

Expansion Policy

Cornell University Criteria for Sorority and Fraternity Expansion

In order for a sorority or fraternity to operate as an active organization within the Cornell University community, it must be recognized by the University and it must be affiliated with one of the three independent governing councils: the Interfraternity Council (IFC), the Multicultural Greek Letter Council (MGLC), or the Panhellenic Council (PHC). These three organizations work collaboratively through the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life (OSFL) which is part of Campus and Community Engagement (CCE) in the Division of Student Campus Life (SCL).

Organizations seeking University Recognition must first receive permission from the OSFL to begin the expansion process before proceeding to the Growth Committee. A chapter from which the University has withdrawn University Recognition is prohibited from seeking permission to commence the expansion process until the complete time of the suspension has lapsed. There may be exceptions allowing a chapter to apply prior to the suspension lapsing. Those exceptions are at the discretion of the Executive Director of Campus and Community Engagement.. With the approval of the Growth Committee and the undergraduate council, as well as the permission of the Director of Sorority and Fraternity Life and the Executive Director of Campus and Community Engagement, an organization will be eligible to begin the process of establishing an active organization with University Recognition. The expansion process includes the following detailed steps and expectations.

Growth Committee:

This is an ad hoc committee appointed by the Director of OSFL with approval from the Executive Director of Campus and Community Engagement or their designees.

The Growth Committee is composed of undergraduate student members of sororities and fraternities, unaffiliated students, staff from OSFL and also the wider University community, faculty as available, and sorority and fraternity alumni. Please see Appendix A. The Growth Committee will have two chairs (one sorority or fraternity alumnus and one undergraduate sorority or fraternity member) who will be appointed annually by the Director of OSFL with the approval of the Executive Director of Campus and Community Engagement or his or her designee.

All applications for expansion are due to the Growth Committee by either September 15, if organizations wish to have their applications considered in the fall semester, or February 1, if organizations wish to have their applications considered in the spring semester.. The Growth Committee will review all requests received by the applicable deadline and will use reasonable efforts to review the applications and make recommendations within one month of the submission deadline. The Growth Committee review and recommendation process may exceed one month from submission deadline depending on the number of applications received and whether the Growth Committee requires supplemental information. All recommendations of the Growth Committee are subject to the approval of the Director of Sorority and Fraternity Life and the Executive Director of Campus and Community Engagement.

The Growth Committee will determine the number of sororities or fraternities that may begin in a given academic year. A vote of at least 60% of the membership of the Growth Committee is needed to affirm a recommendation. If the Growth Committee does not recommend a sorority or fraternity be approved, they will give the sorority or fraternity guidance regarding a timeline to reapply. If the Growth Committee recommends a sorority or fraternity's return to campus, the independent governing council the sorority or fraternity would belong to must also recommend the sorority or fraternity's return. This is done by a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of the respective independent governing council. If there is not a regularly scheduled meeting within 15 business days of the Growth Committee's recommendation, the council vote may be taken electronically. The recommendations of both the Growth Committee and the respective independent governing council are forwarded to the Director of OSFL as well as the Executive Director of Campus and Community Engagement, The Director and Executive Director will use reasonable efforts to make a final determination within 15 business days of receiving both the Growth Committee and the independent governing council recommendations. (but may exceed 15 business days). *(For Panhellenic sororities, the NPC preferred expansion process will be followed as described in the most recent Manual of Information, however, the Director and Executive Director have ultimate decision-making authority).

The Growth Committee may also be used to advise sororities and fraternities struggling with membership numbers. This advising can be done via meetings, conversations with alumni and national representatives, and increased mentorship or support regarding opportunities to build membership.

