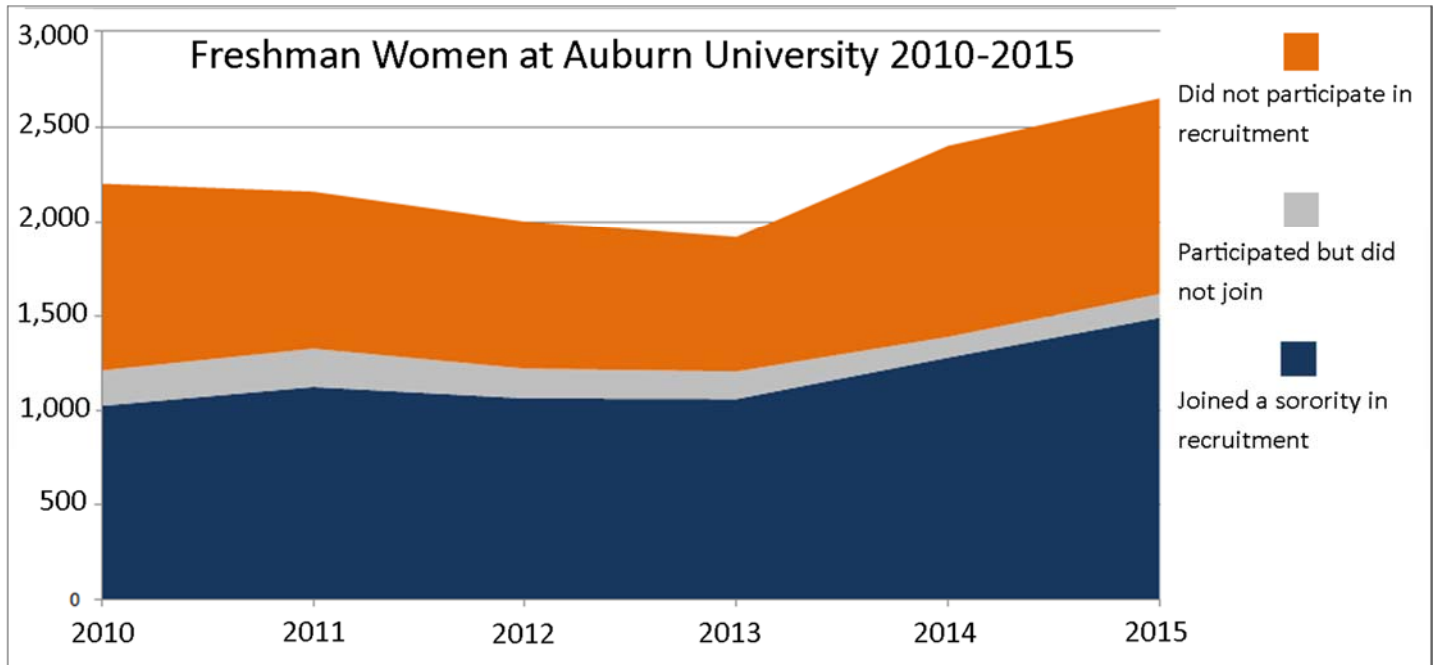




2016 Sorority Recruitment– Bid Day Changes

Auburn Panhellenic has a strong tradition of sorority membership. As our campus has grown, our sorority membership has grown at a rate that equals, and sometimes outpaces, the growth in the number of undergraduate women on our campus. In 2010, 55.62% of our freshman women participated in recruitment. By 2015, 60.91% of them participated. This coincided with growth in the number of freshman women, from 2,201 to 2,650. During that same time period, the placement rate grew from 86% to 93%. This growth in all three metrics yielded a 2015 new member class of 1,489. In fact, four of our five largest recruitments are from that period (2010-2015).

