



**GRAND VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY[®]**

**FRATERNITY AND
SORORITY LIFE**

EXPANSION PACKET GUIDELINES FOR GREEK-LETTER ORGANIZATIONS

Revised Winter 2021

INTRODUCTION

Grand Valley State University (GVSU) supports its students' right to assemble and form groups based on a shared mission. The GVSU Office of Student Life empowers students to effectively engage with their communities through intentionally designed and inclusive programs, services and environments. Student Life fosters learning, development, wellness, and success for students at Grand Valley State University.

Separate recognition guidelines have been developed for Greek-letter organizations due to their complex and unique nature. The Expansion Procedures for Greek-letter Organizations allows Grand Valley State University to carefully manage the growth of its Greek community and help to ensure a healthy, safe, thriving fraternity/sorority community.

Grand Valley State University recognizes that the expansion of Greek-letter organizations involves several parties: the inter/national fraternity or sorority, Governing Council, the University, and in some cases, a student interest group and/or Parent Governing Council. The expansion process, whenever possible, will take into consideration the interests of all parties. It should be noted, however, that the University reserves the right to deny recognition to any group that expresses interest.

This expansion process is intended for organizations affiliated with an Inter/ National Organization and is a current member of one of the following governing bodies: National Panhellenic Conference (NPC), National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC), National Multicultural Greek Council, Inc. (NMGC), National Association of Latino Fraternal Organization (NALFO), National Asian Pacific Panhellenic Association (NAPA), or North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC). Inter/ National Fraternity and Sorority Headquarters may not solicit or recruit Grand Valley State University students to establish interest groups without being approved through the outlined Fraternity & Sorority Expansion Policy.

Fraternally Yours,

Chris McQueen, M.Ed
Associate Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life

1 EXPANSION COMMITTEE

Expansion Committee

The Fraternity and Sorority Life Expansion Committee (Expansion Committee) shall manage the initial consideration of matters pertaining to the expansion of councils and/or chapters into the Grand Valley State University Fraternity and Sorority life community.

The Expansion Committee will consist of the Director of Student Life, Associate Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life, Assistant Director of Student Organizations, two student representatives from each council (one executive board member and one at large member), and Graduate Apprentices for Fraternity and Sorority Life. The Associate Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life will serve as the chairperson of the committee.

Duties and Responsibilities

The duties of the committee will be to solicit, organize, and review the applications or requests of organizations seeking membership in the Grand Valley State University Fraternity and Sorority life community. The committee will assess the viability of Greek-letter organization expansion prior to soliciting applications for review as well as the existing University need for the individual organization seeking membership.

- Solicitation and information related to potential expansion opportunities will be available online following the winter semester each academic year.
- Applications for consideration will be accepted throughout the summer. The deadline to submit applications is October 1 each academic year.
- The committee will convene in October to begin the review process for all applications.
- The committee will complete the review of applications no later than April of the submitting academic year.
- The committee will oversee the creation and expansion of new Greek Councils at GVSU using the framework set forth in this policy.
- The committee will review the Expansion Policy each year in conjunction with the Student Activities Policies and Procedures summer review.

2 EXPANSION PROCESS

New and former Greek letter organizations must be approved through the expansion process adopted within the [Registered Student Organization Handbook](#) (RSO Handbook) and administrated by the Office of Student Life. The timeline for each application review will begin in October and will be completed by April each academic year. The scope is as follows:

I. Review by Expansion Committee

The application process begins by contacting the Associate Director of Fraternity & Sorority Life. A formal application is then completed by the applying organization and submitted to the Expansion Committee for review.

