

# Alma College Chapter Expansion Policy

## August 14, 2015

Realizing the importance of managed growth to the continued success of Greek Life, Alma College sets forth the following policy and procedures for expansion of Greek Life on campus.

The purpose of these procedures is to ensure that the introduction of new or returning national single-sex general fraternities and sororities occurs within a carefully developed plan, conducive to the educational mission of Alma College.

For the purposes of expansion, a “national” fraternity or sorority is defined to be one that: has a headquarters or office space and staff; has non-profit status with the IRS; is preferably a member of one of the national “umbrella” agencies: North American Inter Fraternity Conference (NIC), National APIA Panhellenic Association (NAPA), National Association of Latino Fraternal Organizations (NALFO), National Multicultural Greek Council (NMGC), National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC), or National Panhellenic Conference (NPC); has a Board of Directors and governance documents; has proof of insurance; and, has regional and national meetings or conventions.

Any national fraternity or sorority wishing to colonize at Alma College should file a letter of interest with the Student Life Office. The letter of interest shall be considered a request to become a colony at Alma College. The name of each national fraternity or sorority that has filed a request to colonize at Alma College will be placed on a non-prioritized list.

The Student Life Office will meet annually to assess the campus climate and decide on the need and timing to expand the Greek system. The assessment will be based on several factors including but not limited to:

- The level of interest expressed by unaffiliated students to participate in a new group.
- The number of students participating in recruitment in relation to the number who end up pledging/associating.
- The average size of chapter memberships as well as the median number of members in all chapters.
- The College’s projected enrollment trends.
- The capacity of existing housing to meet the needs of the Greek community.

Once the need to expand the system has been established, the Student Life Office will send out letters of inquiry to those organizations that have contacted the Student Life Office. The Student Life Office may also contact additional national organizations at their discretion. The number of active colonizations occurring at any one time may be limited at the discretion of the Student Life Office to what it deems to be in the best interests of the College community.

### Stage One: Inquiry

Upon receiving the College's letter of inquiry, national organizations interested in the expansion opportunity should prepare a formal petition for submission to the Student Life Office. The petition for colonization should include:

**History of organization:**

- A. A description of the organization's values and founding principles.
- B. A summary of the organizational structure of the fraternity/sorority at the chapter and national levels.
- C. A copy of the national organization's constitution, by-laws, and other rules and policies.
- D. Acknowledgement of any previous relationship with the College.

**Information on inter/national strength:**

- A. The total number of chapters worldwide and their respective locations.
- B. The total number of colonization attempts anticipated in the next calendar year, including a timeline for founding each colony.
- C. The total number and locations of colonization attempts during the past five (5) years including location, number successfully chartered, number not chartered, and reason that the chartering process failed.
- D. The number of chapters closed and/or suspended during the last three (3) years, including where, when, and why.
- E. The average size of chapters on campuses similar to Alma College (in a range of 1300-1500 undergraduate students).
- F. The total number of collegiate undergraduate members worldwide.
- G. The current average size of chapters and costs to both new members and active members.
- H. The percentage of new members initiated worldwide on an annual basis.

**Ongoing Support:**

- A. The number of traveling consultants and description of the organization's consultant program.
- B. The nearest regional, provincial or district support person (paid or unpaid).
- C. A description of national staff assistance to colonies and established chapters.
- D. A listing of academic and leadership scholarships.
- E. Information on additional resources for programming, leadership and scholarship provided by the national organization.

**Membership and Education:**

- A. A copy of the new member education program including goals and objectives, length of program, and the expected supervision of the program.
- B. A copy of leadership development and officer transition programs.
- C. A copy of materials covering the national convention, leadership school, and regional meetings, as well as the expectations of the chapter for participation in such events.

**Alumni/ae information:**

- A. The total number of alumni/ae within a one hundred mile radius of Alma as well as the total number nationwide.
- B. An outline of training programs for faculty advisors, chapter advisors, alumni boards and other volunteers assisting the chapter.

**Summary of Colonization Plan:**

- A. A summary of the financial assistance the national office and chapter alumni/ae are prepared to provide the colony/chapter.
- B. An outline of the national support for the new colony, in terms of on-site supervision.
- C. A listing of the scholarship and programming requirements expected of the colony.
- D. A listing of the social issues programs and philanthropy & community service programs expected of the colony.
- E. An outline of membership qualifications, intake policies and techniques.
- F. A copy of the policies and procedures for disciplining colonies/chapters.
- G. A report describing the plan for housing (if any), and related housing policy and procedure.

**Stage Two: Document Review**

The information requested above will be reviewed by the Student Life Office. The decision to invite a national organization to participate in the next round will be based in part on the following criteria:

- A. The completeness of the materials submitted.
- B. The record of success of the national organization in establishing and supporting current colonies.
- C. The ability of the national organization to actively support its chapters on a national, regional and local level.
- D. The perceived compatibility between the College's mission and that of the national organization.
- E. The ability of the College and the national organization to secure adequate housing for the colony/chapter.
- F. Any historical relationship between the College, the national organization, and alumni members of the organization, as well as the quality of that relationship.
- G. The commitment of local alumni to actively support the chapter.
- H. In cases where more than one application for colonization is being reviewed, the committee will select as many as three national organizations to participate in the campus visit.

**Stage Three: Visitation Stage**

The Student Life Office may invite up to three (3) candidate organizations to visit the campus and make presentations for the purpose of mutual evaluation.

The Greek Life Advisor shall compose a letter to those finalists inviting them to campus to meet with the Student Life Office, the Inter-Fraternity Council, the Panhellenic Council and other select groups in order to share the philosophies and programs of the organization.

