

Resolution 7.35: Recommended Housing Policy Changes Concerning Greek Organizations

Sponsors: Nicole Updegrove '14 (Principal), Nicole Softness '14, Andrew Trexler '14, Bruno Machiavelo '16, Lily Herman '16, Aidan Martinez '17, Danny Blinderman '14, Mari Jarris '14, Chloe Murtagh '15, Lynn Ma '16, Ryden Nelson '16, Alton Wang '16

With support of: Syed Ali '13, Sam Ebb '13, Zach Malter '13

Affirming the role of the Wesleyan Student Assembly (WSA) as the representative student legislative and deliberative body of Wesleyan University,

Recognizing the efforts of Greek organizations, the Inter-Greek Council, and community members to push for changes that will reduce rates of sexual assault at Wesleyan,

Asserting that these efforts do not and cannot resolve fundamental gender inequalities created by all-male fraternity houses as student spaces on campus,

Asserting furthermore that these efforts do not and cannot combat the existence of fraternity houses as centers of sexual violence and rape culture,

Recognizing that Wesleyan University has allowed the continued existence of the three Greek fraternity houses with historical precedent on campus,

Noting that Wesleyan's all-male residential fraternities are housed as University-recognized Program Houses within three of the largest and most optimal social spaces for evening events, and that Wesleyan's sole sorority has been denied a Program House,

Recognizing that Wesleyan University currently forbids any expansion of residential Greek life,

Recognizing that Wesleyan University has, in the past, disallowed Greek houses that created unsafe spaces for the student community,

Recognizing the immense influence that residential fraternities play in the social life on campus because of the spaces they control,

Asserting that the residential fraternities have not taken the leadership roles necessary to prioritize consent, safety, or community well-being in their spaces,

Emphasizing that all-male Greek organizations have *not* fully reflected progressive values around gender and consent, and have engendered high rates of sexual assault, hazing, and binge drinking,

Voicing our alarm at the University's continued support for patriarchal institutions that engender particularly high rates of dangerous and violent behavior,

Voicing further alarm at the continued awarding of program-housing status to residential fraternities that categorically exclude non-male students from membership and all of the privileges granted therein,

Acknowledging the existence and destructive power of rape culture throughout Wesleyan's campus,

Acknowledging that sexual assault and rape culture occur in every space and every group,

Further acknowledging that no one solution can solve the problems of rape culture and sexual violence on Wesleyan's campus,

Pointing to the reinforced rape culture that proliferates in the institutional structures of fraternities,

Understanding the need to take action that directly addresses the institutional structure of the exclusionary, unsafe spaces fostered by fraternities,

Acknowledging the right for these and other organizations to assemble with whatever form or membership they choose without University sponsorship,

Asserting equally strongly that the University has a right and an obligation to ensure student safety and equity in all University-condoned spaces,

Asserting that the University's granting of program house status to all-male fraternities is a direct condonation of a type of ideological and physical violence seen at higher levels here than anywhere else on campus,

Aspiring to increase gender parity, make all campus spaces safer and more equitable, and change campus culture not only within Greek spaces and organizations but across all of Wesleyan's campus,

Therefore, be it resolved that the Wesleyan Student Assembly:

1. Demands that the Wesleyan administration create and enforce new policy removing program-housing status from male-exclusive Greek houses;
2. Calls upon the Wesleyan administration to renew program-housing status to any currently housed fraternity that, by the end of Fall 2014, becomes co-educational in constitution and demonstrates a clear and swift plan of action to become substantively in membership and residence, beginning with an initial co-educated pledge class in Spring 2015;
3. Calls upon the Wesleyan administration to establish and hire a Greek Life Coordinator by the start of Fall 2014 to assist in the careful and safe facilitation of these changes;
4. Insists that the Wesleyan administration allow the continued and uninterrupted existence of all Greek societies, regardless of gender composition, while removing support for all-male Greek control of *spaces*;
5. Demands that Greek organizations and all community members with ownership of spaces take responsibility for ensuring the safety and equity of all students;
6. Supports the University's call for all Greek residences to grant Public Safety officers full access to their houses;

7. Supports all initiatives named in the Inter-Greek Council position statement, including:
 1. Bystander intervention training and consent training for all pledges and members,
 2. Social host training for all house residents,
 3. Diligent party patrolling to deter and prevent aggressive sexual behavior
 4. Charging all Greek residents with the responsibility of maintaining safe events,
 5. Use of Greek spaces for consent education, bystander intervention, and other social justice issues,
 6. Commitment to changing the way Greek organizations interact with the Wesleyan community;
8. Calls upon the Wesleyan administration to award greater recognition and guidance to the Inter-Greek Council for the purpose of greater communication and collaboration with and between Greek organizations on campus.
9. Calls upon the Wesleyan Student Assembly and Wesleyan administration to immediately examine all policies regarding alcohol use and social events in different campus spaces with attention to how they impact student safety, well-being, gender, and student-to-student power dynamics;
10. Calls upon all Wesleyan community members, be they students, faculty, alumni, or staff, to fight against vestiges of male privilege, sexual assault, silencing, and victim-blaming in our community;
11. Resolves to remain actively seized of the matter and to take additional steps to address sexual violence at Wesleyan.

[Introduced 6th April 2014 / Adopted 20th April 2014]

Addendum: Additional Recommendations for the Implementation of Co-Education

In the case of co-education:

1. Substantive co-education requires a minimum involvement of at least 30% non-male students in membership and residence. Fraternities should reach this level within three semesters of pledging non-male students.
2. The gender balance in membership is anticipated and expected to oscillate over time.
3. Newly co-educated fraternities should pursue policy changes used at other co-educational Greek organizations, such as policies against sexual contact between members and pledges, greater involvement of faculty, the establishment of emotional support officers, and the establishment of risk management officers.
4. Co-educating fraternities should actively recruit and pledge *upperclassmen* non-male students in initial pledge classes to decrease power differentials between male and non-male members.
5. The onus of attracting and retaining non-male members falls on the fraternities themselves. Fraternities that fail to attract and retain non-male members should lose program-housing status.
6. The University should consider requiring admission of additional non-male boarders in the previously male spaces to build momentum for non-male involvement.
7. The University should be held responsible for supporting these organizations and their new members through this tumultuous change.
8. The University must establish a point person, whether a Greek Life Coordinator or some other person, to assist in co-education and other policy changes.
9. The University should actively and regularly reach out to non-male pledges, residents, and members in the initial years of co-education to ensure their safety, well-being, contentment, and full membership in said fraternities.
10. The University must reconsider alcohol policies, which, though written in a gender-neutral way, ultimately have very gendered implications on this campus.

In the case of lost program-housing status:

1. While these houses are unaffiliated with the University, students should not be permitted to live or host parties in these houses.
2. Wesleyan University should make every reasonable effort to acquire these houses.
3. If acquired, these houses should remain student-run residential and social spaces.
4. If acquired, these houses should be occupied by student groups that will run large, open events that are appealing to the whole student body.