

November 1, 2019

Dear Nu Rho Chapter-At-Large Board of Directors,

This letter is to notify the Nu Rho Chapter-at-Large Board of Directors of Bryan College of Health Sciences' intent to amend the chapter and move forward in forming a standalone Sigma chapter. The decision was based on the following:

- To align the Sigma chapter with the mission, vision, and values of the college.
- There is a need to provide more specific planning that meets the needs of current members, alumni, and staff in the Bryan Medical Center.
- Autonomy to plan programs based on membership needs.
- A desire to continue growing Sigma.
- To provide service opportunities that support members and the community at large.
- Increase opportunities to support student involvement which hopefully will lead to active involvement in Sigma upon graduation.

The process to amend the chapter has begun and has full support from the administration at Bryan College of Health Sciences and Sigma International. This process typically takes 12 months to complete. As we move forward, the goal is to establish two Sigma chapters that increase opportunities for networking and collaboration for all members and to create a more robust Sigma presence in the region.

If you have any question about this process, contact DeShawn Easley, a chapter specialist, at Sigma International.

Sincerely,



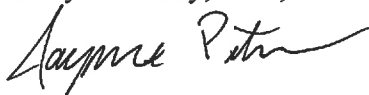
Julie Skrabal, EdD, RN, CNE



Angela McCown, MSN, RN



Ashely Kennedy, EdD, RN



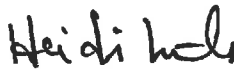
Jayme Petersen, MSN, RN



Melinda Bentjen, EdD, RN



Niki Eisenmann, PhD, RN



Heidi Little, MSN, RN

## Resources:

- Guidelines for an at-Large Chapter to Divide into Two or More Sigma International Chapters Handout (see attachment)
- DeShawn Easley  
Sigma, Chapter Specialist  
888.634.7575 (US/Canada toll-free)  
Direct line: +1.317.917.4993  
Fax: 317.634.8188  
Email: [deshawn@stti.org](mailto:deshawn@stti.org)

## Future Discussions Items:

- Division of assets – November 25 meeting
  - CD: estimate \$4,000+
  - Savings: \$2727.60
  - Checking: \$9,614.21
- Nu Rho Chapter-at-Large Board of Directors vote – December special meeting
  - Voting Members (Confirmed by Sigma International)
    - President
    - Vice Presidents (3)
    - Counselors (3)
    - Treasurer
    - Secretary
- Membership vote - January



## **Guidelines for an at-Large Chapter to Divide Into Two or More Sigma Theta Tau International Chapters**

### **Average Timeline to Complete the Chapter Division Process and Submit the Division Application**

- On average, groups can complete the division process in about 12-18 months.
- If challenges arise, the process may take longer.

### **Contact with Sigma Headquarters**

- As early as possible, consult with Sigma staff to receive an overview of the division process and what next steps should be taken.
- Consult with staff and ask questions as often as needed.
- Staff can help estimate a timeline for application, review, and chartering of the new chapter.
- Division applications are found in the [Sigma Online Application Portal](#).

### **Decisions That Need to Be Made By the at-Large Chapter's Board of Directors**

- Why do the schools within the chapter want to divide into separate chapters?
- Which school(s) will keep the existing at-large chapter Greek name and which school(s) will receive a new Greek chapter name?
- After the division, will each group have a sufficient active membership base to maintain a viable Sigma chapter?
  - A minimum number of 50 active members at each chapter will be required for approval of the application.
  - Which members will stay with the existing chapter and which members will join the new chapter? What resources will be used to determine the membership of each chapter?
  - Keep in mind that it is an unrealistic expectation for **every** active member to remain active when the chapter divides.
- Will the school that is separating from the existing at-large chapter receive any of the at-Large chapter's assets based on the number of members the school has recruited to be part of the at-large chapter?
  - How will these assets be divided?
    - Equal distribution of funds to each new chapter?
    - By the percentage of membership that will be in each chapter?
    - By the amount of time each school has been part of the at-Large chapter?
    - Other?
  - Keep in mind, each new chapter will need:
    - Ample funds for their first 2 years of operational expenses.
    - Ample funds to send delegates to participate in & vote at the biennial convention House of Delegates sessions. (Average expense for 2 delegates to attend convention is \$5,000)

### **Decisions That Need to Be Made By Each Schools' Leadership**

- Will each university approve and support the existence of a stand-alone chapter of Sigma at its school – separating it from the at-large chapter?
  - One letter of support will need to be submitted from each schools' university or college administration **AND** one letter of support will need to be submitted from each schools' head of the nursing program.
  - Letters will be submitted as appendices to the division application

