

Interfraternity Council (IFC)  
Standards Board  
**Bylaws**  
Pennsylvania State University  
University Park, Pennsylvania

**PREFACE:** These bylaws are expected of all recognized IFC organizations. Additionally, all IFC organizations must adhere to all university, federal, state, and local policies, laws, and ordinances. This is to include any civil action taken against an organization.

**ARTICLE I**

Name

The judicial body of the IFC, as established in these bylaws, shall be named the Standards Board. Responsibility for a violation will be determined by preponderance of evidence. Preponderance of evidence means that it is more likely than not that a violation of IFC bylaws has occurred.

**ARTICLE II**

Purpose

The purpose of the Standards Board is to foster accountability among its members and hold them to the expectations established by the IFC. Additionally, the Standards Board shall educate members of the IFC on best practices and safety measures to create a safe and responsible community. The Standards Board shall fulfill all requirements stated within this document by upholding and interpreting the legislation and policy of the IFC and judging these bylaws by preponderance of evidence. These shall be done to maintain self-governance of IFC members.

**ARTICLE III**

Composition

The Standards Board shall consist of the following officials:

1. The Vice President of Standards for the IFC serving as the *Chief Justice*.
2. The Executive Vice President of the IFC serving as the *Associate Chief Justice (in place of the Chief Justice or as a stand-in justice)*.
3. 3 of the 5 Justices (*per hearing for quorum*).
4. A representative from the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life (*who may sit in during hearings*).

**ARTICLE IV**

Appointment and Eligibility

Section A – Interfraternity Council Bylaws

The IFC Bylaws establish procedure for eligibility, nomination, appointment, and duties for Standards Board members, unless stated otherwise.

#### Section B – Chief Justice

The *Vice President of Standards* for the IFC will serve as *Chief Justice* unless there is a conflict of interest. If a conflict of interest is present, the *Executive Vice President* shall serve as *Chief Justice*.

#### Section C – Associate Chief Justice

The *Associate Chief Justice* will be elected as outlined in Article II of the IFC Bylaws.

#### Section D – Justices

The *Justices* will:

1. Be interviewed by the *Vice President of Standards* and *Executive Vice President* of the IFC
2. Be voted upon if proposed by member of Presidents Council
3. Not serve on the IFC Executive Board
4. Not belong to same IFC chapter as any other Justice

#### Section E – Alternate Justices

The *Chief Justice* can appoint an *Alternate Justice*, commonly the *Associate Chief Justice*, due to a conflict of interest within a *Justice*.

#### Section F – Recording Justice

A *Justice* will be randomly selected to serve as the *Recording Justice*. The *Recording Justice* is responsible for conducting the duties stated in Article VII of this document.

### ARTICLE V Training of Justices

#### Section A – Standards Board Training

*Justices* will attend an OSACR training session. The *Justices* will be educated on the Standards Board's purpose, policies, priorities, and functions. The training will include a mock hearing that will introduce *Justices* to the types of incidents that they may handle.

### ARTICLE VI Jurisdiction

#### Section A – Pennsylvania State University

The Standards Board has the jurisdiction to interpret the legislature and policy established within the IFC bylaws and this document.

#### Section B – Adjoining Documents

The Standards Board has the jurisdiction to interpret the following documents:

- [1. Interfraternity Council Fraternal Judicial Board Bylaws](#)
- [2. Interfraternity Council Bylaws](#)
- [3. NIC Alcohol and Drug Guidelines](#)
- [4. NIC Health and Safety Standards](#)
- [5. IFC Hate Speech/Crime Guidelines](#)

### Section C – Undefined

The Standards Board has jurisdiction to adjudicate upon any incident that negatively impacts the Penn State Community or Greek Life’s image.

### Section D – Bad Standing

The Standards board has jurisdiction to impose sanctions on any member chapter who falls into “bad standing” with the IFC. See Article X.

## **ARTICLE VII** Adjudication Duties

### Section A – Chief Justice

The *Chief Justice* will lead all judicial matters and:

1. Conduct dispute resolution
2. Conduct administrative reviews
3. Act as a liaison between the Standards Board and the IFC Executive Board, OSACR, Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life, and Office of Fraternity and Sorority Compliance
4. Disclose evidence from Standards Board investigations
5. Lead the drafting of opinions or and decisions of responsibility released by the Standards Board
6. Ensure all investigation, hearing, and decision information is kept confidential.

