

PREFERENCE DAY PRIMER



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Potential Members,

Recruitment can be a stressful and confusing time, especially when it comes to making your final preferences of which sororities you would most like to join. Many times, people are confused about exactly what to do and how the process works. If you're one of those, then this booklet is for you! This guide is designed to help you understand the mechanics of making your choices and how you can be affected by the choices that you make. Hopefully, this will help un-muddy those waters so that you can submit your preference choices with confidence and certainty about your choices. Above all, remember to keep an open mind in regard to the sororities. Don't worry about what anyone else thinks. Just make the choices that you believe are right for you. You are the one who will be impacted by them. Good luck!

Before discussing the actual mechanics of preference card signing, let's define some of the terms...

Acceptance Agreement: The acceptance agreement is found on the bottom of the preference card. It is a binding agreement reminding potential members of the policies of preferential bid matching and bid acceptance, most importantly the calendar year rule, ISP, and IDP. The potential member must sign it in order to participate in the preferential bid matching process.

Bid: Offer to join a sorority

Calendar Year Rule: Under the calendar year rule, if someone receives a bid through preferential bid matching and immediately declines their bid, she may not pledge another sorority for one calendar year. If someone receives and immediately declines a bid through Snap Bidding or Continuous Open Bidding, she is not held to this rule. However, if a potential member receives a bid and accepts it, then later declines her bid, she will be held to the calendar year rule, regardless of how the bid was offered. The only exception to the calendar year rule is that a woman may re-pledge the same sorority within one calendar year. If a woman has been initiated into a sorority and resigns her membership, she may never join another sorority.

Calendar Year: A calendar year is defined as the time period corresponding to the time that the bid was originally offered. For example, if a woman receives a bid through Fall Formal Recruitment, but turns it in four weeks later, she doesn't have to wait 365 days. She just needs to wait until the following Fall Formal Recruitment.

Continuous Open Bidding: If bids have already been distributed and a sorority still has spaces to fill, they may offer bids through Continuous Open Bidding

Intentional Double Preference (IDP): When someone attends three parties for preference round and lists only two in her preferences. Some people incorrectly refer to this as 'suicide.' It can lower a woman's chances of receiving a bid, but it removes the chance that she will receive a bid from a sorority she would not join and being bound to the calendar year rule.

Intentional Single Preference (ISP): When someone attends two or more parties for the preference round and lists only one on her preference card. Some people incorrectly refer to this as 'suicide.' It can lower a woman's chances of receiving a bid, but it removes the chance of a potential member receiving a bid from a sorority she would not join and being bound to the calendar year rule.

Maximizing Your Options: If someone selects in her preferences every sorority whose preference party she attended, she has maximized her options. This is because she has said that she would join any of those sororities possibly available to her. If someone selects fewer sororities than the choices she has, she has not maximized her options because she has chosen on her own to narrow down the options available to her.

New Member: Once someone has accepted a bid, but not been initiated, she is a new member.

Pi Chi: The potential member's recruitment group leader. She is there to counsel the potential member and often acts as an intermediary between Panhellenic and the potential new member. Pi Chis are only active for Fall Formal Recruitment.

Pledge: This is the promise that a new member makes when she joins a sorority. It is not the term for the person who has made the promise. She is a new member.

Potential Member: The women participating in recruitment and seeking possible membership in a sorority.

Preferential Bid Matching: The process by which potential members indicate preference rankings of sororities, which are matched with information from sororities in order to place women in sororities.

Preference Screen: It's the screen you will complete and submit in order to indicate your preference regarding the sororities whose parties you attended for the preference round. It looks similar to the accept/regret/withdraw screens from earlier rounds.

Preference Round: The final round of recruitment parties. On this day, you will attend a maximum of three. You must attend every party on your schedule.

Snap Bidding: If a sorority has spaces to fill and bids have not yet gone out, they may offer snap bids to those women who participated in recruitment but did not receive a bid through regular preference bid matching, as long as they did not indicate an intentional double or single preference. If a snap bid is being offered, the potential member's Pi Chi will be brought in to serve as an intermediary. Snap bid are very rare. **Of the 6,700 bids Auburn Panhellenic matched from 2009-2015, only 2 were snap bids.**

Withdrawal: If a woman decides she no longer wants to participate in recruitment, she may withdraw. Her last chance to withdraw is before submitting her final preferences on the last day of recruitment. If a woman submits final preferences, she may not withdraw. Even if she chooses not to attend bid day, she will be held to the calendar year rule if she is matched with a sorority.

How it works when...

...you have attended **three** preference parties...

...and you place all *three* choices on your preference list...

