this column for that category.</i></p>	<p><i>To receive a Chapter Achievement Award With Honors in a single category, a chapter must meet all criteria points listed in the Chapter Achievement Award Column for that category and may miss no more than one of the criteria points listed in this column for that category.</i></p>
	<p><i>To achieve overall Purple Circle recognition, a chapter may miss no more than one of the criteria points listed in this column for <u>every</u> category.</i></p>	<p><i>To achieve Gold Circle recognition, a chapter must meet all criteria points listed in the Purple Circle column for <u>every</u> category and may miss no more than one of the criteria points listed in the Gold Circle column for <u>every</u> category.</i></p>
Campus Involvement & Outreach		
CIO 1	<p>50% of Chapter Members are involved in at least one other non-FSL organization or departmental committee on campus. The organization must be an official RSO, and committee existence must be verifiable.</p>	<p>67% (2/3) of Chapter Members are involved in at least one other non-FSL organization or departmental committee on campus. The organization must be an official RSO, and committee existence must be verifiable.</p>
CIO 2	<p>The chapter fielded teams in at least one intramural sport during the award period.</p>	<p>The chapter fielded teams in two or more intramural sports during the award period.</p>
CIO 3	<p>The chapter co-sponsored <i>and was involved in the planning of</i> a minimum of one event per semester with a non-FSL campus organization or department. 50% or more of the chapter's membership must have been involved in the planning of and/or attended the event.</p>	<p>The chapter co-sponsored <i>and was involved in the planning of</i> three or more events, during the award period, with a non-FSL campus organization or department. 50% or more of the chapter's membership must have been involved in the planning of and/or attended each event.</p>
CIO 4	<p>50% of Chapter Members attend a minimum of one cultural event during the award period. Events may include, but are not limited to Hmong Culture Night, Latino Night, LGBT Center Drag Show, etc.</p>	<p>67% (2/3) of Chapter Members attend a minimum of one cultural event during the award period. Events may include, but are not limited to Hmong Culture Night, Latino Night, LGBT Center Drag Show, etc.</p>

CIO5	A minimum of 50% of chapter members attended at least two different intercollegiate athletics events during the award period. To meet this criteria, each person being counted must have attended 2 events.	A minimum of 75% of chapter members attended at least two different intercollegiate athletics events during the award period. To meet this criteria, each person being counted must have attended 2 events.
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Community Service & Philanthropy		
CSP 1	75% of chapter members participated in a minimum of one chapter-planned philanthropic event (raising money for charity) during the award period.	75% of chapter members participated in two or more chapter-planned philanthropic events (raising money for charity) during the award period.
CSP 2	75% of chapter members participated in a minimum of one chapter-sponsored/affiliated community service project (donation of time) during the award period.	75% of chapter members participated in two or more chapter-sponsored/affiliated community service projects (donation of time) during the award period.
CSP 3	75% of chapter members participated in a minimum of one community service or philanthropy event hosted by another FSL chapter, RSO, or other entity. (Note: Most events through Community Engagement Office will fulfill this goal area, Rake the Town and Joint Highway Cleanups may suffice as well.)	75% of chapter members participated in two or more community service or philanthropy events hosted by another FSL chapter, RSO, or other entity. (Note: Most events through Community Engagement Office will fulfill this goal area, Rake the Town and Joint Highway Cleanups may suffice as well.)
CSP 4	The chapter had an officer or chair, elected or appointed, responsible for planning and monitoring the chapter's service and philanthropic activities.	
CSP 5	The chapter submitted monthly community service reports every month during the award period.	
CSP 6	At least 50% of the active chapter was registered for and fundraised as part of a team for Dance Marathon, and at least 25% of chapter members attended the large Mavathon event.	The chapter executed a fundraiser for Dance Marathon, and at least 25% of chapter members attended the large Mavathon event.
CSP 7	The chapter met its obligations, as assigned by the councils' Vice Presidents of Community Service & Philanthropy, for volunteer shifts leading up to and during the FSL Red Cross Blood Drive.	

