Charter Amendment Process

Established chapters may choose to amend the official chapter charter by adding an institution of higher education or practice setting(s). With the guidance of Sigma staff, chapter leaders are responsible for leading the chapter through the charter amendment process.

Adding an Institution of Higher Education

A school of nursing grants a minimum of baccalaureate of equivalent degree. The school of nursing must be accredited by an appropriate accrediting agency.

Letters of support for the collaboration from the following must be submitted with the application:

- Each university or college already affiliated with the chapter and from each non-chapter university or college
  - Administrator
  - Dean or head of school of nursing

Adding a Practice Setting(s)

A practice setting is an entity where professional (registered) nursing is practiced. The practice setting must be accredited by an appropriate accrediting agency recognized by the Sigma Governance Committee (such as the Joint Commission or equivalent).

Letters of support for the collaboration from the following must be submitted with the application:

- Each university or college already affiliated with the chapter
  - Administrator
  - Dean or head of school of nursing
- Each practice setting(s) interested in joining the chapter
  - Chief nursing officer (CNO) or head nurse
  - Hospital administrator

Online Application

All applications for chapter amendment will be submitted via the online application portal. Applications are accepted year around; however, submitting during non-review periods may extend the review time.

- Visit https://webportalapp.com/sp/sigma to create an account, request an initial consultation with staff, and provide preliminary information.
- After the initial consultation, if or when the chapter decides to pursue the amendment process, chapter leaders will begin to complete the next steps within the online portal.
- All amendment requirements are documented and submitted within the online portal as the chapter completes the amendment process. This creates the official application that reviewers will evaluate upon completion of all required tasks.

On-Going Consultations with Sigma Staff

Chapters will consult with Sigma staff regularly throughout the chapter amendment process as tasks and requirements are completed to receive guidance and feedback.

Discussions to Assess Interest and Commitment

The Sigma chapter and prospective institution(s) shall conduct organizational meetings to assess interest and commitment to collaborate to form a new at-large chapter. The following should be discussed:

- Why would the prospective organization want to join the established chapter?
- How would the collaboration benefit the chapter?
- How will the members perceive the collaboration? Will members/leaders realistically attend events at the prospective organization?
- What contributions can the prospective organization add to the established chapter (resources, leadership, perspective, financial/in-kind donations)?
- Potential barriers
- Does the prospective organization have any policies or requirements that would prevent the chapter from operating per Sigma Theta Tau International bylaws?

Chapter Board Vote

If all parties agree to purse a chapter charter amendment, the board of directors of the established chapter must vote to approve this action. Be sure to document this vote in the meeting minutes and include the following information:

- Date chapter board of directors voted to amend chapter
- Number of board members present
- Number of votes to approve charter amendment
- Number of votes not to approve charter amendment
- Number of votes who abstained

Chapter Membership Vote

The membership must vote to add the prospective institution(s) to the chapter's charter.

- The vote can be electronic, by mail, or at a chapter meeting (check local laws in your area).
- Notice of the vote must be sent to all active members.
- If the vote is conducted electronically or by mail-
    - 30 days' notice must be given or members must be given 30 or more days to complete the vote. ¾ of the ballots returned or completed must be favorable. (Notice of the vote should be given to the secretary/communications chair at least 45-60 days prior to vote.)
- If the vote is at a chapter meeting-
    - The opportunity to vote should be announced with the notice of the meeting. The notice should be sent at least 30 days prior to the meeting (60-90 days' notice is recommended). Three-fourths of those present and voting must vote in favor of the charter amendment.
- If 30 days' notice of the vote is not provided, 100 percent of the ballots returned or completed must be favorable.
- Required details of the membership vote will be submitted in the online portal.

Letters of Support

Established Chapter

For each institution of higher education that is already a part of the chapter, two letters of support are required:

- One from the institution of higher education administration (president, vice president, chancellor, vice chancellor, provost, etc.)
- One from the school of nursing or midwifery administration (head of nursing, dean, director, department chair, etc.)

For each practice setting that is already a part of the chapter, two letters of support are required:

- One from the hospital administration (hospital director, CEO, chief administration, etc.)
- One from the chief nursing officer (or equivalent))

Joining Institution(s)

For each institution of higher education petitioning to join the chapter, two letters of support are required:

- One from the institution of higher education administration (president, vice president, chancellor, vice chancellor, provost, etc.)
- One from the school of nursing or midwifery administration (head of nursing, dean, director, department chair, etc.)

For each practice setting petitioning to join the chapter, two letters of support are required:

- One from the hospital administration (hospital director, CEO, chief administration, etc.)
- One from the chief nursing officer (or equivalent).

Collaboration, Inclusion, and Integration

The chapter will spend 6-12 months or more collaborating with the joining institution of higher education or practice setting while including representatives from the joining institution(s) in board planning, including prospective members or members in all chapter activities and communications, and fully integrating the joining institution(s) into the day-to-day operations of the chapter.

Reviewers expect:

- Fair, equal partnership among all parties involved in the prospective at-large chapter.
- All parties to demonstrate an ability to work together and document efforts as evidence of this collaboration for a minimum of six months.
  Documentation will include:
  - Copies of meeting minutes (with documentation of representatives from joining institution in attendance)
  - Copies of policy and procedure revisions to include joining institution
  - Submission of all completed tasks and requested information & appendices requested in the online portal
- High levels of inclusion and collaboration in areas of leadership, programming and events, inductions, communications, board planning, and finances. Supporting documentation submitted should reflect this.

Draft Proposed At-Large Chapter Bylaws

Chapters that are already an at-large chapter and adding a new institution, shall submit a revised copy of the chapter's current at-large bylaws as the proposed bylaws (including the name(s) of the prospective institutions to be added within the heading and Article 1). Additional revisions in the allowable sections of the chapter bylaws may also be made.

Chapters that will become at-large with the addition of the joining institution(s), will use the current chapter bylaws template to make changes for full inclusion and integration of the joining institution(s).

Communication and Promotion

Chapters should plan informational meetings and send communications to promote the collaboration with the joining institution(s) and inform potential candidates about the chapter and Sigma Theta Tau International to recruit new members into the prospective at-Large chapter.

Timeline to Amend a Chapter's Charter

Application Submission Date	Final Approval	Potential Charter Amendment Date
15 February 2018	June 2018	After 1 October 2018
15 June 2018	October 2018	After 1 Mar 2019
15 February 2019	June 2019	After 1 Oct 2019
15 June 2019	Sept/Oct 2019	After 1 Mar 2020

Approval and Charter Amendment Ceremony

If approved by the Sigma Board of Directors, a charter amendment ceremony will be planned with headquarters with the pending new at-large chapter. The amendment ceremony is required and consists of two parts:

- Official chartering of the new organization to be included in the chapter
  AND
- A chapter induction

Sigma will identify and pay travel expenses for the Sigma leader who will officiate at the chartering ceremony.

Newly re-chartered amended chapters will be recognized during the Biennial Convention House of Delegates session:

- 2019 Biennial Convention, 16-20 November 2019, Washington, DC, USA

Questions? Contact us!

Sigma staff members are available by phone or email to answer your questions about charter amendment process.

developinghs@stti.org
1.888.634.7575 (US/Canada toll-free)
1.317.634.8171 (International)