



Resolved to Educate

Educational support for: Unanimous Agreement VIII. Agreement on Questionnaires

The National Panhellenic Conference (NPC) is charged with advocating on behalf of our 26 member organizations and acts in ways that protect the sovereign rights of our member organizations and the individual rights of members. As such, the NPC member organizations have adopted a Unanimous Agreement regarding questionnaires in order to protect individual and group freedom of association rights and the right to privacy.

Unanimous Agreement VIII. Agreement on Questionnaires

Questionnaires, oral and written, shall not be answered until they have been reviewed by the NPC office staff and research subject matter experts. The necessary information will then be released to the member organizations to provide a coordinated response that protects individual and group freedom of association and the right to privacy.

To uphold this Unanimous Agreement, the NPC Research Committee serves an institutional review board (IRB) to review research proposals and questionnaires/surveys on behalf of NPC and its member organizations to protect the rights, welfare and privacy of organizations and members. **As a result, any research proposal to study undergraduate women who are members of NPC sororities shall be submitted to the NPC office for review prior to any research being conducted to ensure the research is aligned with ethical best practices for data collection and NPC's research priorities.**

Please also note, per Unanimous Agreement II. Jurisdiction of Panhellenic Associations, at no point may Panhellenics survey chapters or members to collect data that reflects a chapter's internal information or requires documents that are considered confidential material regarding the chapter's internal operations. Panhellenics also have *no authority* to make responding to questionnaires/surveys mandatory for chapters or individual members or to otherwise compel chapters or individual members to respond. Participation points for questionnaire/survey completion should also not be awarded.

For questionnaires/surveys related to a campus speaker's preparation for a programming event or community-wide education, College Panhellenics should work with the speaker to protect chapter and member privacy and ensure responses cannot be tracked back to an individual chapter or member.

NPC member organizations, as sovereign entities, *always* retain the right to counsel their members whether it is appropriate to respond, regardless of whether the NPC office and/or its research subject matter experts have reviewed a research proposal or questionnaire/survey.

Note: The terms "questionnaire" and "survey" are used interchangeably in this document.

When is NPC review needed?

- The proposal is from a campus-based researcher who is proposing to study undergraduate members of NPC sororities.
- A questionnaire will be distributed as part of a student's requirement toward academic degree completion (e.g., doctoral research).
- The research results, whether qualitative or quantitative, are intended for scholarly publication and/or any kind of public distribution.
- A private researcher/research firm or other outside organization (e.g., a professional organization) wants to study undergraduate members of NPC sororities.

When is NPC review unnecessary?

- The college/university has contracted with a research firm to survey students and/or members.
- The College Panhellenic is using a survey to evaluate Panhellenic operations, such as recruitment or programming (e.g., marketing assessment, membership recruitment evaluation and assessment, recruitment styles assessment).
- A student/class project includes a survey that will not be published broadly or as scholarly research.
- The host institution is surveying sorority members in their role as students of the college/university (e.g., a questionnaire gauging interest in certain types of programming related to campus issues).

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Submitting a Proposal to NPC

NPC welcomes proposals from prospective researchers seeking to enhance the understanding of issues facing collegiate women and broaden the body of knowledge about this population. **Any research proposal to study undergraduate women who are members of NPC sororities shall be submitted to the NPC office for review prior to any research being conducted.**

When submitting a proposal, a prospective researcher should refer to the [NPC Research Process](#) on the NPC website for the criteria and requirements of what to submit as well as the current contact in the NPC office.

The NPC office and research subject matter experts (SMEs) will review the proposal and any related questionnaire(s) to ensure protection of individual and group freedom of association and the right to privacy.

Upon completing the review, the NPC office will provide a response to the researcher. Researchers will be reminded participation is purely voluntary and not all member organizations (or their members) may wish to participate, even after NPC's review. NPC typically will not be able to help researchers identify research subjects. NPC also cannot distribute questionnaires to sorority members on behalf of the researcher.

In addition to responding to the researcher, NPC will notify the chief panhellenic officer of the NPC member organizations on the campus(es) where the research will take place that NPC has reviewed the research and the recommendation. The chief panhellenic officer will share that information with her organization as appropriate.

If all criteria are submitted with the original proposal, the timeline for review and response is typically three weeks.

Examples of research to submit to NPC for review:

- A doctoral candidate has proposed a qualitative study examining an aspect of the character development of undergraduate sorority women.
- A master's student has a proposal focusing on specific measures of success within part or whole of a sorority community on a campus.
- A professional organization has proposed a quantitative study measuring the efficacy of a sorority-related process.
- An outside research firm has a proposal to study the beliefs or behaviors of undergraduate sorority women.

Examples of what not to submit to NPC for review:

- The college/university has developed (or has paid an outside firm to develop) a questionnaire that will be distributed to the entire sorority community.
- A campus speaker wishes to use a survey to assess sorority members' interest in or knowledge of the topic.
- The campus or College Panhellenic is using a data collection instrument based on demographic information the campus already has and that the College Panhellenic intends to use for marketing purposes (e.g., to highlight academic success within the sorority community or the number of first-generation students).