



HOW TO RE-START MY CHAPTER

ACACIA FRATERNITY

How To Re-Start My Chapter

Being an Acasian is an experience that ideally lasts longer than our undergraduate years. It can be a lifelong experience. For many Acasians, the experience as alumni members spans a much longer breadth of time than the undergraduate years. Yet at times, it comes to pass that our “home chapter” is no longer active.

There is (almost) always hope of a return to campus whenever an Acacia Chapter is closed. This document intends to point you in the right direction if you wish to pursue re-colonization, or wish to support the development of a chapter in your local community.

First, let’s take a look at Acacia’s International Expansion Policy:

PHILOSOPHY: Our approach is simultaneously methodical and open. We only colonize or re-colonize at a campus in which the situation is favorable to our success. Currently, this translates into one campus per semester. Typically, this allows as much time as necessary to achieve a high colony success rate and simultaneously achieve a comprehensive package of chapter programming from the start.

Acacia HQ Basic Expansion Procedure

1. Scan environment for institutions at which conditions could be favorable for expansion.
2. Seek an invitation from the institution. Commonly through a formal presentation led by the Executive Director or other staff, unless advised differently from the institution administration.
3. Identify alumni support - with a goal of recruiting at minimum a colony advisor and faculty advisor. Ideally recruit team of 5 Alumni Advisory Team members & an incorporated housing association.
4. Acacia headquarters leads planning & execution of expansion project. What each project looks like can vary widely depending on the situation, and must be planned for case-by-case.
5. Recruit undergraduates for the colony with a goal of at least forty-five men the first year (this will vary in relation to size of campus and size of existing chapters).
6. On-Going coaching & consistent communication year-to-year is necessary to ensure the success of the colony. Both headquarters staff and volunteers from the local area must commit their time in order to build a strong group.

After reviewing this document, if you are interested in furthering the conversation with Acacia headquarters, contact Director of Expansion & Recruitment Jerod Miles at jmiles@acacia.org



When and why did the chapter leave campus?

The question when looking at a re-colonization project is when and why did was the chapter closed before. Was it a conduct issue? Was it a current chapter culture at the time? Was it a campus culture? Whatever the issue is, the next step is to discover what events led to closing the chapter, and develop a plan to address areas of concern. After all these questions have been answered, the next step will be to contact the university.

Contacting the University and What Questions to Ask

To be clear, the Executive Director of Acacia Fraternity, Patrick McGovern, kindly requests that interested alumni contact and reach him directly before contacting your host institution regarding re-colonizing. Patrick can be reached at pmcgovern@acacia.org or (317)872-8210.

Having the university's support is key to a successful re-colonization process, and it can be a complicated situation to approach, especially if our chapter was closed for disciplinary reasons. The more supportive the institution is to our return, the more likely our success is.

The point of contact can go one of two ways: either an interested alumni from the chapter can reach out to the university, or a direct call from headquarters to show international fraternity support. Regardless of who calls, several questions should be answered from both sides at this point. The caller should work with alumni in the area to make sure these questions will have answers before the call begins.

The first question that should be answered is why we left and what we are doing to prevent this from occurring again. Some universities keep this information on file, but others may not know the story as to why we previously left, especially as the time frame from our last time on campus grows longer.

From there let's focus on the questions we have for the university, and others in the community, to better understand the campus culture. It is helpful to have multiple perspectives on the following questions (for example, talk to university and also talk to several alumni chapter advisors). The following are questions that would be helpful for local alumni to assist headquarters staff in compiling answers.

What is the fraternity and sorority life culture like today on campus? This open question will give them an opportunity to tell us the good and the bad of the community. From this question we may get a good read on the possibility of a future expansion.

What is the IFC policy on expansion and returning groups? This information is key to knowing when we can return to campus. IFC's are supposed to adhere to the NIC (North-American Interfraternity Conference) standard of Open Expansion, meaning that students should not be denied their ability to freely associate with any group they might want to, and that members of the NIC (which Acacia is) should not be restricted in terms of our ability to colonize, so long as we are "responsible" in our process. Unfortunately, this does not bear itself out in reality on many campuses and there is often time some pre-expansion steps we will have to take before finalizing an expansion.

This often entails the preparations of an "expansion packet" explaining our organization and expansion process and answering any questions the university or IFC may have. Acacia's headquarters staff will work to ensure these packets are properly filled out and submitted.



When was the last expansion and how did it go? Do you have any future expansions lined up currently?

