



## **Greek Life**

### ***Thinking of Going Greek?***

Deciding whether or not to “go Greek”, or join a sorority during your college career is one of the many decisions that you face when you begin your tenure at any university. There are many reasons to make this choice, whether it is to meet new people, help out within the community or even to just have new experiences.

Virginia Tech Student Programs includes an office specifically geared towards Fraternity and Sorority life at Virginia Tech. This office works closely with all 59 of the sororities and fraternities found on campus, as well as with the Panhellenic Council, which serves as the governing body for the 13 sororities at Tech. The Panhellenic Council promotes scholarship, leadership, philanthropy, sisterhood and social values as reasons to choose a Greek lifestyle.

For further information on “Why Go Greek” including recruitment information and Frequently Asked Questions, visit the website at:  
<http://filebox.vt.edu/org/panhellenic/gogreek.htm>

### ***Glossary of Greek Terms***

A listing of useful terms for the non-sorority woman.

- Active: A sorority woman who has been formally initiated by her chapter
- Bid: A formal invitation to pledge a sorority or fraternity, issued by a sorority or fraternity.
- Chapter: The local group of a larger national organization, and designated by a special Greek letter name.
- Formal Recruitment: A series of events given by each sorority for the purpose of introduction to sorority life, scheduled by the Panhellenic Council.
- Fraternity: The name that applies to all Greek letter organizations and is characterized by a ritual, a pin, and a strong bond of sisterhood.
- Greek: A member of a sorority or fraternity.
- Initiation: The formal ceremony that brings the new members/pledges into full membership.
- Lavalier: A necklace with Greek letters attached to it. Sorority members may receive their sorority's lavalier at the time of pledging or after initiation.



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- Legacy: A prospective member whose grandmother, mother, or sister is an alumna of, or active in, a particular sorority. (The exact definition varies from one sorority to another.) A sorority is not obligated to pledge its legacies.
- New Member (Pledge): One who has been accepted as a probationary member of a sorority or fraternity. Sometimes referred to as a pledge. After a period of education about the sorority/fraternity and fulfilling specified requirements, she/he may be initiated.
- New Member Educator: The individual who is the liaison between the new members and the Chapter. This individual is responsible for implementing and monitoring the new member program and preparing the new members for initiation.
- Pledgeship: A period of education when a new member learns about the organization.
- Potential New Member: A college woman who is participating in formal or informal Recruitment.
- Quota: The number of women that a sorority may pledge during formal or informal Recruitment. A letter written by an alumna introducing and recommending a potential new member for membership.
- Recruitment: A function whereby undergraduates interested in a sorority or fraternity are able to meet with the members, learn more about the organization, and join a Greek organization.
- Recruitment Counselor ("Rho Gamma"): A sorority member who has given up her sorority association during Recruitment to assist the potential new members.

For an extended listing of terms visit the Virginia Tech Panhellenic Council website at :  
<http://filebox.vt.edu/org/panhellenic/>

## *Greek Life by the Numbers*

Inspiring reasons to go Greek...

- 43 of 50 of the nation's largest corporations are led by Greeks.
- 3/4 of Congress is Greek.
- 2/3 of all Presidential Cabinet members since 1900 have been Greek.
- 85 percent of Supreme Court Justices have been Greek since 1910.
- 3 is the number of U.S. Presidents that have not been Greek since the initiations of fraternities in 1825.
- 85 percent of the Chief Executives of the Fortune 500 belong to a Fraternity.
- 26 sororities are in place in the United States and Canada, with almost 3,000 chapters, and more than 2.5 million women in membership.
- 65 fraternities are in place in the United States and Canada with a total membership of over 4.5 million.



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- 7 million dollars are contributed to charities and social service agencies by fraternities each year.
- 1 million service hours are contributed to charities and social service agencies by fraternities each year.

### ***Sorority Women***

One of the best ways to decide if you are interested in joining a sorority is by hearing about other women and their experiences in Greek Life. Here is what some women in sororities at Virginia Tech had to say about their experiences with being a member of a sorority.

#### ***Real Sorority Women on...***

##### **...opportunity:**

“Delta Gamma had given me the self confidence to succeed in anything I do and provided me with the everlasting support to achieve my goals.”

##### **...sisterhood:**

“Before I got to college I always thought I would never find the type of friendship I had with my high school girlfriends...I thought 4 years was not a long enough time to establish that level of friendship but I can honestly say without reservations that the friendships I have made because of Alpha Phi will last me a lifetime...I really have found a family in Alpha Phi.

##### **...becoming a new member:**

“Every sorority is different in how they do the new member period, but in all cases it is one of the best experiences you’re supposed to have. In mine we have socials with every year (i.e. sophomore, junior, senior) to get to know the girls, get to know the history, start getting involved with projects, etc. Every week we get some little treat. The best part? Meeting a ton of girls who are just awesome. We are all different and that is one of the reasons I picked it [the sorority].”

##### **...stereotypes:**

“Everyone has a stereotype of a sorority girl. They think oh she’s blond, tan, sleeps around a lot, only eats salads, is not very smart and is all about her sorority. Granted there are girls out there like that, but that’s far from the truth.”

### ***The First Sorority***

The first sorority was created on May 15, 1851 at Wesleyan College in Macon, Georgia. Founded by Eugenia Tucker, Alpha Delta Pi is the oldest “secret society” in the world.



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Tucker began the society during her first year in attendance at Wesleyan College. She invited her best friends to join and help her establish the sorority. Tucker and friends laid the foundation for the first sorority around the principles of leadership, scholarship, service to others, and most importantly – sisterhood.

The establishment of Alpha Delta Pi allowed for the development of many more sororities in America. Currently ADPi has over 130 collegiate chapters, 150 alumnae associations and has enrolled over 182, 500 women since their inception.

For more information on America's first sorority visit the website dedicated to Alpha Delta Pi at: <http://www.alphadeltapi.org/>

### ***Sororities at Virginia Tech – Past and Present***

Fraternities and sororities were formally recognized at Virginia Tech in 1972. They have been in existence, however, since the university opened its doors. The university formally recognized eight sororities in 1972, the first being Delta Zeta.

Virginia Tech has one of the largest Greek systems in the country, being the 19th largest in the United States. Membership is ever increasing, with a 13 percent membership in the Fall of 2003.

For further details on Greek life at Virginia Tech see the article in Virginia Tech Magazine at: <http://www.vtmagazine.vt.edu/winter04/feature2.html>