I Provisional Status

A. Notification and Deadlines. Sororities and fraternities seeking to establish an active organization must first notify the OSFL of their intent to return. If OSFL grants the organization permission to begin the expansion process, OSFL will then communicate the deadline(s) of the Growth Committee to the organization. The sorority or fraternity must apply to the Growth Committee by the established deadline for the semester. If the deadline for the current semester has passed, the sorority or fraternity must wait until the next deadline. Those persons submitting the application must be authorized to speak on behalf of the organization (i.e. an Inter/National officer of the organization, Director of Expansion, Inter/Nationally-appointed spokesperson, alumni corporation officer, etc.).

B. Application Components. The following is an outline of information that should be included in an application to be reviewed by the Growth Committee. The petitioning Inter/National Greek-letter organization should also provide the Growth Committee with the following information by the established deadline:

- Evidence of alumni/ae support along with the name and contact information of prospective chapter advisors.
- The number of founding members interested in starting the chapter (if applicable) and target number to be recruited through expansion effort.
- Information about the Inter/National organization's strength and presence on other college campuses.

- Information about recent new chapter efforts this group has completed
- An inter/national Anti-Hazing Policy or statement.
- An inter/national inclusion statement or anti-discrimination statement/policy.
- A written constitution and bylaws for the proposed organization which demonstrates alignment of organization's values and mission with those of the University.
- A brief statement of the organization's history, including number of chapters and growth rates, Inter/National philanthropy or community service initiatives, scholarship achievement programs, leadership development, educational programming (diversity, time management, substance abuse, sexual harassment/assault, etc.), commitment to campus community health, goals, and values.
- Identify chapters at neighboring colleges or universities.
- Note any previous chapter presence at Cornell; list times and reasons for absences.
- A letter of endorsement from the charter-granting Inter/National organization. This letter will include a detailed explanation of the resources to be devoted to the expansion process, including the name and contact information of the person(s) charged with leading the effort.
- The Inter/National organization's plan to ensure effective chapter operations and officer training once new members have been initiated.
- A copy of the group's risk management policy, including the organization's certificate of insurance which must be in compliance with [Cornell's Recognition Policy requirements](#) (insurance coverage).
- Acknowledge that Cornell is a deferred recruitment campus. No chapter will recruit first semester students.
- A detailed outline of the chapter's new member orientation/education program or membership intake process implemented by its founding members, which must address the following areas:
 1. Purpose of the program – why is a process necessary
 2. Goals of the program – what are the desired outcomes of the program?
 3. A detailed calendar of activities, day by day; a description of the activities and what desired outcome(s) they intend to achieve; and, how the activities and desired outcomes align with the values and mission of the organization and those of the University.
 4. Length of the program (must be no longer than 4 weeks)
 5. Responsibilities of new members and chapter members and officers

6. Demonstrated knowledge/understanding of university anti-hazing policies
7. Financial obligations for new members and continuing membership
8. Demonstrate how this information will be shared up-front with potential members and all members going forward

C. Applying Following Prior Withdrawal of University Recognition. An organization requesting University Provisional Recognition or Probationary Recognition (as discussed below) following a period of disciplinary separation must also submit a Chapter Improvement Plan ("CIP") to the Growth Committee addressing the specific issues that led to the separation, as well as a general plan to effectively manage risk. Additionally, the plan must detail the alumni and Inter/National organization plan for thorough support of the organization, both in the initial expansion phase, and the long-term running of the organization. It is strongly recommended that the group work with the OSFL staff to design this plan. It is important to acknowledge that the length of time University Recognition was withdrawn is only the minimum duration for which the organization will not be eligible for recognition. The conclusion of that disciplinary period is not the date upon which the organization can return or regains recognized status.

If the terms of a university disciplinary action withdrawing recognition for a minimum specified period provides that the organization may return only upon Probationary Recognition [<http://ccengagement.cornell.edu/fraternity-sorority-life/greek-community...>], that organization may follow the procedures for Provisional Recognition set forth herein but may only be granted Probationary Recognition according to the terms of the prior university disciplinary decision. Probationary Recognition may include specific sanctions or limitations as may be deemed appropriate by the Director of Sorority and Fraternity Life and the Executive Director of Campus and Community Engagement.