Understanding the relative success of previous expansions is a good way to gauge our estimated chance of success. While Acacia believes we have a unique expansion procedure and offering, it is helpful to study how other organizations have done on a specific campus and what we can do to learn from their efforts. Additionally, it is good to hear when the last expansion was, depending on the size of a campus. With a university of 30,000 students, an expansion can be done semester after semester, but if a university has about 2,000 students, it may be wise to wait some time between each expansions so the community is not overwhelmed. This is also why we ask when future expansions are planned, this is a good way to lead to a conversation to get us on their calendar for the future, which leads us to our next question.

What do you need from us next to ensure we can make a return to campus? This question is straightforward and gets to the point that we are interested in making a return to campus. We've sort of already talked to them about what the IFC needs from us, but this question may lead to them inviting us to campus for a face-to-face meeting or a virtual face-to-face (video conference). Additionally, this question can lead to us asking about when exactly we can return. Try and steer the conversation into this direction and get a date that works best for the university and Acacia.

Recruiting Alumni and Alumni Support

A key area to returning to campus is having the proper alumni support. Fraternity and Sorority Life offices will want to ensure that a new group will have strong alumni support and relations. Recruiting the right alumni is key to a successful expansion for a number of reasons listed below.

- **Financial Support:** Starting a new group costs money. From expansion costs, to recruitment events, to new member scholarships, raising money for the expansion is a big factor in how successful the project will be. While Acacia Fraternity, Inc. has a set amount budgeted for expansion, the colony stands the best chance of success if local alumni are able to reimburse an agreed-upon percentage of expansion expenses. This will be discussed with the Executive Director, exclusively.
- **Alumni Advisory Board:** Having the right leadership in alumni roles can also be beneficial to a new group starting. Instead of just a single chapter advisor, look to recruit an entire Advisory Board. Some of the roles on the board will be Chapter Advisor, Alumni Relations Advisor, Recruitment Advisor, Financial Advisor, Ritual Advisor, and Cornerstones Advisor. Other roles can be added as seen fit.
- **Alumni Mentorship:** Some alumni may not have the time commitment to fulfill an advisory role. However, there is an opportunity to get them signed up on our Cornerstones App and they can become a mentor to one or two of the new members. This mentorship program will help the expansion be successful and ensure all the re-founding fathers are building relationships with alumni who aren't just their advisors.

Planning the Expansion Project

After the university has declared they are open to Acacia's return to campus, and a semester date has been set for the expansion, the next steps will be planning out the project. Acacia's Director of Expansion and Recruitment will work with alumni who are involved and interested in being a part of the project to determine the next best steps. Here are some of the decisions that will be made with the alumni.

Planning a Calendar

The first step will be working with the university's IFC to determine what will be the best day to start on the ground. Some universities believe arriving a few days before classes start is the best time, while others

believe waiting until after Labor Day weekend. Regardless, determining the right time to have Expansion Coordinator(s) arrive is key to a successful expansion.

Once the start date is determined, we'll look at the campus calendar to schedule recruitment events, alumni events, pledge induction, and initiation weekend. We'll also determine the time period in which consultants will be on campus. This will most likely be majority of the semester, and housing will be looked for at this time.

Assigning Expansion Coordinators

Determining who will lead the expansion on ground efforts is also a big part to a successful expansion project. Acacia headquarters always has its eyes open for potential new staff members, and often times will hire an expansion coordinator for an expansion project. If there is someone already on staff capable of leading a quality expansion project, they will be assigned to the university. It will be the coordinators job to work with the Director of Expansion to ensure a strong effort will be made for the project. The Coordinator will learn everything he can about the campus and Greek community before beginning the project, and Acacia Headquarters will make sure they are properly equipped with the right tools to succeed. Sometimes an expansion project may have more than one consultant handling the project.

Recruiting the Re-founding Class

Once all the pre-work of an expansion is decided, the final step is to recruit the re-founding fathers. The Expansion Coordinator(s) will do their best to find strong leaders on campus who are capable of starting a brand new organization, and building it to ensure it is something all Acacia Alumni can be proud of. The recruitment process is a unique process focusing primarily on relationship building and determining who will be the right leaders to a new group.

Once the re-founding class is finalized and pledged, the Expansion Coordinator(s) will work towards initiation and elections. It is during this time the group will identify leaders among themselves and they will begin working towards the goal of chartering. Alumni will work with the undergraduate group to ensure the colony gains their charter within a certain amount of time.

