Memorandum to Presidents

Date: November 10, 1976

From: Office of the Vice Chancellor for Educational Services

Subject: Revised Policy on Affiliation of Campus Student Organizations with National Social Organizations

At the meeting of October 27, 1976, the Board of Trustees adopted the following resolution:

Whereas various national organizations which affiliate with student groups have disavowed rules and practices which formed the basis for Resolutions 53-89 and 62-93 in 1953 and 1962; and

Whereas affiliation with national organizations may be of benefit to student groups at the State University of New York; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that Resolution 53-89 dated October 8, 1953 and Resolution 62-93 dated May 10, 1962, be, and hereby are, rescinded; and, be it further

Resolved that student organizations on the State-operated campuses of the State University of New York which affiliate with national organizations shall file with the Chief Administrative Officer, or his designee, a certification which is satisfactory to the Chief Administrative Officer, or his designee, that the constitution, bylaws, policies, regulations and practices of the organization do not restrict membership on the basis of race, creed, national origin, sex, age or disability, except as may be specifically exempted by Federal or State laws or regulations, and, further, that the active membership of the campus affiliate has authority independent to any national organization to determine membership in the campus affiliate.

Trustees' resolutions 53-89 and 62-93, which were rescinded by this resolution, prohibited affiliation of student social organizations with national social organizations. Student social organizations may now affiliate with national
social organizations provided a certification of non-discrimination is filed.

Implementation of the Trustees' October resolution will require that each campus establish a procedure by which all student organizations affiliated with national organizations file with the Chief Administrative Officer, or his designee, a certification that the constitution, bylaws, policies, regulations and practices of the organization do not restrict membership on the basis of race, creed, national origin, sex, age or disability, except as may be specifically exempted by Federal or State laws or regulations, and, further, that the active membership of the campus affiliate has authority independent to any national organization to determine membership in the campus affiliate. It should be noted that social fraternities and sororities are specifically exempted under Title IX from the requirement that membership be open regardless of sex.

For your information I am attaching the background statement which accompanied the resolution when it was presented to the Board of Trustees.

James S. Smoot

Attachment

cc: Vice Presidents for Student Affairs, State-operated Campuses

This memorandum addressed to:
Presidents, State-operated Campuses

Copies for information only sent to:
Presidents, Community Colleges
Deans, Statutory Colleges
President Rose
Mr. Barlow
Background

In 1953 the Board of Trustees adopted a University policy which prohibits affiliation of campus social organizations with national organizations. In 1969 the Board authorized the Chancellor to reexamine the policy and received a subsequent report recommending the policy not be changed.

There has been continued interest within the University for affiliation of local social organizations with national organizations. On June 15, 1975 the Student Assembly adopted a resolution asking the Chancellor to reexamine University policy prohibiting such affiliation.

The continued interest in national affiliation has been based in part upon the advantages such affiliation would offer existing local social organizations and in part upon the changes in policy and practices of the national organizations which have occurred since 1953.

Descriptions of changes in policies and practices of national social organizations are contained in the staff report prepared in response to the 1969 resolution of the Board of Trustees. Further indication of the elimination of the restrictive clauses which represented a primary basis for action in 1953 is exemplified by the recent letters, constitutions, and bylaws submitted by National Pan Hellenic Council and National Interfraternity Council.

The University is committed to affirmative action and nondiscriminatory practices among all of its constituencies. It is also obligated under Federal laws, regulations, and guidelines, including Titles VI and IX, toward assuring equity of opportunity and access. Within this context, it would seem more appropriate for the University to require an affirmation of nondiscriminatory policies and practices from all student organizations with national affiliation rather than to solely exclude one type of organization as a result of such practices in the past.