**Virtual Chapter Engagement Guide**

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Fraternity and Sorority Life

Student Activities Office (SAO)

Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management

*Adapted from Florida State University,*

*Fraternity and Sorority Life*

*“Resources for Virtual Chapter Management”*

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# Introduction

In these uncertain times surrounded by the COVID-19 virus pandemic, it is important that we adapt to our current situations. Fraternities and sororities are no strangers to overcoming challenges and operating in this pandemic is yet another challenge that our communities can overcome. We hope that this Virtual Chapter Engagement document helps your chapter leadership maintain a strong sense of brotherhood and sisterhood, passion, and motivation.

Stay well,

Mrs. Jordan DiPalma, Coordinator

Fraternity and Sorority Life

Student Activities Office

North Dakota State University

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# Meetings

*Tools: Teams (provided through NDSU), Zoom, Skype*

Holding regular meetings with chapter members, executive board members, and officers/committees are a great way to keep members engaged and provide a sense of normalcy. Due to the nature of virtual meetings it is not necessary to conduct formal chapter meetings/ritual. However, members should understand the importance of continuing efforts on initiatives that can be conducted virtually.

During meetings, the chairperson should allow members/attendees to share how they are dealing with situations associated with the coronavirus. Some members may be uncomfortable sharing if they have a personal situation relating to the virus, but it is important to make it clear that chapter leadership is there to support members.

Specific officers can also conduct their responsibilities virtually. Your Scholarship chairperson, Chaplain, New Member Educator, and even your recruitment chairperson are just a few examples of functions that can continue virtually!

NDSU offers a Zoom license to student organizations at a discounted price. Email [kim.bruemmer@ndsu.edu](mailto:kim.bruemmer@ndsu.edu) for more information.

Some ideas from Phired Up are listed below:

* Schedule a weekly video call to keep in touch with members. You can provide discussion questions in advance, host a specific topic, or just offer a “we’re here to listen” time.
* Setup virtual study times. You can host calls for specific subjects or general help.
* Assign weekly “outreach buddies/groups” who are challenged to connect with one another virtually for at least one hour during the week.
* Practice your recruitment conversation skills via individual phone or video calls. Create a list of open-ended questions to ask and stories to share.
* Conduct a virtual check-in. Post three to five statements or create a poll and have members like/select how they are feeling. For example, “I’m Great!”, “I’m Mehh”, “I’m Not So Good”. Follow up with members who may not be feeling great.
* Attend (or host!) an online workout class as a group.
* Host a virtual discussion on specific topics. These can be chapter related or not but should encourage deeper conversations.
* Check in on new members. Have your New Member Educator or other executive board member check in individually or in a group setting with new members.

# Member Engagement

*Tools: Teams, Zoom, Skype, FaceTime, social media, online programs, streaming services*

Even though the settings of your organizations have changed drastically, many officers and committees that would normally plan in-person events/activities may also be able to plan virtual events.

Some ideas from Phired Up are listed below:

* Create a “Movie Watch Party.” Pick a movie, start it at the same time and have a video or messaging group to discuss, quote, and share your favorite parts.
* Create a chapter bingo board. Have members compete to do a collection of tasks to create a bingo or fill in their whole board to win a prize. (e.g. Log 10 study hours, post a photo in letters on social media, post on social media what you are thankful for, have one facetime coffee date with another member, etc.)
* Get a group together to play an online board game.
* Ask each member to create a virtual memory board that visually shows why their chapter is important to them. Share your boards with each other.
* Wear your letters! You may not be on campus, but you can still show your fraternity/sorority pride. Designate a day to wear letters and post on lnstagram using a specific #hashtag.
* Craft live! Watch a bob ross painting video together, learn to hand weave, or find other virtual classes to create a craft together.
* Teach a skill. Have a member teach everyone else a skill they have on a live video. Record the video to share with those who couldn’t attend.
* Start a Book Club. Pick a developmental book and a for-fun book to read as a group. Designate some intervals to have discussions.
* Post a daily inspirational quote for that day in your group chat.
* Curate a group playlist, jump on video, and have a dance party.
* Learn about each other. Have members showcase their hometowns by doing a social media highlight. You can even do hometown tours on a private channel or public social media.
* Play multiplayer games together online (e.g. Minecraft, fortnite, MarioKart etc.) and have a Discord channel while playing.
* Find an online course to take together. Check out places like Udemy, Course, or LinkedIn.
* Attend virtual group experiences together such as yoga, church, or performances.
* Host a daily meditation session to do together.
* Share a meal together. Cook the same dish together over video or gather for dinner time with whatever you are eating in a video chat.
* Host a Bible/Religious document study over a video chat.
* Host an MTV Cribs episode: Have members show their houses and rooms on a video call.
* Host a TikTok dance class or a TikTok dance challenge.
* Post a picture of one member per day (either on social media or in a chapter chat) and have members write what they love about that member.