Following the colony members' initiation into the fraternity, the next step is working towards chartering the colony. Similar to a member's initiation, there are several requirements the colony must achieve before their chartering. These include:

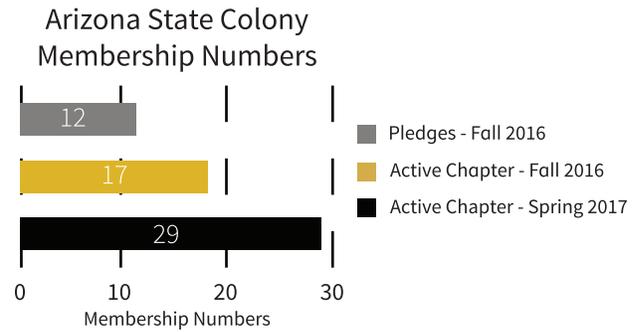
1. A minimum membership of 30 or a size equal to the average fraternity chapter size at the institution.
2. An approved advisor.
3. Adequate housing or plans for such (if applicable).
4. A legally incorporated alumni board (if applicable).
5. Scholastic average equal to all-men's average.
6. A good campus reputation and strong internal organization.
7. Financial stability.
8. Recognition from the Interfraternity Council and the university or college (if applicable).
9. Completion of a printed petition and approval from four-fifths of all active chapters in good standing.
10. \$25 per member chartering fee.

The following is an explanation of each of the preceding ten chartering requirements:

- 1. A minimum active membership of 30 or a size equal to the average fraternity chapter size at the institution** - Realizing that each chapter size depends a great deal upon the individual campus, this requirement allows for a certain amount of flexibility depending on the average campus chapter size.
- 2. An approved advisor** – Each chapter is required to have a Chapter Advisor, elected by the colony/ chapter and approved by the International Council. Any interested and highly regarded men may serve, whether they are an Acacian or not. The advisor should be acquired as early as possible.
- 3. Adequate housing or plans for such (if applicable)** – Each colony must have some kind of housing or plans for such by the time of chartering in order to foster brotherhood and be considered an attractive opportunity when compared alongside other fraternities on campus. This applies only to those colonies where housing is a consideration.
- 4. A legally incorporated house corporation board and alumni association** – Each chapter must have a house corporation for the purpose of securing, holding and maintaining fraternity property. Each chapter is strongly encouraged to have an alumni association for the purpose of promoting brotherhood among alumni and supporting the active chapter.
- 5. Scholastic average equal to all-men's average** – Chapters with good scholarship are usually stronger in most areas of operation and continually maintain a much lower pledge and active attrition rate. Experience has taught that the best assurance of high chapter scholarship is to pledge men with proven academic ability.
- 6. Good campus reputation and strong internal organization** – Campus reputation is very important and once it is established, it is very difficult to change. Reputation can vary and will definitely affect the growth and strength of a new chapter, and each member should therefore do his best to project a good image of Acacia. A strong internal organization is a definite necessity to perpetuate the fraternity and is a must before any colony is chartered. This includes having well-defined and organized recruitment programs, a social program, and a Headquarters-approved pledge education program.
- 7. Financial stability** – A sound financial position is important and a necessity to any good organization. Accurate records must be kept from the start. Colony dues should be set high enough so that no end-of-the-year assessment is necessary. Remember, the chartering week expenses may run as much as \$1,000-\$1,500 or more and should be planned for well in advance.
- 8. Recognition from the Interfraternity Council and the University or College** – A prerequisite to the installation of a new chapter is that all Interfraternity Council and university or college requirements regarding scholarship, housing and membership, etc., be fulfilled.
- 9. Completion of a printed petition and approval from four-fifths of all active chapters in good standing** – Before each colony may be eligible for chartering they are required to print a petition and submit it to the International Headquarters and International Council for consideration. The package will then be sent to all active chapters and must receive at least a four-fifth affirmative vote of all chapters in good standing.
- 10. \$25.00 per member chartering fee** - The international fraternity requires each colony seeking to become a part of the International Fraternity to pay a \$25.00 per member fee. This fee is payable to the International Headquarters and must accompany the petition when mailed to the Headquarters.

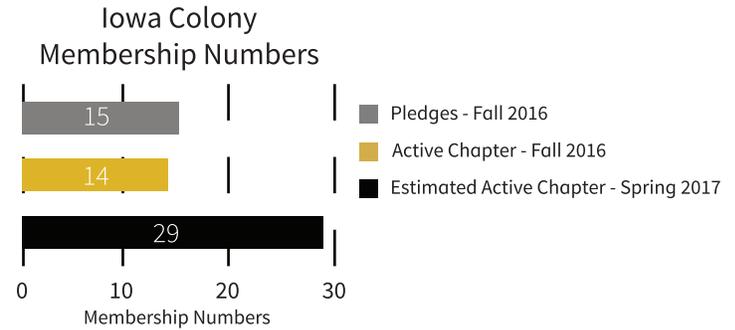
Arizona State Colony

ASU entered the semester with 17 members and had a Fall pledge class of 12 who was initiated this past weekend. Members aiming to work on their charter for the Fall as they have become heavily involved into the FSL Community.