You have maximized your options. Hopefully, you will receive a bid from one of those three. Remember you may only list the sororities whose preference parties you attended. If you receive a bid from anyone you have indicated a preference to at any place in your preference submission, you will be held to the calendar year rule, which means you can't join another sorority (**including Sigma Sigma Sigma**) until next fall recruitment. If you do not receive a bid from anyone you have listed, you *are* still eligible for snap bidding and for continuous open bidding and Sigma Sigma Sigma extension.

...and you make *two* choices on your preference list...

You have not maximized your options. Hopefully, you will receive a bid from one of those two. Please remember that you may only list the sororities whose preference parties you attended. If you receive a bid from either sorority you have indicated a preference to, you will be held to the calendar year rule, which means you can't join another sorority (**including Sigma Sigma Sigma**) until next fall recruitment. If you do not receive a bid from anyone you have listed, you *are not* eligible for snap bidding, but you *are* eligible for continuous open bidding and Sigma Sigma Sigma extension.

...and you make only *one* choice on your preference list...

You have not maximized your options. Hopefully, you will receive a bid from the sorority you indicated. Please remember that you may list the sororities whose preference parties you attended. If you receive a bid from the sorority you have indicated a preference to on your card, you will be held to the calendar year rule, which means you can't join another sorority (**including Sigma Sigma Sigma**) until next fall recruitment. If you do not receive a bid to that sorority, you *are not* eligible for snap bidding, but you *are* eligible for continuous open bidding and Sigma Sigma Sigma extension.

How it works when...

...you have attended **two** preference parties...

...and you list *two* choices on your preference list...

You have maximized your options. Hopefully, you will receive a bid from one of those two. If you receive a bid from anyone you have indicated a preference to on at any point in your preference submission, you will be held to the calendar year rule, which means you can't join another sorority (**including Sigma Sigma Sigma**) until next fall recruitment. If you do not receive a bid from anyone you have listed in your submission, you *are* still eligible for snap bidding and for continuous open bidding and Sigma Sigma Sigma extension.

...and you list *one* choice on your preference list...

You have not maximized your options. Hopefully, you will receive a bid from the sorority you indicated. If you receive a bid from the sorority you have indicated a preference to, you will be held to the calendar year rule, which means you can't join another sorority (**including Sigma Sigma Sigma**) until next fall recruitment. If you do not receive a bid to that sorority, you *are not* eligible for snap bidding, but you *are* eligible for continuous open bidding and Sigma Sigma Sigma extension.

How it works when...

... you have attended **one** preference party...

...and you list *one* choice on your preference list...

You have maximized your options. Hopefully, you will receive a bid from that sorority. If you receive a bid from anyone you have indicated a preference to, you will be held to the calendar year rule, which means you can't join another sorority (**including Sigma Sigma Sigma**) until next fall recruitment. If you do not receive a bid to anyone you have listed, you *are* still eligible for snap bidding and for continuous open bidding and Sigma Sigma Sigma extension.

How it works when...

...recruitment is over and you don't have a bid....

Not every one who registers for recruitment joins a sorority at the end of recruitment. This happens in many ways for many reasons. Occasionally a woman will reach a point in the week where she has no invitations. More commonly, a woman will decide that sorority life isn't for her and she will withdraw on her own. There is also a chance that someone will participate in preferential bid matching and not receive an invitation to join a sorority. If any of these happen, there are other options.

1. Look into Sigma Sigma Sigma. They will have their new chapter before the first football game. It's a great opportunity to get into something good as it begins. They will occupy a chapter room in the Village and, beginning in fall 2017, they will live on the top floor of Magnolia Hall. They will offer the same activities and opportunities provided by the other sororities here. Their social calendar is already set for 2016. Ask your Pi Chi if you want to know more.
2. Continuous Open Bidding... Anyone who has not been initiated into an NPC group is eligible to participate in COB as long as they have not declined a bid received through preferential bid matching or turned in an accepted bid within the preceding year. You do not have to register to participate in COB, but you may fill out an interest sheet in the Greek Life Office. If you fill out an interest sheet, it simply lets the sororities having COB know that you're interested. Filling out the sheet does not obligate them to invite you to any events. It also doesn't obligate you to attend any events if you are invited. You don't have to have filled out an interest sheet in order to be invited. The sororities can invite anyone that is eligible. It's up to you whether you want to go or not.
3. Participate in Fall Formal Recruitment the next year. Every year, sophomores, juniors, and seniors participate in formal recruitment.
4. It's OK to not be Greek. About 40% of Auburn's undergraduate women are Greek. That means that about 60% of Auburn's undergraduate women are having a great Auburn experience without being Greek. Auburn has over 300 organizations that you can be involved in. You definitely don't have to be in a sorority to have a great time and make friends at Auburn. Recruitment can certainly make one think that Greek Life is the only thing on campus, but once the school year gets going, you will find there is much more.