# Communication

It is important to use existing forms of communication with chapter members. Using a different format of communication may make members less comfortable or willing to participate in conversation as they normally would. If you find that chapter members are not communicating with the rest of the chapter, consider reaching out to their big brother/sister or a member they are close with to help facilitate a conversation. You can also set up communication pairings in which two members are randomly paired up by the brotherhood or sisterhood chairperson to have a conversation or participate in an activity.

It is also important that when you communicate any “official” information that you are sure that the information is accurate. It’s okay to tell a member that you don’t know something instead of providing untrue or partial information. If you are unsure, be sure to reach out to our office or to your advisors!

# Operations

## Officers

The chapter's executive board should continue to meet regularly via Zoom or other video conferencing software. Chapters are encouraged to establish a set time that works around every officer's schedule and make sure everyone attends from week to week. Utilize other communication platforms in between video meetings.

Chapter Presidents and Vice Presidents are encouraged to meet with each executive board officer to discuss plan for completing position duties virtually for this semester while planning for upcoming semesters.

If any chapter officers will transition during spring 2020, consider modifying transition documents or creating transition documents for future officers. Also be sure to host several virtual officer transition meetings.

## Chapter Management and Planning

Hosting bylaws revision meetings or officer elections virtually may be unchartered territory for most, but it can still be done effectively. Before asking chapter members to vote on a topic, provide all necessary information at least 3 days before. Then, officers can use Google Forms, Engage, Zoom polls or GroupMe to vote confidentially. You can also reach out to your inter/national organization to see if they have any programs like OmegaOne or Slack set up for chapters to use.

Recruitment is currently scheduled to occur in-person. Chapters should continue to hold their planning meetings to prepare for new members in fall of 2020. Use this time to clean up your processes and the skills necessary for your chapter to have a successful recruitment period. Consider using Zoom to host recruitment training programs with your chapter.

Think about what things you always wish you had time to do, but never have the time to do so during the semester. Working on transition documents, brainstorming bylaws revisions, updating your chapter’s social media accounts and website, and cleaning up chapter files are all things that can now be more feasible. Also check in with your Awards chairperson to make sure that any applicable documents have been sent in to your inter/national headquarters.

Now is more important than ever to keep in close contact with your chapter advisors. Reach out to your alumni board, faculty advisor, and inter/national headquarters contact(s) to check-in with them. They will give you useful information that you may have not known or thought about!

## Standards

Just because our chapters aren’t on campus anymore doesn’t mean we still can’t hold our members accountable! Make sure that standards committees are still up-and-running.

It is important to note that some chapter members may have chosen to stay in their off-campus residence. Make sure that these members are practicing social distancing and not interacting with other students at different residences. It is our responsibility to continue to uphold the image of our community in school in our area.

# Philanthropy Events

Currently the state of North Dakota is in the Green/Low Risk category in the ND Smart Restart Guide. As you and your philanthropy chair plans the fall semester, it is important to plan to meet the Yellow/Moderate Risk and Green/Low Risk categories to ensure safety of members and guests. This will also ensure your event can still take place if the state moves back a category.

## Feeds

Each event must follow the capacity specifications listed in the ND Smart Restart Guide. Each feed must have an attendance list with sign done via myNDSU for contact tracing purposes. This list must be emailed to the Coordinator for Fraternity and Sorority Life no later than 24 hours after the event.

All events with food present and/or served must follow the Restaurant and Bar Guidelines found in the ND Smart Restart Guide. Below are the guidelines for Yellow and Green categories:

Physical Distancing Guidelines

* Yellow/Moderate Risk Level:
  + Allow for 6 feet of spacing between groups: increase table spacing by removing tables, marking tables closed or provide a physical barrier between tables. Back to back booth seating is allowed.
  + Waiting areas (indoor or outdoor) should be marked so physical distancing standards are met.
  + Tables should be limited to 10 people per table (existing group, for example family).
* Green/Low Risk Level:
  + Yellow protocols in addition to the following:
    - Tables can seat more than 10 if part of an existing group, for example family. Maintain distancing between tables.