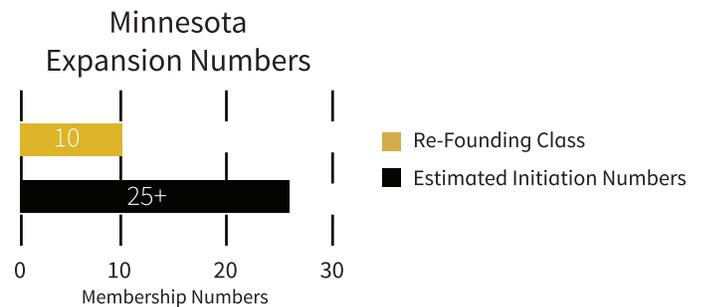
Iowa Colony

Iowa entered the semester with 14 members and added are adding 15 new members to the pledge class, including Lee Kearney's grandson Brian Kearney. The Chapter is aiming to start working on their charter next semester.



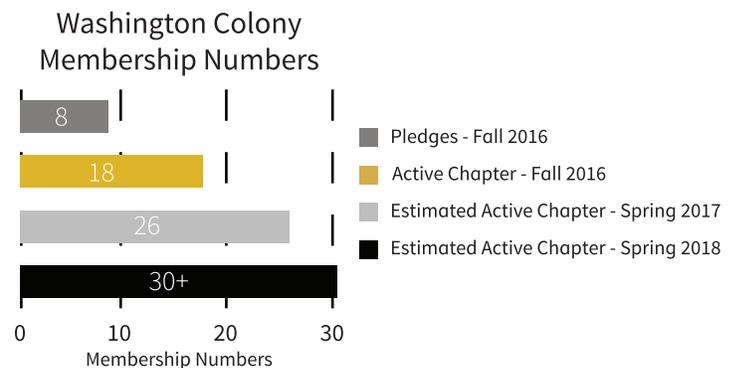
Minnesota Expansion

Expansion Coordinator Kieran Edstrom has spent the majority of the semester at Minnesota actively recruiting new members. As of Oct. 25, 2016, the re-founding class was at 10. Looking for more through our scholarship drive, which brought in an additional 600 names. Pushing off the initiation until they gain 25+ members.



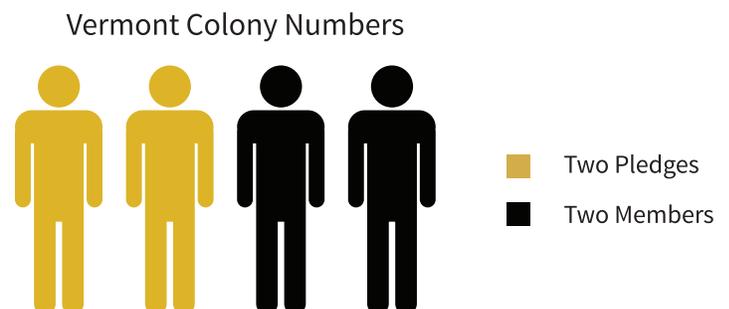
Washington Colony

Colony currently sits at 18 members. They have added a pledge class of eight for this Fall and are hoping to add about two more members to those total numbers. Aiming for 30+ Actives by end of Winter Quarter.



Vermont Colony

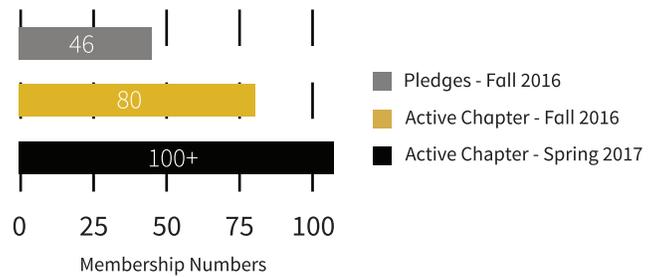
Colony currently sits at two members and has two pledge members.



Indiana Re-Chartering

The Indiana Chapter officially re-chartered at the 59th Biennial Conclave in Louisville, KY. The Chapter has grown rapidly. Accumulating 80 members in just two semesters. In the Spring of 2016, the Indiana Colony's GPA of 3.3186 ranked 2nd amongst fraternities represented by the Interfraternity Council, which is over 40 IFC chapters. Expansion Coordinator Drew Sherman along with extensive alumni support has helped make this re-colonization a huge success!