ANALYZING THE ACCEPTANCE AGREEMENT...

When you submit final preferences, you must also submit the binding Membership Acceptance Agreement. Below, you will find the agreement with an explanation. The items in italics are from the agreement and the words in standard type are an explanation. So that there are no surprises, be sure that you are familiar with this agreement before pref day. You should ask your Pi Chi any questions you might have and don't be afraid to ask the staff in the computer lab when you are making your preferences.

By signing this Selection Agreement, I agree to the following:

1. *I am willing to accept an invitation to membership from any women's fraternity that I list on this agreement.* Explanation: This means that you are basically pre-accepting a bid to any sorority you submit on your list. It is not a wait-and-see thing. It is like you saying, "If I get a bid from any of these sororities, I am going to take it."

2. *I may limit my choices to one or list any women's fraternities on campus in which I am willing to accept membership. I realize that by not listing the maximum number of events I attended, I may be limiting my potential to join any other NPC group during formal recruitment should I not be placed with my choices.* Explanation: This statement is an acknowledgement that you can list as few or as many as you would like. If you went to three parties, you may list one, two, or three preferences, but not listing an option available to you limits the number of chapters you could be placed in, lowering your chance of receiving a bid.

3. *Once I submit this agreement to the College Panhellenic Association, I cannot change the order of my preferences or add or delete a preference once this Agreement has been submitted to the College Panhellenic Association.* Explanation: This is an acknowledgement that once you save your preferences, you can't change them. They have to stay the way you originally submit them, even if you change your mind one minute later. For this reason, you are allowed all of the time you want to complete your preferences. So, do not submit your preferences and then ask to change them. You will submit a written copy as well.

4. *If I do not receive an invitation to membership from a group that I have listed, I am eligible for continuous open bidding.* Explanation: This statement is basically a reminder that if you complete and submit your preferences and do not receive a bid, the opportunities to join are not over with. If you do not receive a bid, you are free to join any sorority who offers you a bid at your earliest opportunity.

5. *I have the option of not submitting an agreement at this time.* Explanation: This is your last chance to withdraw. If you submit preferences, you are bound to them.

6. *Once I submit this agreement, I am bound by the National Panhellenic Conference one- calendar year rule. This rule states that if I receive an invitation to membership from a group I have listed and I choose not to accept it, I am not eligible to be pledged to any other NPC member sorority on this campus for one calendar year (12 month period) from the time of this signing.* Explanation: This statement means that if you are offered a bid from anyone you have submitted on this list and you do not accept it, you may not join another sorority until next fall recruitment. It is for this reason that you should be careful about listing sororities you are definitely not interested in. It is also for this reason that we recommend at least giving it a try for one week when the bid you receive is not one that you are especially thrilled about.

ANATOMY OF A PREF SCREEN

Here are the parts of the preference screen you should be ready to see...

Bid Preferences

1st Preference

2nd Preference

3rd Preference

* denotes chapter pnm attended in preference round

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*by submitting my bid preference choices, I agree to the following

I understand and agree to the following terms:

1. I am willing to accept an invitation to membership from any women's sorority that I list on this agreement.
2. I may limit my choices to just one OR list any women's sorority whose preference-round (last) event I attended, and from which I am willing to accept membership. I realize that by not listing the maximum number of events I attended, I may be limiting my potential to join any other NPC group during formal recruitment should I not be placed with my choice(s).
3. Once I submit this agreement to the College Panhellenic Association, I cannot change the order of my preferences or add or delete a preference.
4. If I do not receive an invitation to membership from a group that I have listed, I am eligible for continuous open bidding.
5. I have the option of not submitting an agreement at this time.
6. Once I submit this agreement, I am bound by the National Panhellenic Conference one-calendar year rule. This rule states that if I receive an invitation to membership from a group that I have listed and then do not accept it, I am not eligible to be pledged to any other NPC member sorority on this campus for one calendar year (12 month period) from the time of this signing.

By submitting my bid preferences, I agree to accept a bid from any of the women's sororities I have preferred and if offered, I am bound to that bid from one calendar year.

I agree to the terms stated above, and I am willing to accept an invitation to membership from any of the above women's sororities whose preference event I attended (listed in order of preference).

Callout Boxes:

- Save button:** Clicking this will save your choices. Click this to save the order you currently have entered into the dropdown boxes.
- Submit button:** This is the last button you will click on. Click this to submit your preferences. Once you click this button, you may not make any changes.
- Dropdown boxes:** There will be one for each pref party you attended. Make sure you have the right number of boxes available and the right sororities available to choose from. Choose your favorite in the dropdown labeled *1st Preference*, your next choice in the one labeled *2nd Preference*, and your third choice in the one labeled *3rd Preference*.
- The preference agreement:** This is explained in detail earlier in the book. Make sure you read and understand each part.

