



How the College Panhellenic Can Support COB and Community Growth

Continuous open bidding (COB) to help grow a sorority community requires College Panhellenics to be intentional about how they support the continued growth of chapters outside of the primary recruitment process. While it would be easy to create systems, processes, forms and other requirements to manage COB from a council level, these actually create more barriers to membership and should not exist. **The College Panhellenic should make every effort to eliminate as many barriers to joining as possible.**

The role of the College Panhellenic in the COB process is to market the opportunity, including sharing information with potential new members (PNMs) about the Panhellenic chapters on campus, and provide resources to the chapters as needed. College Panhellenics will not regulate the individual processes that chapters use to recruit PNMs during COB. The chapters will work with their inter/national organizations to determine the best timing and method for recruiting PNMs in a COB process.

Unanimous Agreement III. The Panhellenic Compact #3. An undergraduate woman may pledge an NPC sorority only during a regular academic term and not during any school recess or summer academic term except during a primary membership recruitment period and the ensuing continuous open bidding (COB) process when held immediately before an academic term.

Continuous Open Bidding (2022) – POLICY:

COB is not intended to precede or take the place of the primary membership recruitment period, nor should there be a COB process prior to the start of fall primary membership recruitment. Likewise, no COB process should occur during the period at the start of the term in which primary recruitment does not take place while rosters are confirmed for the reset of total, if applicable (not to exceed seven days).

The purpose of COB is to enable those chapters that did not pledge to quota or pledged quota but did not reach total, to pledge additional new members immediately following the primary membership recruitment period. The intent of COB is to provide maximum opportunities for membership to the greatest number of chapters possible and the greatest number of women who are eligible to join a sorority. The College Panhellenic, therefore, will not place restrictions on the COB process, which may include (but is not limited to) designated COB dates, schedules and bid distribution. The chapters will work with their inter/national organizations to determine the best timing and method for the recruitment of potential new members in a COB process.



On campuses with deferred (second term) membership recruitment, any COB prior to the scheduled primary membership recruitment period should be limited to upperclass and transfer women. First-year women should not attend these recruitment functions. COB would not be open to first-year women until after the primary membership recruitment period.

How Can the Panhellenic Help Support Growth?

- By setting total at a number that allows growth for the entire Panhellenic community; when total is set too low there is a lack of sufficient spaces for women to join.
- **By not placing restrictions on the COB process.** While a College Panhellenic may ask chapters to share COB events with the Panhellenic to share on a common calendar or promote on social media, a College Panhellenic should not be asking or requiring chapters to register COB events. The College Panhellenic will also not restrict COB schedules or bid distribution.
- By maintaining a database of interested women for chapters to contact when conducting COB. Make sure the information in the database is readily available to the chapter recruitment officers, as needed. Remember that a woman **does not have to be in the database to receive a bid; College Panhellenics should NOT require PNMs to “register” with the Panhellenic to participate in COB.** The database should simply be a place that chapters can go to for ideas of women they may want to reach out to. Promote COB by promoting this database and inviting women to sign up. When a woman expresses interest in COB, she should be told that her name will be shared with chapters who are participating. Each chapter will decide whether to contact the interested women.
Additionally, the College Panhellenic should maintain a list of ineligible women on campus, including women who are initiated members of an NPC organization already but are no longer affiliated, and women who have signed MRABAs since the last primary recruitment.
- **By setting total in a timely manner!** All chapters should be aware of what total is and the number of spots they have available. It is critical that chapters submit an accurate roster of returning members so open spaces may be calculated. This will allow fall primary recruitment campuses to start COB activities immediately after bid distribution. It will also allow spring primary recruitment campuses the ability to start COB activities at the start of the academic term.
- **By keeping any helpful documents on hand and making them easily available to chapters.**
 - For example, some campuses have grade releases for PNMs to sign so that chapters can verify grades. Make sure to put these in the hands of chapters below total, even before they ask for them. **The College Panhellenic should not require grade checks for PNMs.**