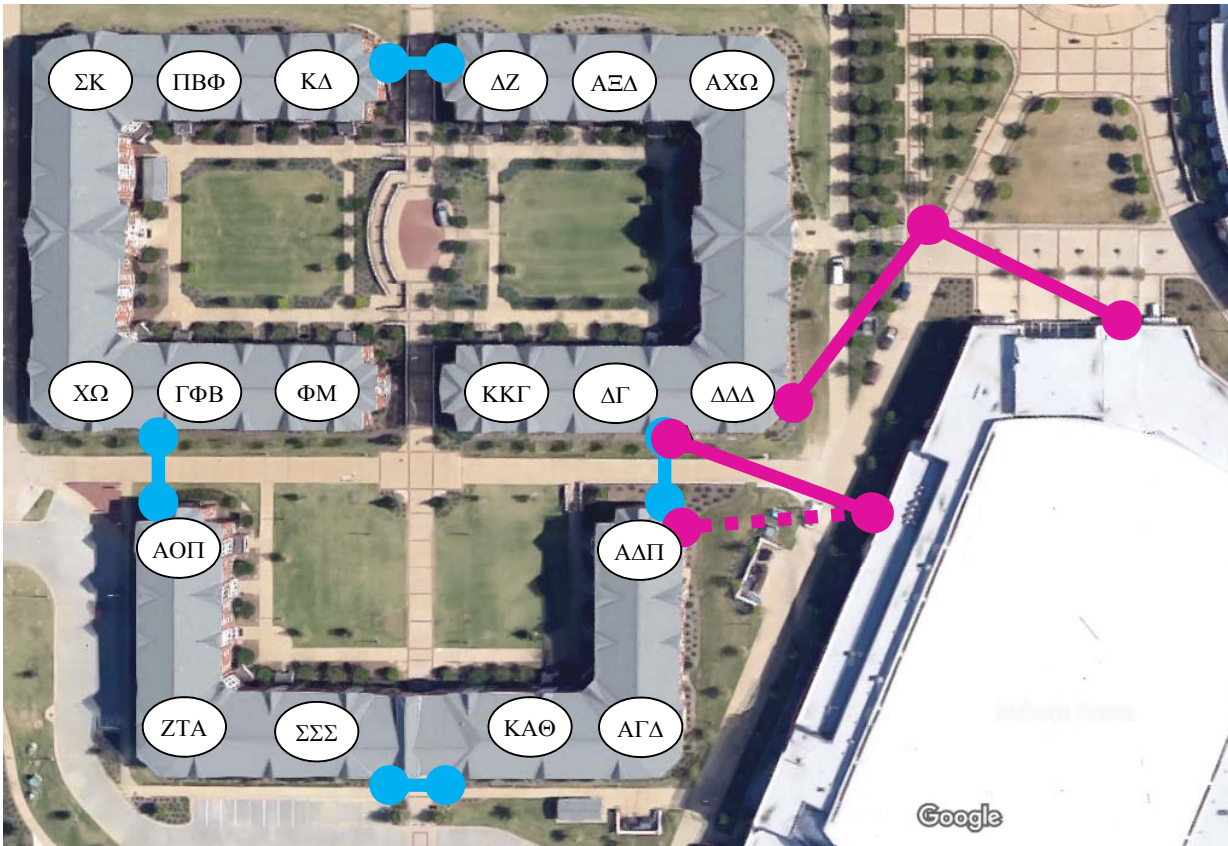


As the image to the right shows, sorority life is booming at Auburn. As our membership has grown, so has interest in our programs. Particularly, there has been a spike in interest in Sorority Bid Day, the day that new members join their new sororities. It is a time of celebration for these women and the older sorority members, but the crowd has grown to become unmanageable and unsafe. Simply put, our facilities aren't equipped to safely host the large number of non-sorority members at one time.

The chapter spaces we occupy in The Village are great for chapter meetings and other functions during the year, but the members and new members alone are enough to bring the spaces to capacity per their occupancy ratings. The courtyard area is home to decorations placed by the chapters and large spaces are set up for the group photos taken by every chapter. Given the number of people who arrive on campus to attend Bid Day, it is very easy for the crowd to quickly grow to a number that is much too concentrated for the area.

In 2015, we invited representatives from Auburn University's Office of Public Safety to attend the event. We have accepted all recommendations in an effort to improve student safety. To limit the size and give the new members a more intimate Bid Day experience, we are restricting access to the lawns and buildings occupied by the sororities on Bid day. Those who have access will include current undergraduate members, 10 advisors/helpers per chapter (at the discretion of chapter leadership), new members, and two guests per new member. All of this will be managed with a barricade and wristband system.

Key Points to Know



Perimeter barricades. These go up at 8 am. With a wristband, sorority members and the parents of new members are allowed entry. Each sorority also has 10 additional passes for advisors.

Bid distribution barricades. These barricades go up at 1:00 pm. Only recruitment staff and women receiving bids are permitted here.