Snap Bidding vs. Continuous Open Bidding: A Closer Look

Many times, people are confused about the difference between the two. Here's a quick comparison of the two:

Snap Bidding

What: A method used to allow chapters to have full new member classes before bids are distributed. It is very rare. **Of the 6,700 bids Auburn Panhellenic matched from 2009-2015, only 2 were snap bids.**

Who: Anyone who participated in recruitment and did not ISP or IDP when submitting preferences, but did not receive a bid from the sororities she indicated. Even people who registered for recruitment but withdrew or were released during the week are eligible.

When: This will occur after prefs are submitted, but before bids have been distributed. If you accept a snap bid, you will come to bid distribution and receive a printed bid and attend your new chapter's bid day festivities with everyone else. You will not be singled out or indicated any differently from the other new members in your chapter.

How: Once preferential bid matching is completed, representatives from each chapter will be shown their list of new members and they will be told if they still have room to take in new members. Those chapters who still have room will be given a list of women who are eligible that they may choose from to offer a snap bid if they wish. They will let the Greek Life Office know who they wish to contact. They typically choose women who were invited to their preference party, but did not have room on their schedules. Sororities do not offer snap bids to women they released during the week.

Where: Once the chapter has decided who they would like to offer a snap bid to, they will contact the Greek Life Office. The potential member's Pi Chi will be brought in to be the messenger. She will contact or visit the potential member to let her know that she did not receive a bid from anyone listed on her card, but that there is a sorority who would like to offer her a bid. She will then get an answer from the potential member and let the Greek Life Office know. If the potential member accepts, she will attend bid distribution as usual and she will be bound, from the moment of acceptance, to the Calendar Year Rule. If she declines immediately, she will not be held to the calendar year rule.

Snap Bidding vs. Continuous Open Bidding: A Closer Look

Continuous Open Bidding (COB)

What: A method used to allow chapters to have as many members as they are allowed to have

Who: Anyone who has never been initiated into a Panhellenic sorority may participate as long as she is not waiting out her calendar year after declining a bid. You do not need to be any certain age or have registered for recruitment at any time in order to participate. However, you may express interest in Continuous Open Bidding by completing the form found on AU Involve.

When: Continuous Open Bidding begins once bids have been distributed from preferential bid matching. The time COB is allowed continues throughout the year. It can happen at any time during fall and spring semesters, as long as Formal Recruitment is not going on. The upcoming extension recruitment for Sigma Sigma Sigma is a type of COB.

How: This happens if a chapter has spaces to fill in a new member class, but chooses to wait until bids go out rather than offer snap bids. It also happens if spaces in a chapter open up during the year and the chapter wishes to fill them. If spaces become available, the chapter has the rest of the academic year to fill them if they choose.

Where: If it occurs on bid day, the sorority may independently call the woman and offer her a bid. If she accepts, she will need to sign a bid acceptance form, which binds her to the calendar year rule, that the chapter turns in to the Greek Life Office. If a chapter chooses, they may hold actual COB events, which are informal recruitment events, and offer a bid to anyone eligible at any time, as long as it is within that chapter's inter/national policies on bid offering. The new member will still need to sign the bid acceptance form to be turned in to the Greek Life Office.

What to Expect

When you submit your final preferences

Once your last preference party is over, Pi Chis will direct you to the computer station. It is important that you go there without speaking to any one, including your Pi Chi. It is important that you make your decision without consulting the opinions of others. Don't worry about which order your best friend or roommate puts her choices in. You may not be as happy in the one that she likes the best. If you two are not in the same sorority, it will still be easy for you to be friends. In fact, if you are in two different sororities, your circle of friends will expand even more. Here are some other things to know:

1. Go directly to the computer station to make your preferences. Do not talk to anyone, including your Pi Chi. You can find her and speak with her after your preferences are submitted.
2. If there is a line to the computer station, get in it. If not, go right in.
3. There will be Pi Chis along the way to direct you, but your Pi Chi will not be in the room where preferences are being made.
4. You will be given a written copy of the preference agreement to complete. You may take as long as you need to complete that, but you may not talk with anyone. Bring the written copy with you to the chapter room.
5. Your Pi Chi will not be in the room as you are used to, but the room will be staffed by knowledgeable recruitment staff. They are educated on how the system works and can answer any technical questions you might have.
6. A staff member will open your personal preference screen for you. She will hand you the computer and you will make your selections. Return the computer to her after you have submitted your preferences.
7. Once you have completed your submission, you are free to go. Leave your signed, written copy behind.
8. Once you turn in your preferences, you can't change them, so take all of the time that you need.
9. Once you are completely finished, please exit quietly and either meet with your Pi Chi or return to your place of residence.