

NAPA Open Expansion Policy

In the interests of collaborative work and the growth of the NAPA community, NAPA embraces an open expansion policy¹:

- To educate undergraduate chapters about the benefits of open expansion and the growth of the fraternity/sorority community at their respective institution.
- To ensure that when a NAPA member organization would like to expand to a campus at which there already exists NAPA member organizations, full support will be given to the interested organization.
- The support which will include, but shouldn't be limited to, will be:
 - Supporting and voting to approve the opening of expansion to the council in which NAPA member organizations are members of.
 - Voting **"Yes"** to allow the interested NAPA member organization to charter (may not abstain).

Please remember that you are a representative in the council by being affiliated with your organization; an organization which holds membership in NAPA. All policies set forth by NAPA must meet compliance.

Purpose

When many people hear the words "open expansion," they envision a chaotic rush of random groups coming to campus and overwhelming the community and administrative resources. True open expansion is that the opportunity to call a university home should always be available, but that the national organizations should collaborate with the local councils and the university for mutual success.

Open expansion can take many forms:

- University realizes the need for new national fraternities or sororities and markets the opportunity. Potential member organizations express an interest and the campus works closely with interested organizations to create a timeline for all of them to expand on campus in a manner that increases the chance of success.
- Students on campus come together to create an interest group that seeks recognition from an organization that is not already represented on campus. Interested students are supported by the national organization as they see recognition from the university and a local greek council. The interest group is given the opportunity to recruit and participate in fraternity and sorority community activities.
- The national organization identifies a campus they believe fits its values and growth plan. The national organization works closely with the university and council to identify strategies for success while building a collaborative relationship centered on new opportunities for students on that campus.

¹ <http://www.napahq.org/join/#expansion>



We should frame the idea of open expansion as one where the university, local councils, and interested national organizations want to be successful by working together to increase the opportunities available to students to find the right fit. It should not be a selection process where national organizations are required to jump through proverbial hoops.

A common university practice is to require national organizations to submit detailed reports about their expansion plan, alumni engagement, ideal members, or any number of other relevant statistics. These reports are then scrutinized by the campus, a select number of “finalists” are chosen for a presentation, and the campus selects a specific number of “winners” who will get the opportunity to expand in a pre-determined order. The Standard of Open Expansion should be thought of as a conversation of mutual success where the national organization wants to use resources on a campus where they can establish a chapter and the university wants a national organization that will enhance the lives of the students on their campus.

NAPA member organizations all agree that expansion will enhance the fraternal community when it is done freely and in collaboration with the university. The national organization and the university are partners in the expansion effort and neither wants to fail.

Ultimately, every fraternity and sorority started with a group of students coming together and choosing to be called by the letters they represent. Today, the university, local greek councils, and national fraternities/sororities must unite around the common goal of success and support one another in the collaborative effort of advancing the fraternity community. Open expansion creates an environment of growth that is sustainable and relevant to the campus community.

NAPA Response to Common Concerns

The principle of open expansion is supportive of the associational rights of students to freely associate with peers and organizations of their choice. NAPA supports the associational rights of its members, while encouraging them to work as a good faith partner with colleges and universities. As we work together, NAPA and its member organizations seek equity in the application of student policy that permits students to form groups and organizations through established student organization registration processes. Expansion also represents an opportunity to elevate a fraternal community by bringing in new groups that will infuse energy into a community, challenge the status quo, and create additional opportunities for personal and leadership development. Below are responses to responds to commonly expressed concerns.

We aren't ready for another chapter.

As is the case with any student organization, students and student interest will decide if and when a campus is ready for another fraternity chapter. NAPA has confidence in the students deciding if a particular chapter is offering something of value to its members. If it is, then students will join the organization and if it isn't, then it will die out quickly. It's up to the students to decide which organization provides value.

We have to build up the weak chapters before we expand.

Chapters become weakened due to many factors: Poor recruitment techniques, cliques, hazing, lack of enforcement of risk management policies, lack of interest, poor internal leadership, weak mentoring by alumni, financial mismanagement, etc. Students listen to what is being promised during recruitment and if it isn't delivered after they become a member then they become disenchanting and drift away. Membership at that point has lost its value. The college/university and the fraternity/sorority advisor are not responsible for the success or survival of a chapter. Continued support for struggling chapters is only advantageous if there is a clear road to recovery and all parties are heavily invested in the process. Additionally, adding a new, strong chapter will force weak chapters to "up their game" or risk dying out. Either way, a rising tide lifts all boats.

We don't have the resources to provide to another chapter.

A campus fraternity/sorority advisor, already overworked and overburdened, may think of expansion and become concerned about their ability to continue to support additional chapters. That shouldn't be the response. A new chapter is one more opportunity for developing leadership, and the development of lifelong friendships; which will result in more invested alumni for the college/university, and additional philanthropic and community service efforts. Expansion represents an opportunity to work with an additional national fraternity, and in doing so, brings more resources and support to a campus community. Expansion is an investment in a group of students and a campus community. Through this, there are significant opportunities to develop long term partnerships that are beneficial to the organization, campus, and most importantly, the students that are seeking a fraternal experience. Undergraduate students have the right to determine with whom they will associate, and if a particular experience is right for them. The university won't recognize a new chapter because the student greek council won't recognize them and vice-versa. This circle is unprincipled and intended to protect those who restrain free-trade and protect their perceived turf. Additionally, it is an inequitable application of student policy.

Each fraternity chapter can be considered a small business whose products should be the development of lifelong friendships, the development of leadership qualities and experience, the achievement of high academic accomplishments, and the development of philanthropic and community service activities. Chapters that fulfill those promises will find long-term success. For chapters that fall short, the chances of success are dubious. We owe it to students to continue to provide them an opportunity to choose. Expansion creates competition that promotes growth and progress. Expansion builds opportunities for values based fraternal experiences that are a benefit to individual students, host institutions, and the local community.