### Section B – Associate Chief Justice

The *Associate Chief Justice* will be chosen by the *Chief Justice*, carry out the will of the Standards Board, and shall:

1. Be the primary officer at hearings
2. Request evidence to reach a decision
3. Select which *Justices* will be present for a hearing
4. Assist the drafting of opinions or decisions of responsibility released by the Standards Board
5. Ensure all investigation, hearing, and decision information is kept confidential

### Section C – Justices

The *Justices* will be the primary decision makers at hearings, and shall:

1. Attend hearings in which they were appointed
2. Request evidence to reach a decision
3. Assist the drafting of opinions or decisions of responsibility released by the Standards Board
4. Ensure all investigation, hearing, and decision information is kept confidential

## **ARTICLE VIII** Informal Dispute Resolution

### Section A – Purpose

Dispute resolution is meant to mediate disputes between parties that do not rise to the level of the Standards Board

## Section B – Composition

Mediated by *Chief Justice*. If a conflict of interest is present, *Associate Chief Justice* will mediate.

## Section C – Jurisdiction

Dispute resolution is used before involving the Standards Board

## Section D – Procedure

1. The *Chief Justice* will notify the President(s) of the accused chapter(s) within 24 hours of report
2. The *Chief Justice* and chapter representative(s) will schedule to meet within (2) business days of notification
3. The *Chief Justice* will provide a copy of the accusation to the chapter and explain his view
4. The President of the chapter is given the opportunity to open informal dialogue

## Section E – Powers

Dispute resolution ends with the mutual agreement of both sides, and the agreement of the *Chief Justice*. If no agreement is made, the Standards Board will hear the case.

# ARTICLE IX

## Formal Hearing Procedures

### Section A – Pre-Hearing

1. Once the Standards Board decides that a chapter or individual is in violation of the IFC guidelines they have agreed to, and an informal resolution is not reached, a hearing will be scheduled.
2. The *Associate Chief Justice* will select at least (3) unbiased *Justices* to attend a hearing
  - a. *Justices* cannot be assigned to their own chapter's hearing
3. The *Associate Chief Justice* will coordinate hearing time, date, location, set-up, and notices.

### Section B – Hearing Procedure

1. The *Associate Chief Justice* will begin the meeting, reading the script, charges, and explaining procedure
2. The accused party will have an opportunity to explain their situation, plead their case, argue against the charges, etc.
2. The Standards Board will explain its decision to the accused party. Decisions will fall into (3) categories: not responsible, responsible, continuation of trial. If the trial must be continued, the new date and time will be announced within (2) hours of the accused party's dismissal. This decision will not contain sanctions.
  - a. The accused party is free to stay or leave
3. An official decision letter detailing all charges, decisions, and imposed sanctions will be sent to the guilty party within (5) business days

### Section C – Rules

1. The only individuals present for a hearing will be the *Chief Justice*, *Associate Chief Justice*, all assigned *Justices*, *Recording Justice*, OFSL representative, President of accused chapter, (1) undergraduate member of the accused chapter, and (1) chapter advisor. No legal counsel will be allowed to represent a member fraternity during a hearing.
2. The President of the accused chapter will speak on its behalf
3. The *Associate Chief Justice* will rule on points of procedure
4. The accused party may present evidence during their argument
5. The *Associate Chief Justice* and *Justices* may ask question at any time
6. Witnesses may be called for questioning. They will be examined by both parties
7. The past conduct of the parties are admissible to determine responsibility

## **ARTICLE X**

### **Sanctions**

#### Section A - Sanction Method

A. The IFC has the power to issue the following sanctions, as per Article VI.

1. Fines
  - a. payments to the Interfraternity Council
2. Restitution
  - a. complete payment for damages to property

#### 3. Restorative Circles

- a. programmed IFC events mandated by the Standards Board. These conversations are meant to have a conversation about how these actions negatively affect the community at large.
5. Social Probation
  - a. time period in which no alcohol or dry social events are allowed
6. Recommendation of Suspension to OSACR
  - a. all possible sanctions will be levied against an organization, and the organization will not be allowed to participate in any chapter related events including meetings, functions, intramurals, etc.
7. Recommendation of Expulsion to OSACR
  - a. loss of membership with the Interfraternity Council and Penn State University

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **Appeal Process**

#### Section A - Right to Appeal

All member fraternities have a right to appeal their decision if they file an official appeal with the *Chief Justice* within (10) calendar days. An official appeal must be a formal written document and must state all matters of deviation from proper procedure or judicial standards. This written document will be read by the Interfraternity Council Executive Board during the Appeal Review. This must be provided to and or sent (via an electronic method) to the *Chief Justice* and *Interfraternity Council President*.

