

FORMALLY INTRODUCED

Sorority and Fraternity formals honor new members and graduating seniors

More than just an excuse to get all dolled up, formals were a celebration of the addition of new members as well as a time to honor those who would soon be graduating.

Many sororities found ways to commemorate their senior members such as presenting them in a special manner to the entire group or having them wear a certain color. For example, at Chi Omega's formal, "new members are presented and they receive a white carnation and wear a white dress. At spring formal, seniors do the same thing, and they wear black," Christina Bianchi, a senior member of Chi Omega, said.

Fraternities generally found ways to honor their seniors and pledges in different ways. Special songs and crowd activities were popular. "Formal always ends with the playing of 'Back Where I Come From' by Kenny Chesney while the seniors crowd surf over the entire brotherhood," Jason Gangwer, a new member of Beta Theta Pi, said.

Formal was also a time to reminisce and make new memories. Most people had the option of bringing a date, and some, such as the Phi Mu seniors, who could bring up to three dates, had special privileges in this area.

In addition, most members had some sort of family get together beforehand to mark the growth of their family as well as to honor the matriarch(s) or patriarch(s). Bianchi noted her families activities that night. "My family went out to eat at Kyoto before, which was fun," Bianchi said. "But then our bus was late picking us up because it got into an accident on the way to the SC to get us! Besides that, everyone just got together, danced, and enjoyed our last formal as seniors," Bianchi said.

So, a night of formal wear and dancing helped give graduating members a proper send off and a night they would never forget.

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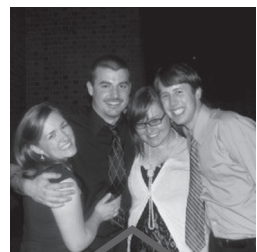


Members of Phi Mu and their dates gather around to present the new members, known as Phis, as well as the seniors. Phi Mu held their formal at the Williamsburg Lodge and enjoyed its many amenities.

»strikeapose



Sisters of Kappa Delta Kate Laird, Amanda Koons and Elizabeth Welshhans pose at their spring formal held at Nauticus Naval Museum in Norfolk, Virginia. Sororities frequently held their formals in non-traditional venues.



At the Alpha Chi Omega spring formal held at the Woodlands, Erin Houston, Paul Garrity, Katie Dixon, and Austin Wiese smile after the senior presentations. Both seniors Houston and Dixon were presented at the special formal to honor their contributions through the years to their sisters.



Freshman Hillary Hoffer, seniors Amanda Smith and Libby Doyle, and sophomore Chrissy Scott, all members of the same family, enjoy their formal. Families often made plans for getting ready and eating dinner together beforehand.



Several members of Chi Omega pose for a picture in front of the Chi Omega house. Wearing white or black set the new members and the seniors apart in order to celebrate their first or last formal respectively.

Abby Freeman of Phi Mu gets "de-gartered" by her grand-little, Kelly Reed and her little Stephanie Driggers. Phi Mu seniors had the choice of being de-gartered by their dates or their sorority families.