Fraternity & Sorority Life Involvement		
FSLI 1	The chapter had a minimum of one member submit a letter of intent/application for an elected or appointed position with its respective governing council during the award period. (EXCLUDES Conduct Review Board Representatives and Recruitment Counselors for sorority or fraternity recruitment)	The chapter had a minimum of two members submit letters of intent/applications for an elected or appointed position with its respective governing council during the award period. (EXCLUDES Conduct Review Board Representatives and Recruitment Counselors for sorority or fraternity recruitment)
FSLI 2	The chapter had a minimum of one member serve in a position on the Greek Week Team during the award period.	
FSLI 3	A minimum of 50% of the chapter's membership participated in or attended at least one Greek Week activity.	A minimum of 75% of the chapter's membership participated in or attended at least one Greek Week activity.
FSLI 4	The chapter did not have any unexcused absences from council meetings during the award period.	
FSLI 5	The chapter failed to have representation at no more than two round-table meetings or workshops hosted by governing council executive officers during the award period.	A minimum of one chapter member attended all round-table meetings or workshops hosted by governing council executive officers during the award period.
FSLI 6	The chapter had an active member attend each semester's leadership retreat.	The chapter had a President or Executive board member attend each semester's leadership retreat.
FSLI 7	The chapter had a minimum of one member submit a letter of intent/application for, and complete the selection process for, the recruitment counselor position on its respective governing council during the award period. If selected, the recruitment counselor fulfilled their position duties adequately.	

Member Education & Development		
MED 1	A minimum of 2 chapter members attended national or regional leadership conferences/conventions sponsored by the inter/national organization during the award period. Attendance at UIFI, AFLV, or other national/regional FSL-related conferences will fulfill this criterion.	Four or more chapter members attended national or regional leadership conferences/conventions sponsored by the inter/national organization during the award period. Attendance at UIFI, AFLV, or other national/regional FSL-Related conferences will fulfill this criterion.
MED 2	75% of new members attended a New Member workshop during the award period.	100% of new members attended a New Member workshop during the award period.
MED 3	The chapter provided a minimum of one educational program targeted to more than new members during the award period. Suggestions include, but are not limited to: etiquette dinner, dressing for success, resume/interviewing skills, wellness programs, etc.	The chapter provided two or more educational programs targeted to more than new members during the award period. Suggestions include, but are not limited to: etiquette dinner, dressing for success, resume/interviewing skills, wellness programs, etc.
MED 4	The chapter had and submitted a written member education program during the award period.	The chapter made detailed information about its new member program/process readily available and accessible to potential new members and parents.
MED 5	The chapter held a minimum of one all-chapter educational/goal setting retreat per semester during the award period. 75% of the chapter must have been in attendance at each retreat.	The chapter has a documented multi-semester strategic plan and used part of each semester's retreat to follow up on, modify, or assess the chapter's progress in attaining the objectives in its strategic plan.
MED 6	25% (1/4) of chapter members attended the U-Lead Conference	50% (1/2) of chapter members attended the U-Lead Conference
MED 7	25% of chapter members attended at least one council-sponsored Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion-themed event or workshop during the award period. This may be an event hosted by the councils, or an event either hosted by a different department and co-sponsored by the councils or co-hosted by the councils and another department.	50% of chapter members attended at least one council-sponsored Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion-themed event or workshop during the award period. This may be an event hosted by the councils, or an event either hosted by a different department and co-sponsored by the councils or co-hosted by the councils and another department.

Recruitment & Retention		
RR-F1A (Fraternities Only)	For Fraternities, the chapter recruited a number of new members equal to at least 25% of the active chapter for the Fall semester.	For Fraternities, the chapter recruited a number of new members equal to at least 33.4% of the active chapter for the Fall semester.
RR-F1B (Fraternities Only)	For Fraternities, the chapter recruited a number of new members equal to at least 10% of the active chapter for the Spring semester.	For Fraternities, the chapter recruited a number of new members equal to at least 20% of the active chapter for the Spring semester OR the chapter recruited a number of new members equal to or greater than 50% of the beginning chapter size (using the beginning chapter size at the beginning of the previous Fall term) for the entire academic year. NOTE. This is the only criteria point that looks at an academic year statistic, rather than a calendar year statistic.
RR-S1 (Sororities Only)	For Sororities, the chapter recruited to quota through formal recruitment or COR during the Fall recruitment period.	For sororities, the chapter met or exceeded total each semester.
RR 2 A	The chapter retained/initiated at least 75% of the new members who accepted bids during the award period.	The chapter retained/initiated at least 90% of the new members who accepted bids during the award period.
RR 3	Chapter did not have any recruitment violations/infractions during the award period. **Policy violations by individual recruitment counselors shall not be considered as infractions, unless the recruitment counselor is deliberately violates a policy in order to benefit his/her own chapter.	
RR 4	The chapter communicated, via newsletter or e-mail update, with the parents of all active and new members once per semester.	The chapter hosted one event involving parents of active and new members during the award period.
RR 5	The chapter had a current and up-to-date website on which potential new members and parents could find information about the chapter and how to join it.	