- Another example is making sure each chapter has copies of the COB MRABA. The COB MRABA can be found in the NPC Manual of Information [here](#). Once an MRABA is signed, the chapter should submit a copy to the Panhellenic office to be kept for one year.
- By encouraging each chapter to create a COB plan that details what each chapter would do if there are spaces in the chapter to reach total. That way when primary recruitment is complete and the chapter is able to participate in COB, the chapter may execute its plan immediately. **Chapters should consult with their local and inter/national volunteers as well as their headquarters for guidance on their COB policies and procedures.**
- Some chapters will want to meet lots of women through COB and will host events that anyone can come to. In those cases, help chapters get the word out through the College Panhellenic's marketing channels *if requested by the chapter*. In other cases, a chapter may only have room for a small number of people and may quietly select those new members.
- By assessing the community's knowledge of COB; after learning about the needs of chapters, the College Panhellenic can host COB roundtables with chapter COB chairs or share brief updates during Panhellenic meetings about COB and allow chapters to learn from one another.
- By having an officer within your Panhellenic assigned to monitor and promote year-round joining opportunities, like COB, to unaffiliated women on your campus. This is usually the recruitment officer, but she can have an assistant assigned to this task if it helps.
 - Reiterate that COB is a chance to offer membership to more women on campus, including those who did not or may not have wanted to participate in primary recruitment, yet still want to join a sorority.
- By keeping tabs on chapter sizes. As soon as you become aware of a chapter that is eligible for COB, reach out to the chapter to inform them of eligibility and how many bids the chapter is allowed to give out. The chapter may not even realize it has room for new members. Also, remember there is no limit on the number of times a chapter may conduct recruitment. A chapter may welcome new members every time it is below total, even if that is more than once a term!

Remember, whatever a College Panhellenic does during COB, should be in support of the chapters and PNMs finding each other!



How can the College Panhellenic or chapters reach unaffiliated women?

In Person	Virtual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus digital platforms, including virtual involvement fairs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residence halls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open sisterhood events
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-campus involvement fairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media or networking apps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other student organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President's or dean's list
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through work, volunteering or internships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumnae networks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty/staff recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of unaffiliated women from campus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Names of women who withdrew from recruitment or did not receive a bid during primary recruitment

For both virtual and in-person networking opportunities, reaching out to all women on campus should be a priority. Member and alumnae networks are helpful, but can create barriers to entry if relied on exclusively. Consider the following student services departments or affinity organizations for networking, marketing and programming opportunities to make sure all women can learn about the sorority experience and joining opportunities:

- Transfer student orientation.
- Commuter student services.
- First-generation student organizations.
- International student services and organizations.
- Upperclassmen focused campus areas.

*This is not an exhaustive or all-inclusive list. Panhellenics and recruitment chairs can collaborate on best ways to reach all women as best fits their campus.

What type of activities can be done for COB?

Below are some event ideas that can be done in-person or virtually. If your campus has students taking courses across multiple time zones, these could be great events to bring women together:

- Game nights
 - Host live gaming competitions. There are various resources that allow you to play games virtually and share your screen with the chapter. Think about games like Pictionary, Charades, Card Games and Lip Sync Battle.
- Health and well-being activities



- Stress and anxiety levels have risen during the pandemic. Mental health has also been destigmatized and many chapters are focusing on programming and education for their members. Plan events such as group meditation, yoga or a workout to help members stay active. Allow members and PNMs to chat about their week and relax with one another.
- Host a hobby
 - Invite members to share their hobbies during a COB event. If one member is really good at baking, have her host a baking night and teach others. Think about hobbies such as drawing, knitting, cooking and more. If you don't have members who have hobbies, teach them! Find out what members are interested in learning and learn together. Use resources such as YouTube to find how-to videos.
- Coffee dates
 - This term can encompass all small "dates" whether they be at a fro-yo shop or at Starbucks. Sometimes women are more interested in COB because it is a more laid-back setting than primary recruitment is, so have something casual with a few women and a PNM to just relax. Think creatively on how these could be executed virtually using customizable Zoom backgrounds.
- Host a watch party
 - Invite PNMs to join chapter members to watch your school's team play or for a chapter favorite movie night or TV show viewing.