The national representative visiting campus should be prepared to discuss:

- A. The history of the organization.
- B. The goals and objectives of the organization.
- C. The standards of behavior for members.

- D. The plans for educational programs, including leadership development, scholarship and community service.
- E. Any unique programs that offer something currently not available in Greek life at Alma College.
- F. Any contributions the colony/chapter will make to the quality of student life at Alma.

## Stage Four: Evaluation and Decision

At the conclusion of the visitations, the Student Life Office will evaluate the value each organization can bring to Alma College. Only those national organizations invited to visit shall be considered for colonization. If no consensus is reached to invite one or more of the visiting fraternities to campus, the process may begin anew.

Possible recommendations from the committee to the President of Alma College are:

- A. **Extend no invitations at this time.** Such a recommendation would include specific reasons for declining colonization and, if applicable, when another presentation may be made.
- B. **Request more information.** The committee would identify specific materials to aid them in making a final decision.
- C. **Extend an invitation to colonize.** The committee would recommend one or more of the visiting organizations be colonized at Alma. Should the President agree, a registered letter would be sent to the national headquarters formalizing the College's decision.

## Stage Five: Colonization

### Pre-Colonization Requirements

Once a national headquarters has been invited to colonize on the Alma College campus, the following processes and procedures must be completed before any students at Alma College are contacted or colonization is advertised.

- A. **General Liability.** The national headquarters must provide the College with a certificate of insurance. The organization must have \$1 million per occurrence and \$2 million in aggregate of liability insurance and shall name Alma College as an additional insurer on the certificate. Coverage must be written with companies reasonably acceptable to the College.
- B. **Alumni/ae Board.** The national organization, in cooperation with the College, must establish an active alumni board consisting of at least five (5) alumni, with one member designated as the chapter advisor. The board must be trained by the national organization. The alumni board must meet at least once before beginning the colonization process.
- C. **Time Frame.** The timeframe for active colonization must be established. Active colony status must extend for at least one academic year and no more than two. The beginning date for colonization shall be decided by the national organization in consultation with the Greek Life Advisor.
- D. **Budget and Finance Plan.** The national organization should provide a budget plan equivalent in length of time to the colonization plan.

## **Colonization Criteria**

An organization selected to colonize must agree to the following criteria:

- A. The initial “interest group” recruitment period for the colony must occur after the formal membership recruitment period for the Regular Members of Inter-fraternity Council or Panhellenic Council. Alma College has a deferred recruitment process and therefore formal recruitment takes place during the winter semester. Colony interest group recruitment must abide by the same member qualifications as outlined by the College for currently recognized chapters.
- B. The initial minimum interest group size must be at least 40% of the current average chapter size of the regular members.
- C. The colony must secure the support of a faculty/academic advisor within the first 60 days of colonization.
- D. Newly recognized colonies/chapters residing in recognized chapter housing will maintain their houses as “substance-free, alcohol-free” facilities.
- E. A member of the national organization’s professional staff shall be required to facilitate the recruitment and education processes for the colony throughout its colonization.
- F. The colony will be granted provisional member status in the Inter-fraternity Council or Panhellenic Council. Provisional status carries with it all the rights and responsibilities of regular membership with the exception of voting in Council business.
  - Groups not belonging to NIC or NPC will become associated members of Alma College’s IFC and Panhellenic Council, with a move to their own governing boards if more chapters from their respective national “umbrella” entity colonize at Alma College.
- G. The colony must comply with College, Greek governance, national organization and governmental agency rules and regulations.
- H. The College agrees to provide the colony with the same advising and services provided to all recognized chapters.
- I. The colony must become an approved organization by Alma College Student Congress.

Additional criteria may be established in the case of organizations seeking re-colonization on campus. Failure to abide by any of these criteria may result in the premature conclusion of the colonization process.

## **Colonization Requirements**

The following requirements must be met for at least two consecutive semesters for the colony to be considered for full chapter recognition. Statements of progress on meeting the conditions of the status will be forwarded to the Student Life Office at the end of each semester by the Greek Life Advisor. The Greek Life Advisor may request additional information.

- A. The colony shall have a national representative visit at least twice each semester throughout colonization. The purpose of these visits is to evaluate the progress of the colony and provide suggestions for improvement.
- B. The chapter advisor will attend colony meetings and hold monthly meetings with the Greek Life Advisor.
- C. The colony will develop and adopt its own governing documents.
- D. Colony officers will meet with the Greek Life Advisor every other week.

E. The colony will meet at least monthly with the Alumni/ae Board.

### Stage Six: Full Chapter Membership

When all colony criteria and procedures have been fulfilled for no less than two consecutive semesters, the group may petition the Student Life Office for recognized chapter status. The petition must include:

- A. A copy of the organization's governing documents as developed during the colonization process.
- B. A listing of all colony members, past and present.
- C. Letters of endorsement from the faculty advisor, the chapter advisor, the national organization, and the Inter-fraternity Council or Panhellenic Council.
- E. A letter from the Greek Life Advisor attesting to the colony's completion of all requirements.

The Student Life Office will review the petition and may choose to speak directly with colony representatives. The committee will then forward its recommendation to the President of Alma College who will review the petition and determine whether to grant college chapter recognition. Once a colony is formally recognized for chapter status it gains full privileges of recognition as a chapter. If a colony fails to receive chapter status at this time, the organization may continue as a colony up until the two-year time limit, at which time it will be expected to disband. Groups failing to receive chapter status within two years must wait at least one year before reapplying for expansion consideration.