



Bama Rush Documentary FAQ

What is Bama rush?

In the summer of 2022, HBO contracted with several incoming freshmen attending the University of Alabama and participating in sorority recruitment for the purpose of producing a documentary film. Four potential new members (PNMs) agreed to be recorded and filmed as they participated in formal recruitment on campus in Tuscaloosa last fall. The documentary, “Bama Rush,” is the result of this effort. It is set to air on Tuesday, May 23, at 3 a.m. ET on HBO Max.

HBO Max describes the documentary like this:

Bama Rush follows four young women as they prepare to rush at the University of Alabama in 2022. Against the viral backdrop of #BamaRush on TikTok, and the long-held tradition of sorority recruitment at the University of Alabama, the film explores the emotional complexities and high stakes of belonging in this crucial window into womanhood.

Did any Delta Gamma members partner with HBO in the making of the documentary?

Based on concerns about an inaccurate and sensationalized portrayal of the recruitment process and member experience, Delta Gamma volunteers and staff actively counseled our members not to participate in the making of the documentary in any way. We are not aware of any Delta Gamma members at the University of Alabama who partnered with HBO.

Will Delta Gamma be featured - positively or negatively - in the film?

Without seeing the final film, it is hard to answer this question with confidence. Delta Gamma members do NOT appear in the trailer, nor does the Delta Gamma chapter house.

Whether Delta Gamma is featured specifically in the documentary or not, we are concerned that anything negative about the recruitment process and/or sorority system at the University of Alabama will reflect poorly on Delta Gamma, the individual NPC groups and sorority life, in general.

What ended up in the actual film?

The documentary film features the personal stories of four women who chose to partner with HBO to chronicle their recruitment experience at the University of Alabama. The information that we have to date is from the trailer and sources close to the production. Here is what we know:

The trailer promotes a few storylines including:

- Women in search of who they are, wanting to grow and develop
- Women in search of belonging on a large college campus
- Mental wellness, self-esteem, body image and other issues women experience in high school and college
- The story of a woman who is removed from formal recruitment because of her suspected participation in the show (we believe this is the PNM referenced above, but do not have confirmation)
- The struggle of diverse, non-white potential new members
- “The Machine” – an informal campus “power structure,” portrayed as secret and powerful

Based on other sources:

- The director of the documentary is still telling participants that “the purpose of the documentary is to show that Alabama Greek women are smart, passionate, driven—not ditzy girls on Daddy’s credit card.”
- Most of the current members of sororities are being supported by their organizations as they prepare for the potential backlash from their involvement in the film.

What is NPC doing to prepare for the impact this could have at Alabama and other campuses, as well as potential new members?

NPC is working with PR firms Vox Global and FleishmanHillard to develop a response. While we are all working from limited knowledge until the film is released, they did assemble staff from all NPC organizations for a preparation discussion to share recommended public relations strategies and tactics. We are operationalizing and tailoring those recommendations to Delta Gamma's and our chapters' needs.

How do we respond to potential new members who ask about the film?

Suggested answer for individual members:

All I can speak to is my experience. In Delta Gamma, I have found lifelong friendship and opportunities for growth and development. (Use this as a starting point and personalize this for your experience)

While the recruitment process can be stressful as a potential new member, the whole process is really about finding your home – a place where you feel a sense of belonging and purpose. That can only be determined by you, not by some hypothetical hierarchy defined by what others think. We hope every potential new member brings their true and authentic self to the recruitment process and finds friendship, belonging and a place that feels like home.

Is this really how recruitment works?

Recruitment looks a little different on every campus and the recruitment process at Alabama differs greatly from the process at Iowa or Oregon or Maine. At Delta Gamma, we want potential new members to bring themselves to recruitment and to see if they find connection and a sense of belonging in Delta Gamma.

Throughout the recruitment process, Delta Gamma members share our values, what sisterhood means to us, how we serve the community and support our philanthropy and how we support each other and grow as sisters and friends.

Delta Gamma was founded as a literary society club of mutual helpfulness to further members' personal growth and friendship. Recruitment in Delta Gamma is about highlighting the values-based experience our members enjoy.

Do we believe race is an issue in recruitment? Do diverse, non-white potential new members have a harder time fitting in?

Delta Gamma and other fraternal organizations have worked hard – especially in the last three years - to address the issues surrounding diversity, equity, inclusion, access and belonging in our chapters. As organizations with predominantly white members, we have taken deliberate action to educate and empower our members to center BEID in Delta Gamma, embedding into every aspect of the member experience, including recruitment.

How do we know the sorority experience benefits women?

The sorority experience has many benefits, and they differ for each woman. In Delta Gamma, we know women find a place of belonging where they can be themselves and be a part of something bigger. They find a place where they can be passionate about serving others. And they find a place where they learn and grow and better their best.

We also know from a recent Gallup survey that the sorority experience has long-term benefits:

- Sorority and fraternity members thrive in every aspect of well-being measured by Gallup post-college and score significantly higher than their non-affiliated peers in:
 - Career well-being (62%)
 - Community well-being (66%)
 - Financial well-being (51%)
 - Physical well-being (53%)
 - Social well-being (62%)

This is a testament to our focus on friendship and belonging, as well as significant investments in mental health programming and support for our members.

- More than one in five sorority and fraternity alumni (23%), versus 14% of non-affiliated alumni, report having a professor who cared about them as a person and made them excited about learning. A similar percentage of alumni had a mentor who encouraged them to pursue their goals and dreams.

- Nearly one in four sorority and fraternity alumni (24%), as opposed to just 8% of non-affiliated alumni, strongly agreed that they had a job or internship that allowed them to apply classroom learnings, worked on a project that took more than a semester to complete and were “extremely active” in extracurricular activities or organizations.
- A full 84% percent of affiliated alumni say if they had to do it all over again, they would join their fraternity or sorority.