D. Recruitment. Organizations obtaining recommendations to proceed with expansion from the Growth Committee and council, and final approval from the Director of Sorority and Fraternity Life and the Executive Director of Campus and Community Engagement, will be granted the opportunity to proceed with a referral based recruitment effort to identify student interest. This does include participation in any approved formal or informal recruitment periods of the independent governing council. If the recruitment effort is successful in recruiting the agreed upon initial class of members, Provisional (or Probationary) Recognition will be granted upon confirming undergraduate officers/representative members and being granted associate membership with one of the independent governing councils (IFC/MGLC/PHC). Each have individual guidelines for membership and should therefore be consulted directly.

E. Provisional Recognition Terms. Consistent with the Recognition Policy [<http://ccengagement.cornell.edu/fraternity-sorority-life/greek-community...>], provisional recognition is afforded for one-year increments, beginning with the semester during the period of re-establishment of a formerly active chapter or the initial establishment of a new chapter. During the expansion period, the organization will actively participate in community-wide and University activities such as attend council meetings and educational programs, and pay council dues. The council typically waives council dues the first semester, subject to council approval.

At the end of the specified period, the chapter must apply for Full Recognition or may request to remain at Provisional Status for a period not to exceed four years. If applying for Full Recognition, the chapter must acknowledge that they intend to comply with the Criteria for Full Recognition at the end of the provisional period.

Provisionally Recognized chapters are entitled to the following benefits:

- Provisional chapters may register chapter social events with the OSFL 4 weeks from the date of the initiation of their founding new member class.
- Provisional chapters may attend and participate in all of the programming and events of the OSFL and the respective council.
- Provisionally recognized chapters are afforded the benefits granted by the Recognition Policy which can be found at <http://ccengagement.cornell.edu/fraternity-sorority-life/greek-community-cornell/rights-responsibilities/recognition-policy>, Letter F.

II Full Recognition

A. Applying for Full Recognition. Chapters will notify the OSFL, in writing, one month prior to the date they wish to make their presentation for Full Recognition.. Chapters petitioning for Full Recognition must have received their charter from their Inter/National organization. The Director of OSFL and Executive Director of Campus and Community Engagement or their designee will determine full recognition in conjunction with the independent governing council's written policies regarding Full Recognition. The chapter will provide, in writing, the following items two weeks in advance of their presentation:

- Total Membership Development plan, to include new member orientation and development efforts for current members based on developmental stage.
- Statement of purpose- include specific goals, objectives and programs current and for the upcoming year.
- Evidence that the chapter has complied with its constitution and bylaws as set forth in the initial expansion process.
- A summary of all activities and accomplishments that support their petition for recognition.
- Letters of endorsement from Chapter Advisor(s) and other community members.
- A review of existing judicial incidents – keeping in mind that any infraction is grounds to immediately revoke, or deny request for, Recognition.
- A review of attendance and participation in council and OSFL events and training.
- Proof of required liability insurance for the chapter that meets the requirements of the [Cornell University Recognition Policy](#) (a certificate of insurance).

- A letter of endorsement from the charter-granting organization –
- A membership list containing each member’s name, net ID and other contact information, including local address. The chapter must demonstrate evidence of how they will support a functional budget, council dues, and insurance requirements.
- Evidence that the chapter has met the expectations outlined in the Fraternity and Sorority System Core Principles and the criteria for Full Recognition set forth in the Recognition Policy for Fraternities and Sororities, Letter E.

Amended 9/1/17

Appendix A

Growth Committee Membership

- 1 MGLC Alumnus
- 1 Panhellenic Alumna
- 1 IFC Alumnus
- 1 OSFL Staff Member
- 1 Faculty Member
- 2 additional University staff
- 1 MGLC undergraduate student
- 1 IFC undergraduate student
- 1 PHC undergraduate student
- 1 unaffiliated student
- 1 additional alumnus from a council will be added when the chapter applying falls under their council

Chairs will be one alumnus member and one affiliated undergraduate member from the list above.