- There are two sets of barricades. One will be up all day to enclose the interior of the sorority buildings and courtyards. The other will only be up long enough to give the new members a clear path to the Village after receiving their bids. The solid pink line shows where the barricade will be from 1:00 pm to 2:55 pm. Just before bids go out, the barricade will be moved to provide the new members with a protected path to their new sororities. Once all new members are in the Village, the barricades along the pink lines will be removed.
- Guards will be stationed at every barricade point as well as every exterior entrance to the sorority buildings. They will control access to allow entry to only those with wristbands. (New members, recruitment staff, guests, and undergraduate members)
- Wristbands will be distributed to sororities on August 12 and to new members and parents on August 13.
- The Arena opens at 2:30 pm and bids are distributed at 3:00 pm. New members should be in the Arena with their groups well in advance of 3:00 pm.
- Those with wristbands may enter the barricades at any time to wait for the new members to arrive. Or, they may wait outside of the barricaded area for bids to be distributed before entering.
- After bids are distributed, the new members will find the representatives from their new sororities and separate themselves into new member classes. Each class will be led to their new chapter room.
- During the time that the new members are organizing themselves, they will have time to text, tweet, and share their bids. This should help parents know which chapter room to find.
- Ten minutes after bids are distributed, an email will be sent to parents, using the email addresses submitted by the new members as part of their recruitment registrations. This email will include their daughters' bid and other pertinent information.
- Parents attending Bid Day should park in the lot at the end of West Thach. The closest physical address is 910 West Thach Avenue. New student move-in, Welcome Week Events, athletic donor events, and numerous other events will be held at this time, so it is important that we be respectful and park in the areas assigned to us.

What should I know if I am...

... a potential member?

This day is going to be fun! You're going to learn what sorority you're invited to join and become a part of an amazing sisterhood. Bids will be distributed on the afternoon of Saturday, August 13. Earlier that morning, your Pi Chi will give you a wristband that will allow you inside of the sorority areas and the Arena. You will also be given up to two wristbands to give to parents/guardians for access to the sorority areas.

The Arena opens to us at 2:30 pm on Saturday, the 13th of August. Bids will go out at 3:00 pm. Make sure you wear your wristband to campus that day and have it clearly visible when you arrive for Bid Day. If your parents are with you, remind them to wear their wristbands. They can choose to wait in the sorority courtyard areas or they can wait outside the barricades and come in after the new members are at their respective sororities. Once bids go out, you will be asked to find the representatives from your new sorority, waiting inside the Arena. As you are waiting to be dismissed from the Arena, you will be able to text, tweet, and share your happy news.

In addition, your parents will receive an email that contains your bid. The email will be sent to the parent contact information you have included in your recruitment registration form. Warn them that this email is coming, so that we don't ruin the surprise if you want them to hear it from you. Whether they open the email right away or wait until they have heard from you, tell them to save the email as it will include other important information they will need afterwards.

What should I know if I am...

... a current undergraduate sorority member?

You will be able to get to your sorority chapter room as long as you have your wristband. Each sorority will receive wristbands on Preference Day for every undergraduate member as well as 10 more to distribute, at their discretion, to advisors and helpers. Most of these wristbands will be for the sorority areas only and five per chapter will allow access to the Arena. The five chapter members will assemble the new member classes and lead them out to the chapter rooms. It is up to each sorority to determine their own strategy for getting their wristbands to their members.

What should I know if I am...

... a sorority advisor?

In addition to the wristbands for the collegians, each chapter will receive ten discretionary wristbands. The intent is for these wristbands to go to the advisors working with the chapter in recruitment and the new member process and to the members' mothers who assist on Bid Day. Each chapter and its leadership will decide who receives these, so advisors should look to their chapters for additional information.

What should I know if I am...

... the parent of a potential member?

Bid Day is an exciting opportunity to celebrate sorority new membership. Because we can't safely accommodate everyone who wants to come, access to the area is restricted to those with wristbands. With the intent of allowing parents to attend if they want, each new member may bring up to two guests. She will receive wristbands on the morning of Bid Day and will be responsible for getting those wristbands to her parents. Bids will be distributed in the Arena at 3:00 pm. Only potential members may be in the Arena. Parents will have the option of waiting outside the barricaded area or they may show their wristbands and enter the barricaded area and wait there. After bids go out, the new members will have a moment to text, tweet, and share their news. Then, they will proceed, as a new member class, to their new chapter. Additionally, Panhellenic will send an email to you, using the email addresses provided by the potential members in their recruitment registration. These emails will let you know which sorority your daughter joined as well as other information specific to the sorority she joined. So, if you don't want our email to spoil the surprise, wait to open the email, but hang on to it because you will want the other information contained in the message.

What should I know if I am...

... the loved one of a potential member?

Because we can't safely accommodate everyone who wants to come, access to the area is restricted to those with wristbands. With the intent of allowing parents to attend if they want, each new member may bring up to two guests. This means that, unless you have a wristband, you will not be permitted to the sorority areas on Bid Day. There will be opportunities for siblings, grandparents, boyfriends, and family friends to congratulate her with a phone call or in person at a later time. Throughout the year, the sorority will have several events where there is more room for guests— family weekends, homecoming tailgates, and philanthropy events are examples. Make sure your favorite new member keeps you informed about upcoming events you can attend. It will give you a chance to meet her friends in a setting that is much more intimate.