1. **Expansion Viability Assessment:** The Fraternity & Sorority Life staff within the Office of Student Life will conduct an Expansion Viability Assessment for the Expansion Committee after the completion of the winter semester. The assessment tracks overall enrollment, recruitment/intake statistics, new member class size, council size, success of prior expansion approvals, and the at-risk organizations in each council. This assessment will determine whether the committee will accept expansion applications for a given council.
2. **Initial Review:** The chairperson of the Expansion Committee will conduct an initial review of the proposed documents to ensure full completion of all requested materials.
3. **Committee Review:** The Expansion Committee will review all materials submitted for charter in the shared standards sections after receiving the completed document from the petitioning organization.
4. **Determination of Council:** Based on the mission and affiliation of the national organization, the Expansion Committee will determine which governing council the petitioning organization may be considered for if chartered at GVSU.
5. **Invitation to Present:** The Expansion Committee will determine whether the petitioning organization will be invited to prepare a presentation for the appropriate governing council and the Expansion Committee. If the petitioning organization is moved forward in the process, the organization will be extended an invitation to give a presentation in person on campus or virtually to both the Expansion Committee and the designated governing council.
6. **Council Vote on Expansion:** Following the presentation the governing council will then conduct their expansion voting procedures outlined in their constitution. Based on the voting outcome, a recommendation for approval or denial will then be made by the governing council to the Expansion Committee. An official letter from the governing council president containing specific reasons as to why the governing council wishes to extend an invitation to join the governing council or not will be sent to the Expansion Committee.
7. **Council Placement:** The Expansion Committee may determine to place a petitioning chapter on a designated council even if the council does not recommend membership.
8. **Final Committee Expansion Vote:** After the Expansion Committee reviews the letter from the governing council, the fraternity/ sorority must then receive approval of $\frac{3}{4}$ (three-fourths) votes of the total Expansion Committee to be approved to colonize and enter the council.

II. Review by Student Organization Review Board

Once approved by the Expansion Committee, the applying organization must be formally approved for charter and recognition from the Office of Student Life through the [Student Organization Review Board](#) to become an official student organization. If the organization is returning, additional documentation may be required.

- The Expansion Committee will make a recommendation within the official student organization chartering process as outlined by the Office of Student Life through the Student Organization Review Board.
- The Student Organization Review Board will provide significant consideration to the recommendation of the Expansion Committee when determining the charter of Greek-letter organizations.
- The Student Organization Review Board submits recommendations for approval /dismissal to the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students for final review and approval/dissmissal.

III. Expansion Procedures

In order for expansion to occur, 2/3 (two-thirds) of the chapters in a council must be at full chapter status as defined by the national organization. Expansion of Greek-letter organizations cannot exceed adding one new chapter per council per academic year.

I. Formal Application from a National Office

A. Formal Application

The formal application will include but is not limited to the following:

1. A letter of petition explaining the purpose and intent of the organization. This letter shall also include the justification and interest in affiliating with GVSU.
2. If applicable, an official letter of intent on letterhead from the inter/national organization stating that the inter/national organization has knowledge of the interest group with an outline of the support the inter/national organization will give the group along with their requirements for chartering.
3. Completion of the official application for [New Student Organization](#) charter documents as outlined within the policies of the Office of Student Life.
4. If applicable, provide verification if the inter/national organization is affiliated with any of the following:
 - a. National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC)
 - b. North-American Interfraternity Conference (NIC)
 - c. National Association of Latino Fraternal Organizations (NALFO)
 - d. National Multicultural Greek Council (NMGC)
 - e. National Asian Pacific Islander American Panhellenic Association (NAPA)
 - f. National Panhellenic Conference (NPC)
5. If the organization is attempting to reactivate a previously approved charter, documentation of the status of good standing must be included regarding judicial and financial matters from both the University and the affiliated national organization. This information will be gained through the Dean of Students Office, the petitioned council, or the national office.

B. Student Organization Documentation

Copies of the following inter/national organization policies, procedures, and programs:

1. Required Information:

- Name of organization
- Founding date and location
- Membership statistics:
 - Current number of chapters and colonies – include locations
 - Current number of undergraduate members and alumni/ae
 - Average chapter size
 - Number of chapters closed in the last five years and their reasons for closing
- Membership costs: new member, initiation fees, membership dues
- National organization leadership and location