#### Section B - Appeal Review

The Executive Board of the Interfraternity Council, minus the Vice President of Standards (or whomever served as the Chief Justice for the case), shall review all appeals. The *Chief Justice* must present all case information and the official appeal to the board. The *Chief Justice* will also provide insight into the methods and justifications to the determined sanction(s). The Executive Board reviews the process and or the sanctions from the decision of the Standards Board. The sanctions can only be appealed if the chapter in question believes them to be grossly disproportionate to the violation.

#### Section C - Appeal Decision

A unanimous decision must be reached by the Executive Board excluding the Vice President of Standards (or whomever served as the Chief Justice for the case). The Executive Board can uphold, reverse, or send the decision back to the Standards Board for another hearing. Appeal decisions cannot be appealed further.

#### Section D - Appeal Decision Period

The appeal will be heard by the Executive Board of the Interfraternity Council, minus the Vice President of Standards (or whomever served as the Chief Justice for the case) within (14) calendar days after the

appeal has been received. This period may only be modified in extenuating circumstances in which the Interfraternity Council President will notify the Chapter President of this change.

#### Section E - Additional Materials

Prior to or during the appeal hearing, the Executive Board may request additional statement(s) or materials from any involved parties. In this circumstance, the appeal decision period will be extended (7) calendar days from the date of the original appeal hearing.

### ARTICLE XII

#### Suspension of Member Fraternity Activities

##### Section A - Authority

The Executive Vice President shall have the authority to suspend any and all member fraternity activities, events, or functions, up to and including a full issuance of cease and desist, for a reasonable, but potentially indefinite, amount of time.

##### Section B - Reasons for Suspension

There must be some extenuating circumstance(s) that would require the Executive Vice President to suspend any member fraternity activities including, but not limited to:

1. It is deemed that the member fraternity continuing activities would put its members at significant physical, mental, or emotional risk
2. A Penn State university, IFC, or other investigation of the member fraternity is underway, and it is deemed that the chapter continuing operation would hinder such investigation
3. The member fraternity is non-compliant on regulations and requires more immediate action than the ordinary judicial process

##### Section C - Confirmation

The decision to suspend any member fraternity activities must be reviewed and confirmed by the *Chief Justice* of the Standards Board within five (5) business days of the issuance by the *Executive Vice President*. If it is not approved within the required time, or the decision is overturned by the *Chief Justice*, the member fraternity can immediately resume full activities until stated otherwise.

### ARTICLE XIII

#### Amendments

##### Section A - Right to Introduce Amendments

Any member fraternity in good standing or officer of the Interfraternity Council may introduce an amendment to the Interfraternity Council Standards Board Bylaws or any other adjoining documents.

##### Section B - Procedure for Proposing an Amendment

After the President's Council meeting in which an amendment is introduced, the President's Council shall hear any additional readings of the amendment for discussion and may vote on the amendment at any Presidents Council meeting after its introduction.

##### Section C - Adoption

An amendment that receives at least two thirds of a vote from the Presidents Council is adopted as a part of these Bylaws.

### ARTICLE XIV

## Code of Conduct

### IFC Code of Conduct:

- A. Members will understand the values and traditions passed down to them by their fraternity and will incorporate these values and traditions in everything that they do.
- B. Members will adhere to all academic integrity standards and strive for superior academic achievement.
- C. Members will respect the dignity of all; therefore, vowing to not physically, mentally, psychologically, or sexually abuse or harm any human being.
- D. Members must always protect the health and safety of all human beings.
- E. Members will respect property belonging to themselves and others; therefore, vowing to neither abuse nor tolerate the abuse of property.
- F. Members will meet all financial obligations in a timely matter.
- G. Members will not use or support the use of illegal drugs, nor will members misuse or support the misuse of alcohol.
- H. Members acknowledge that a clean and attractive environment fosters both physical and mental health, therefore, vow to properly maintain and clean their properties.
- I. Members will respect the surrounding State College community and residents.
- J. Members will not use social media to portray their fraternity or another in a negative light.
- I. Members will challenge each other to abide by these fraternal expectations at all times and will confront violators.

## APPENDIX I Document History

### Section A - Revisions

- 1. Revised February 16, 2020, by David McCarthy, Vice President of Standards, Interfraternity Council
- 2. Revised February 27, 2020, by David McCarthy, Vice President of Standards, Interfraternity Council
- 3. Revised January 25, 2023, by Brad Pedone, Vice President of Standards, Interfraternity Council

### Section B - Additions

### Section C - Amendments