



Zach Greenberg &lt;zach.greenberg@thefire.org&gt;

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## UCSB Response to FIRE Letter

1 message

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**Nancy Hamill (Campus Staff)** <Nancy.Hamill@ucop.edu>  
To: Zach Greenberg <zach.greenberg@thefire.org>

Thu, May 4, 2023 at 7:50 PM

Mr. Greenberg,

I am Chief Campus Counsel for UC Santa Barbara. I appreciate your patience as you awaited the University's response to your letter addressed to Chancellor Yang dated March 21, 2023.

Thank you for your letter expressing concern about the effects of UCSB's requirements for recognition of social Greek-lettered fraternities and sororities. The University requirements with respect to Greek-lettered organizations participating in activities with formerly recognized fraternities and sororities organizations that have lost their good standing are requirements which are unrelated to the suppression of ideas. Such requirements are an appropriate method of regulating conduct to promote and enhance the health and safety of our campus community consistent with Constitutional standards - including those cited in your letter.

Please know that it is a much narrower set of organizations whose relationships are at issue than might have initially appeared in your reading of the policy. The references to "organization" and "unrecognized" found in Section E.2 of the policy are intended to only apply to once recognized Greek-letter organizations. Unrecognized pertains to those Greeks which fall out of good standing due to various infractions – such as hazing, underage drinking, Title IX violations, etc... The language you question is only found in the "Statement of Relationship Between the University of California Santa Barbara and Social Fraternities and Sororities". In particular, the Statement says, "This Statement is intended to highlight information pertinent to fraternities and sororities and further define the relationship between the University and social fraternities and sororities that are recognized at UC Santa Barbara." It becomes more clear when the language is viewed in the context of the broader policy statement that "organization" and "unrecognized" only pertain to social fraternities and sororities that had once been recognized by the University. It is not intended to address non-Greek-lettered organizations such as the Rotary club as referenced in your letter. In addition, the policy does not preclude individual friendships, just formal organizational co-sponsorship and organizational support (through group attendance) of the activities of these types of unrecognized groups.

Please note that Greek lettered organizations are only placed on probation, become unrecognized, or are potentially terminated when there has been serious misconduct on the part of the organization which compromises the health and safety of our campus community. When a Greek lettered organization loses its status of good standing, they lose the privilege of affiliating with those Greek lettered organizations which have upheld and abided by the code of conduct. There must be accountability for those organizations which refuse to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the code of conduct and the safety standards of our community. This policy is designed to prevent a formerly recognized fraternity which lost its recognition due to severe misconduct establishing itself as a "colony" without University recognition and then wanting to be able to receive the benefits of recognition so that they can continue to have events with those fraternities and sororities that remain in good standing and are recognized by the University. To otherwise allow such fallen organizations to continue to affiliate with those who abide by the code of conduct would undermine the integrity of the Greek system and allow them to escape accountability for their misconduct thereby compromising the safety and well-being of our campus.

We appreciate FIRE's attentiveness to the protection of Constitutionally protected association and expression and the University will bear your concerns in mind when it does its next policy revision review to make it more clear that "organization" for purposes of Section E.2 is meant to relate to Greek-lettered organizations that were once recognized by the University. Thank you for sharing your concerns.

Sincerely,

## **Nancy Greenan Hamill**

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