Food Handling Guidelines

* Yellow/Moderate Risk Level:
  + All self-service stations are allowed as long as all food is pre-packaged into the appropriate serving
  + Buffet stations are allowed as long as staff is serving food with masks and gloves
    - Ensure the serving utensils are replaced and/or sanitized every 4 hours

Hygiene and Cleaning

* Yellow/Moderate Risk Level:
  + Drink refills should not be allowed unless served in a clean unused glass or cup.
  + Recommend contactless payment options or electronic payment devices that can be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
  + Beverage stations that are not touch free should be cleaned after each use.
  + Disposable cups, straws and utensils should be handled by staff only and served to the customer, be individually wrapped or dispensed to prevent contamination by the customer.
  + Bar straws and coffee stir sticks should only be handled by staff and are served in drinks to customers or individually wrapped.
  + Self-service condiments should be eliminated and provided by request in single use or disposable containers.
* Green/Low Risk Level:
  + Follow all Yellow/Moderate Risk protocols

## Talent Shows or Pageants

All theaters, Century and Festival are operating at the following capacities:

* Yellow/Moderate risk: 50% max capacity with social distancing and alternating rows
* Green/Low risk: 65% max capacity with social distancing and alternating rows

Those who are in the show and backstage must follow social distancing guidelines as much as possible. If that is not possible, all participating members must wear a face mask.

Consider still having the show in person with a live stream component. Consider moving ticket sales to an all online format. Virtual tickets could be sold with the link and information to watch online to ensure the information would not be freely shared.

## Fundraising

Be sure to complete a fundraising form for any philanthropy event. Online collection of funds are allowed to be accommodating during this time.

Facebook, Instagram, and other social media platforms have a donate button you are able to add to organization and business pages to collect donations.

Get creative with fundraising events by doing online silent auctions, online fundraising campaigns, give aways, or partner with an online company, such as Ever Row, to sell merchandise to receive a percentage of the sales.

See if local businesses will still do dine to donate events with carry out options as well.

# Events

## Formals

Per the ND Smart Restart Guide, there cannot be any dance floors or dancing at any special event and/or large gathering as social distancing cannot be garaunteed.

Dinners, awards, and other ceremonies can take place as long as the social gathering and distance and food safety guidelines are followed.

Ensure that an ARMA is still completed for any event that will have alcohol present.

Each formal event must have a guest list turned in to the Coordinator for Fraternity and Sorority Life no later than 24 hours after the event has taken place for contact tracing purposes.

## Brotherhoods & Sisterhoods

Ensure that all social distancing and gathering protocol is met when hosting a brotherhood or sisterhood.

Explore options for hosting smaller brotherhoods or sisterhoods with a group or team of members throughout the semester or virtual alternatives.

Have a sign or attendance sheet for contact tracing purposes. This does not need to be turned in to the Coordinator for Fraternity and Sorority Life but should be easily accessible should it be requested.

## Socials with other chapters/organizations

Ensure that all social distancing and gathering protocol is met when hosting a brotherhood or sisterhood.

Explore options for hosting smaller events or have rotations of the event with a group or team of members throughout the semester or virtual alternatives.

Have a sign or attendance sheet for contact tracing purposes. This does not need to be turned in to the Coordinator for Fraternity and Sorority Life but should be easily accessible should it be requested.

# Mental Health & Wellness

Have your Standards or Mental Health chairperson engage with members during this time. If you don’t have a designated chapter officer for mental health and wellness, now is the time to facilitate the creation of that position and any supporting documents.

Consider having an officer conduct a mental health check in. Post three to five statements or create a poll and have members like/select how they are feeling. For example, “I’m Great!”, “I’m Mehh”, “I’m Not So Good”. Follow up with members who may not be feeling great.

Activity, or lack thereof, can also have an effect on a member’s mental health. You can also have your intramurals/Greek Week chairperson or other member host their own workout via Zoom. Use part of their budget to purchase online classes or use stream some for free!

For more information about mental health and wellness resources at NDSU, please visit <https://www.ndsu.edu/counseling/>.

*Document Sources:*

<https://fsl.fsu.edu/current-members/resources-virtual-chapter-management>

<https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/5bedc8521b35278d680e478b/5e7bc248be9fb24d9419ecca_44%20Ways%20to%20Foster%20Brotherhood%20&%20Sisterhood%20Virtually%20(Phired%20Up%20&%20TechniPhi%20FREE%20RESOURCE).pdf>