What should I know if I am...

... a sorority alumna?

While there isn't room for everyone to attend Bid Day, there are still plenty of ways to engage with the chapter if you're an interested alumna. Every sorority has some kind of formal pledging ceremony within a day or two of Bid Day. As an alumna, you are welcome to participate in or help with this members-only event. It will give you a chance to really meet the new members and get to know them in a private setting and be a part of officially introducing them to your sisterhood. In that same vein, reach out to your chapter's leadership about attending your sorority's initiation ceremony. Most are six to eight weeks after Bid Day. Again, these members-only events are a great way to bond with the undergraduate members. Also, stay tuned to your sorority's alumna newsletters and be on the lookout for Founders' Day celebrations and Alumnae Teas. You can also find ways to attend or help with your chapter's philanthropy events.

What should I know if I am...

... the parent of a current member?

Because of the limited capacity of the Bid Day celebrations in the sorority areas, the new members are the only ones who may bring guests. The older members will be there to welcome and celebrate with the new members, but are not permitted to have any guests. The chapter may have extra wristbands for the mothers who are there to assist with Bid Day festivities, but those will be distributed at the discretion of the chapter. Throughout the year, though, the sorority will host events that family members are invited to attend. If you're the parent of a current member, check with your daughter to find out about these events so that you can be there to meet the new members and their families.

What should I know if I am...

... an Auburn student not participating in sorority recruitment?

The events on Bid Day are for the sorority members and new members, so don't plan to attend any sorority events that day. On this day, Welcome Week begins with the Home Sweet Auburn event on the Greenspace, so there is a great option for a fun on-campus event. The sororities will have numerous events throughout the year that you may attend. We promote these events through our social media channels, so be sure to follow us to stay informed.

What should I know if I am...

... an Auburn fraternity member?

In many cases, fraternities like to stop by as individuals or as new member groups to see the new sorority members. If you would like to schedule a social event with a sorority, please ask your leadership to contact the sorority's leadership. Bid Day is a time for the new sorority members to meet the older women in their chapters. So, please respect that the Bid Day celebration is a private event.

What should I know if I am...

... a community member?

Over the past few years, Auburn Panhellenic's Bid Day has attracted more and more members of the community at large. Some are people interested in seeing the action, some are younger people interested in learning about sororities and recruitment, and others are just there to be supportive of friends. As the crowd has grown, so has the idea that Bid Day is an event that is open to anyone, but that actually isn't the case. While we do want to share with others about who we are and what we do, Bid Day is a time for the new members to celebrate and spend time getting to know their new sorority sisters. We hope that those who are interested in our activities will attend the events that are open to the public and that people who are interested in sorority life will visit our office, or attend our sessions at War Eagle Days and Camp War Eagle. Please respect our safety and privacy by letting the sorority members have this time together while still having room to move around more comfortably.

What should I know if I am...

... a vendor working with a sorority?

We couldn't accomplish what we do on Bid Day without the help of many others. An important part of the behind-the-scenes logistics is the cadre of workers who provide goods and services to our chapters. From caterers to floral deliveries to photographers, the sororities contract a variety of services for Bid Day. Leading up to recruitment, the sorority leaders will provide us with a list of vendors who will need access to the sorority areas. Those vendors will be provided with instructions for how and when to obtain their wristbands. Because we truly we will be operating at capacity that day, it is important that the vendors make deliveries as needed, but not remain in the chapter rooms once their work is completed. If you a vendor who will be working in or around a chapter room on Bid Day, please ask that sorority for more information about gaining access on Bid Day.

What should I know if I am...

... a sorority leader?

As these changes are new, we are depending on sorority leaders to help make this a successful event. We will bring your chapter wristbands to you, but you will decide how you distribute them. Think carefully about who will receive your 10 discretionary wristbands and which 5 members will help at the distribution in the Arena. We are going to give access to your vendors, but we need you to let us know who they are. It is important to help everyone understand what changes are happening and what to expect. We will work together with you on that. It is important for you to make sure that you are connecting with your members, their families, and your alumnae to give them clear and early information about the things you want them to attend, such as family weekends and alumnae teas. Remember that this wristband policy only applies to the events at Bid Day that occur at the sorority spaces. If you choose to host an event in a different location after bids are distributed or want to have an event in your chapter room on another date, you are certainly welcome to do so, as long as you coordinate with your neighbors so that you aren't all out there together.