

reek to Me

1975, nine nationally recognized sororities located in College Station. Alpha Delta Pi, Alpha Gamma Delta, Alpha Phi, Chi Omega, Delta Zeta, Kappa Alpha Theta, Kappa Kappa Gamma, Phi Mu and Zeta Tau Alpha became the first to introduce A&M to the wonderful world of sororities.

The governing body for local sororities is the College Station Collegiate Panhellenic Association, which at this time has not applied for University recognition. Panhellenic has

stricter rules than the IFC concerning the behavior of its member organizations. For instance, drinking is prohibited at most sorority functions and hazing of any sort is forbidden.

Both fraternities and sororities, falling under the category of social organizations, help members learn to meet people and to work in groups, IFC President Wes Williams says.

"Fraternities provide a surrounding for the future growth of the individual," he says. "They provide a social outlet at school and offer a relief from the academics. When we come out of high school, we are still not fully matured. Fraternities offer a way to further the maturing process."

Williams says that fraternities, based on a set of morals and ethics, help one develop one's own ideals and goals.

He also says that academics are just as important to those

involved in the Greek system as they are to those not involved, since a certain grade point ratio must be maintained.

In fact, a United States Government study shows that 71 percent of all fraternity men graduate, while just over 50 percent of non-fraternity men graduate.

Sororities stress the same qualities and high standards as fraternities, emphasizing leadership, sisterhood, community awareness and

\$\$\$ The Cost of Going Greek at A&M \$\$\$

One of the strongest objections to fraternities and sororities at Texas A&M University is represented by the motto "Rent a friend: Join a Frat," meaning that members of Greek organizations must pay money to have friends.

It is not within the powers of this publication to decide whether or not paying money to join a Greek organization can guarantee one friends. However, we can present you, our readers, with a comprehensive survey of the costs involved in Greek organizations.

Expenses for fraternities and sororities depend on the individual organization. These costs — ranging from minimal to quite expensive — also fluctuate with respect to the amount each individual is willing to pay when it comes to optional expenses.

The average cost for the first year of sorority membership here is \$900, ranking A&M as the second most expensive in the state (behind the University of Texas-Austin), according to the Houston Alumnae Panhellenic. The average yearly cost thereafter for A&M sorority members is \$520.

The major expense each fraternity and sorority member must pay is dues. Depending on the organization, these dues are paid either monthly or by the semester.

Housing is a determining factor in the amount of dues paid, mainly in the case of sororities. Nine of the 11

sororities have their own houses and because house dwellers pay rent in addition to dues, their dues are lower.

For sorority members, the cost of dues for members living in the house averages \$300 a semester, while members not living in the house pay an average of \$350 a semester.

One of the sororities with the most expensive dues is Alpha Chi Omega, whose members pay \$425 a semester. Alpha Chi Omega is one of the two University recognized sororities without a house.

Kappa Kappa Gamma also has high dues, with its members paying \$475 each semester.

Fraternity members' dues are more commonly paid by the month. Since only a rough half of the University recognized fraternities have their own houses, a standard amount is usually charged for dues.

The average amount for dues runs about \$60 a month. The number of months per semester in which fraternity members must pay varies with each individual organization.

Phi Gamma Delta, Sigma Alpha Epsilon and Sigma Phi Epsilon have the highest dues, with members paying between \$70 and \$85 a month.

The fraternity with the lowest dues is Kappa Alpha. However, members of this organization must also pay \$200 per semester for social assessments. The cost of all T-shirts

and all other paraphernalia which each member wants to buy is taken from this fund. In other fraternities, members simply spend their own money on such things.

The most expensive time in a fraternity or sorority member's Greek career is pledgship. Each organization charges their new members, called pledges, a fee which is usually determined by their national body, while some organizations also tack on fees which goes towards the local chapter. These fees pay for pledge retreats, for the various folders of information and for other activities. Also, some organizations also charge a one-time initiation fee. These pledge fees are usually paid in addition to the regular dues.

New fraternity members on the average pay \$170 in fees for their pledgship, while the average new sorority member pays \$265. The pledgship customarily lasts one semester.

Finally, fraternity and sorority members must pay for all the hidden extras involved in Greek organizations. Although the cost of all mixers and some other activities are covered through dues, date parties and formals must be paid for separately. The costs for these functions can vary from a few dollars, which usually pays for the date's expenses, to more than \$50 for a

formal event, which pays for hall rental, dinner and possibly bus rental, if the event is out of town.

These functions can usually be remembered by T-shirts, sweatshirts, beach towels, beverage tumblers and party pics which are printed with slogans and advertisements recording the functions. Buying this paraphernalia is left up to the individuals in most organizations, so that members can spend as little or much money as they want.

Some people believe that the costs involved in the membership of a Greek organization separate those who can afford more and those who can't. However, Ariel Tarrago, rush chairman for Interfraternity Council, says fraternities and sororities simply provide an alternative way for college students to spend their money.

"Join a frat, rent a friend," Tarrago scoffs. "This statement is a misconception. There are two sides to a fraternity — the business aspect and the brotherhood aspect. Once you're in a fraternity, you have a set of close friends who will last you the rest of your life. This is really there.

"On the other hand, when you have these big parties, formals and a house, you have to pay for these with dues. The dorms have their activity fees to pay, but does that mean that if you live in a dorm you're renting a friend when you pay an activity fee?" — with contribution from Lauren Naylor.