2. Program Policies:

- Plan of consultations and supervision for establishing a colony
- Position statements and trainings on hazing, alcohol and sexual violence prevention
- Intake policies and guidelines (if applicable)
- Complete new member program
- Minimum standards for potential new members
- Scholarship/academic support programs
- Community service and philanthropy programs/requirements
- Sample chapter constitution and bylaws
- Leadership/member development programs
- Code of conduct/standards/judicial procedures
- Risk management program and/or policy
- Proof of Insurance (copy of insurance certificate of at least \$1,000,000.00 coverage with Grand Valley State University listed as an additional insured.)
- COVID-19 Action plans and support
- Notification of any pending legal action being taken against other chapters and/or the inter/national organization

3. Organizational support:

- List of all chapters and locations
- Volunteer support at the district and local level
- Approval from the inter/national organization to colonize
- Nearest chapter(s)
- Number of alumni/ae in the West Michigan area

C. *Advisor and Alumnae Advisor(s) Documentation*

1. The name, address, telephone number and email address of a faculty/staff from GVSU who has agreed to serve as an advisor must be provided, as well as a signed, written statement from this person of a willingness to serve within this capacity.
2. The name, address, telephone number and email address of the chapter alumni/ae advisor(s), as well as a signed written statement from this person of a willingness to serve in this capacity.

II. Formal Application from a Group of Students

If the request is being made by a group of students currently enrolled, the interested students must notify the Associate Director of Fraternity & Sorority Life of their desire to charter a fraternity/sorority.

1. If the interest group has a particular inter/national fraternity/sorority they want to affiliate with, the interest group will provide the name of the National fraternity/sorority to the Associate Director of Fraternity & Sorority Life.
2. The Associate Director of Fraternity & Sorority Life will contact the National fraternity/sorority to see what the interest of the inter/national Organization is in expanding to GVSU.
3. If the inter/national fraternity/sorority is interested in GVSU, then the Expansion Policy will be sent to the inter/national Headquarters for their review and subsequent application.
4. All aforementioned requirements are applicable once the steps above are completed.

III. Reactivation Process

This policy provides students, alumni group/graduate chapter members, and inter/national offices with information relating to reactivation of a previously chartered Greek-letter organization.

1. Before initiating contact with potential new members, students and/or members of an alumni group/graduate chapter or national organization wishing to reactivate an organization will contact the Associate Director of Fraternity & Sorority Life.
2. In the case that a chapter was expelled or dissolved due to judicial or disciplinary action, the chapter must also have completed all necessary sanctions previously required by the national organization, Grand Valley State University, or any governing entity.
3. Inactive status is defined as one or more of the following:

- Organizations with less than five members for two consecutive semesters will be declared inactive by the Office of Student Life.
- Current membership does not meet grade eligibility standards for student organization participation
- Organizational roster has not been updated in two (2) semesters
- Chapter president has not attended Fraternity & Sorority Life Summit in one semester. Compliance is reached when any president attends the training.
- No University approved events have occurred within the last two (2) semesters

B. Organizations Inactive for Disciplinary Reasons

Organizations suspended for conduct or disciplinary purposes either by the university or the inter/national organization may not be considered for reactivation until one or all of the following criterion are met **(1)** all members of the suspended chapter have either left the institution and/or a minimum of five years have passed; **(2)** the group has a written commitment from a GVSU faculty/staff to serve as an advisor; **(3)** a letter from the Director of Conduct and Conflict Resolution has been sent to the Expansion Committee affirming compliance with all noted sanctions and recommendations including, but not limited to, involvement from the members who were involved in the incident, monies owed to Grand Valley State University and/or their council, and/or any pending legal processes. The designated Council Judicial Board will determine which criterion must be met during the sanctioning phase of the conduct hearing.

A formal appeal of this expectation may only be reconsidered by the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students.

The organization will complete the expansion process as outlined in this stated policy. If the petitioning organization is considered for expansion, the presentation may include, but is not limited to 1) the steps the chapter will take to ensure polices are in place and adhered to and, 2) structures that have been developed to address any pervious issues as well as other as questions submitted by the Expansion Committee.

Disciplinary Revocation of international Charter

The university automatically removes any organization whose local charter/chapter is revoked or dissolved for disciplinary reasons by its inter/national charter authority for the period of time indicated by the inter/national office. Such groups are able to apply for active status under the same terms as groups under disciplinary sanction by the university.