### **Decisions That Need to Be Made By the at-Large Chapter's Active Membership**

- Does the membership support the separation of the school from the at-large chapter?
  - A ballot to all active members is required for the division procedure.
  - The ballot may be sent and collected via mail, email, or at a membership meeting. (Check with your local government or state's attorney general office to determine if there are limitations to using electronic ballots!!)
  - Notice should be sent at least 30 days prior to the deadline for having the ballot returned.
  - For this particular ballot vote, ¾ of the ballots RETURNED from active members must be favorable for the application for the amendment to move forward.
- Will the separated school have a stable active membership base that will support a stand-alone Sigma chapter?
  - Will the new chapters have more than 50 active, dues-paying members?
  - Will the new chapters have enough volunteers/leaders to lead the new chapters?
  - Will each new chapter be financially viable?

### **Decisions That Need to Be Made By Each New Prospective Chapter**

- Leadership—
  - Who will lead each prospective new chapter?
    - The first board of each prospective new chapter may be appointed or elected.
  - Each subsequent board must be elected.
- Bylaws—
  - Each new prospective chapter will need to adopt their own set of bylaws using the chapter bylaws template.
- Goals—
  - What kind of membership experience does each new prospective chapter want to create? What modes of communications will be used? What types of programs will be offered? What kinds of benefits & activities will be offered to members? (Ask staff for a list of considerations for determining goals.)
- Budget--
  - What types of revenue will be brought in?
  - What types of expenses will the chapters have in accomplishing their goals and required operations?
  - What will be the annual renewal membership fee and induction fee for each of the chapters? (Induction fees do not have to be different from the annual renewal fee, but some chapters opt to charge slightly more for induction fees to cover at least some of the costs of the induction ceremony.)

### **Actions That Need to be Taken By the at-Large Chapter's Board of Directors and each Prospective Chapters' New Board of Directors**

- The at-Large chapter board must finalize their decisions about why to divide, how to divide members, how to divide assets, etc.
- Rationale for the decision to divide the at-large chapter will be submitted with the completed application.
- The last annual chapter report – including the financial report – from the at-large chapter must be submitted with the application.
- A ballot must be distributed to the entire active membership of the at-large chapter at least 30 days prior to a deadline for responding to the ballot. Of the votes that are RETURNED, ¾ of the responses must be in favor of the division for the application to move forward.
- Each stand-alone chapter must complete the following which will be required information for the submitted division application:
  - Appointment or election of leaders (Required: president, vice president, counselor, treasurer, secretary, governance committee chair, leadership succession chair)
  - Proposed bylaws (these will be voted on by the membership if/when the at-Large chapter division is approved)
  - Goals for leadership, programs and events, communications with members, member engagement, recruitment, retention, overall membership experience, impact on community
  - An estimated written budget for the next two years
  - A summary of proposed chapter activities for the next two years including any business meetings, conferences, program meetings, research grants and scholarships and special projects.
  - Obtain written approval of the division and pledged support from each university administration and school of nursing head.

### **Decisions That Will be Made By the Sigma International Governance Committee**

- Has the at-large chapter sufficiently documented the need to divide the at-Large chapter?
- Does the split yield two viable & sustainable chapters that can meet the society's mission?
- How does the split strengthen the society?
- Does the at-large chapter have the support of the active membership to divide the at-large chapter?
- Do the schools that will form stand-alone chapters have 50 or more active members in each of the proposed new chapters?
- Have each of the schools secured the approval and support of their university leaders and heads of nursing for the division and for establishment of stand-alone chapters of Sigma?
- Are the current assets of the at-large chapter being divided in an equitable, fair manner between the affected schools to form new chapters?
- Has the at-large chapter and proposed stand-alone chapters provided all of the required documentation as part of the application?
  - At-Large Chapter Application for Division
  - Proposed annual membership fees and induction fees for each remaining chapter
  - Two-year budget for each new chapter
  - Written summary from each new chapter indicating the proposed activities of the chapter for the next two years

- Copy of the mailed ballot and documentation that  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the active members responding to the ballot are in favor of the division
- Letters of approval and indication of support from each of the schools' universities for a stand-alone Sigma chapter
- Chapter history reflecting events leading to and rationale for the division to divide the at-large chapter
- Copy of the at-large chapter's last annual and financial report
- Copy of the proposed chapter bylaws from each of the proposed stand-alone chapters

11-13-19

Print

Sign in

Kristal Davis  
Melinda Berrgen  
Mary Williams  
Ashley Kennedy  
Angela McCown  
Niki Eisenmann  
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Jayme Petersen  
Jodie Wise  
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Doe Gabriel