Risk Management		
RM 1	The chapter sponsored/planned a minimum of one educational program, per semester, for its members on a topic pertaining to Risk Management. 75% of chapter membership must have been in attendance. Suggested topics include, but may not be limited to: responsible alcohol use, safe social planning, hazing prevention, sexual assault prevention and awareness, and CPR or first aid training. Collaboration with other chapters is encouraged.	The chapter sponsored/planned two or more educational programs, per semester, for its members on topics pertaining to Risk Management. 75% of chapter membership must have been in attendance at each program. Suggested topics include, but may not be limited to: responsible alcohol use, safe social planning, hazing prevention, sexual assault prevention and awareness, and CPR or first aid training. Collaboration with other chapters is encouraged.
RM 2	The chapter registered at least two alcohol-free social events per semester and completed the after-event report.	The chapter registered four or more alcohol-free social events per semester and completed the after-event report.
RM 3	The chapter was not found responsible for any hazing, alcohol, or social event policy violations during the award period.	
RM 4	During the award period, the chapter attended, hosted, or co-sponsored a minimum of one educational program pertaining to a Risk Management topic which was open to non-members. 50 % of the chapter's membership is to be in attendance.	During the award period, the chapter attended, hosted, or co-sponsored a two or more educational programs pertaining to Risk Management topics which were open to non-members. 50 % of the chapter's membership is to be in attendance at each program.
RM 5	The chapter had an officer or chair, elected or appointed, responsible for Risk Management within the chapter.	
RM 6	The chapter had a comprehensive written Risk Management program in place, including position statements regarding hazing and responsible alcohol use and a sober cab/designated driver program (or justification for not having one), during the award period.	

Scholarship		
S 1	Chapter's semester GPA met or exceeded the all-men's (fraternities) or all women's (sororities) GPA each semester.	Chapter's semester GPA met or exceeded the all-men's (fraternities) or all women's (sororities) GPA each semester AND exceeded 3.14 for one semester.
S 2	For both semesters, either the chapter achieved a 3.14 GPA or higher OR the chapter's semester GPA was an improvement (.01 or greater) over the same semester's GPA during the previous award period. Example—Spring 2022 GPA is higher than Spring 2021 GPA.	For both semesters, either the chapter achieved a 3.14 or higher, OR the chapter's semester GPA improved by .05 or greater over the same semester's GPA during the previous award period. Example—Spring 2022 GPA is higher than Spring 2021 GPA.
S 3	Chapter's new member GPA met or exceeded the freshman men's (fraternities) or freshman women's (sororities) GPA during the Fall semester.	Chapter's new member GPA met or exceeded the all-men's (fraternities) or all-women's (sororities) GPA during the Fall semester.
S 4	Chapter hosted a minimum of one academic skills workshop, with a minimum of 75% chapter attendance, during the award period.	Chapter hosted a minimum of one academic skills workshop, per semester, with a minimum of 75% chapter attendance, during the award period.
S 5	Chapter had a Scholarship officer or chair, elected or appointed, responsible for monitoring academic progress and providing programming to assist members.	
S 6	Chapter had a scholarship program or Bylaws section that: detailed incentives for good academic performance; included an improvement plan for members who do not meet expectations; and included academic requirements for officers, new members, potential new members, and "good standing" status.	
S 7	Chapter had an active faculty advisor who met, in person, with the chapter's scholarship chair to discuss the chapter's academic progress at least once per semester.	