Indiana Chapter Projected Growth

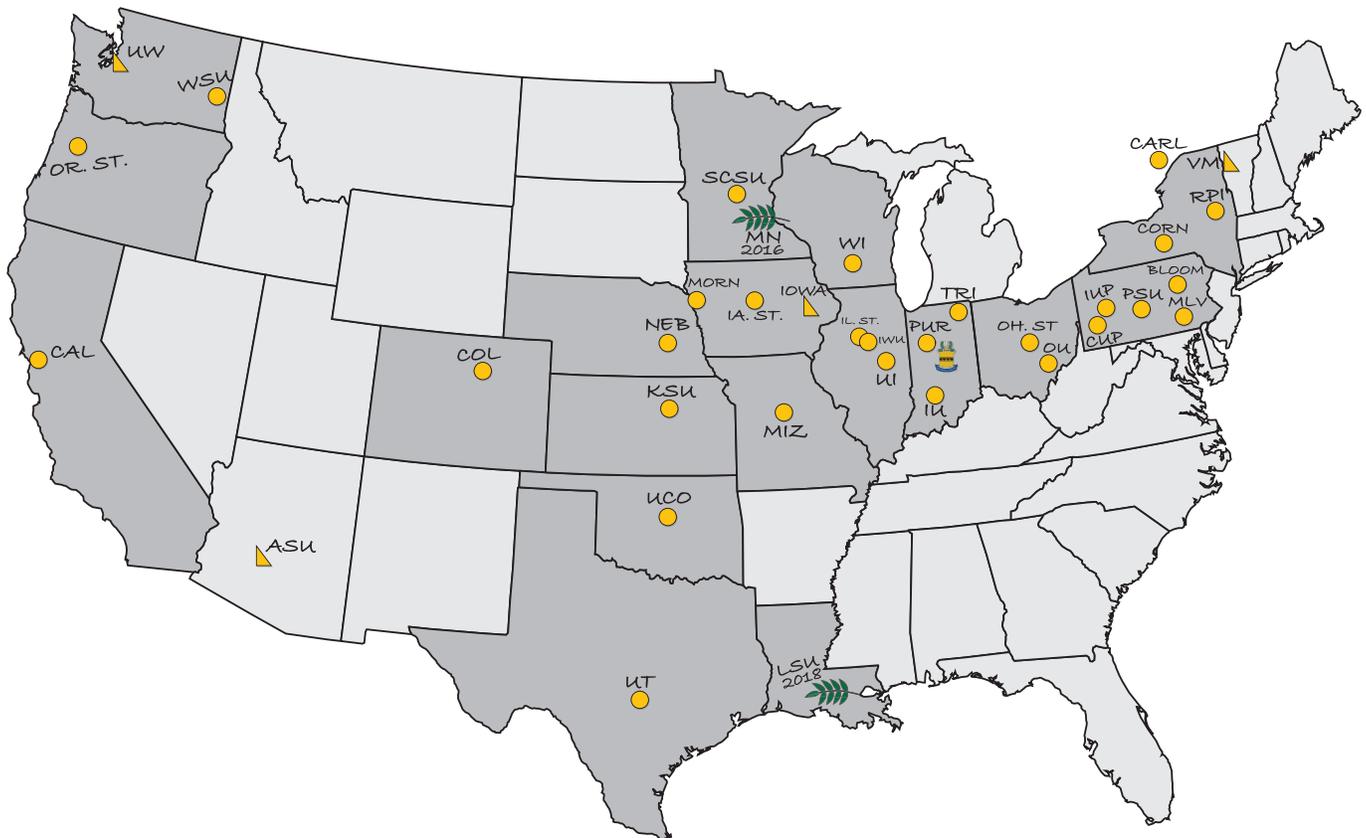


Illinois State Re-Chartering

The Sprig of Acacia continues to grow with the re-chartering of the Illinois State Chapter! The once then Colony earned their charter on July 31, 2014 at the Darold W. Larson Acacia Leadership Academy. The Chapter welcomed nine new members to their brotherhood at that time. Since the re-colonization in 2012, Illinois State Acacia has initiated 42 members.

Trine Re-Chartering

Acacia expanded to Trine University in the Fall of 2012. 36 initiated Brothers later, the Trine Colony was dubbed a Chapter at the Darold W. Larson Acacia Leadership Academy in Bloomington, IN. The Trine Chapter has initiated 63 Brothers since colonizing in 2012. Brotherhood at Trine continues to thrive; the fraternity is currently looking for a house, is maintaining a GPA above the universities male average, and retain over 80% of the members they initiate.



- Chapter
- ▲ Colony
- International Headquarters
- 🌿 Future Expansion