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The Extension Process of National Panhellenic Conference Sororities on Southeastern Conference College Campuses

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THE EXTENSION PROCESS OF
NATIONAL PANHELLENIC CONFERENCE SORORITIES
ON SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE COLLEGE CAMPUSES

by
Stevie Jeanne Farrar

A thesis submitted to the faculty of The University of Mississippi in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College.

Oxford
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Approved by

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my cousins, Shellye Stanley McCarty and Mary Helen Griffis, and my chapter advisor, Merrill Magruder. Thank you for encouraging me to embrace Greek Life and a future as a sorority woman. I cannot express the impact your support has had on me throughout my collegiate years and the reassurance that it has given me at times when I felt I had reached the end of my rope. Finally, thank you for believing in my leadership ability and supporting my desire to approach my role in the Greek community as something worth investing in, expanding on, and caring enough about to devote something as significant as my thesis to.

ABSTRACT

STEVIE JEANNE FARRAR: The Extension Process of National Panhellenic Conference Sororities on Southeastern Conference College Campuses
(Under the direction of Dr. Amy Wells Dolan)

The definition of a sorority has evolved significantly from its origins in the mid-1800s. From their beginnings as secret literary societies to their current standing as corporate networks of sisterhood, sororities have grown from groups of a handful of women to chapters of over three hundred members. The National Panhellenic Conference's outline of the formal extension process has helped structure this growth, enabling the process to meet the needs of growing collegiate Panhellenic communities and allow NPC member sororities to continue to expand the reaches of their sisterhood. The process can be highly competitive, characterized by applications, interviews, and presentations, and perhaps the most competitive stage on which this process can unfold is the Southeastern Conference, a group of colleges and universities where Greek life thrives and recruitment numbers grow each year.

The primary method of research throughout this process was personal interviews with professionals who possessed experience with the extension process in some way, particularly at the three SEC colleges focused on as case studies. In addition, scholarly works on Greek Life, student newspaper publications, extension documents of the National Panhellenic Conference and its member sororities were examined. The research was also able to draw on personal experience of witnessing extension efforts unfold on the campus of the University of Mississippi. The research findings revealed that the extension process is a joint effort whose success is

dependent upon the work and dedication of the collegiate Panhellenic community, Greek Life officials and the colonizing NPC group. In addition, the extension process unfolds in a similar fashion on SEC college campuses with only minor changes based on each Greek community's unique needs. Ultimately, the research results proved that while no perfect formula for success can be written for an extension effort, common threads do exist. A supported and recognized need for additional chapters, a strong housing component, effective analysis and manipulation of recruitment numbers and thorough education of the Greek community on the extension and colonization process were found among the three SEC campuses examined and were all credited with playing a crucial role in the success of their extension efforts.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

COB	Continuous Open Bidding
IFC	Interfraternity Council
NPC	National Panhellenic Conference
NPHC	National Pan-Hellenic Conference, Inc.
PNM	Potential New Member
SEC	Southeastern Conference
RFM	Release Figures Method

INTRODUCTION

On today's college and university campuses, there exists a world known as Greek Life. This community of men and women spend their collegiate years donating their time to respective philanthropies, chapter meetings, social events and the fostering of their chapter's reputation on campus. These groups have evolved significantly, growing from small secret societies to a network composed of thousands of members and hundreds of chapters across the United States and beyond. At the helm of the sorority community is the National Panhellenic Conference, a conference body composed of members, which are women's fraternities or sororities, each autonomous as a social, Greek-letter society of collegiate women, undergraduates and alumnae (NPC Extension Process: Explanation of the NPC). The stated purpose of the NPC is to foster interfraternity relationships, to assist the collegiate Panhellenic communities which are made up of collegiate chapters of NPC member groups and to cooperate with colleges and universities in order to maintain the highest scholastic and social standards (NPC Extension Process Explanation of the NPC).

In order to facilitate the expansion of its member groups, the NPC developed an outline known as *extension*. Extension is defined as the addition of NPC chapters to the Panhellenic system at a college or university, or the establishment of a sorority system on a campus where previously none had existed (How to Start a Chapter, n.d.). Today the extension process is a venture to which significant time, attention, and deliberation is given by the college or university's Greek Life leaders, Panhellenic community and prospective NPC member groups.

Adding a new NPC chapter to the Panhellenic community can be mutually beneficial, accomplishing goals for both the campus's Panhellenic community and the new NPC member sorority. For the Panhellenic community, it is important to maintain a balance between the number of women participating in formal recruitment and the number of chapters available to absorb those numbers. This balance helps to ensure that sorority members feel that they are a part of a sisterhood rather than a small corporation. In addition, this balance is necessary to enable chapters to efficiently operate in terms providing food, meeting spaces, and adequate housing to members. Furthermore, the researcher has come to understand from serving as a sorority chapter president that Panhellenic communities need to explore the possibility of growth when a chapter becomes so large that a feeling of sisterhood is difficult to achieve and internal operations become strained.

For prospective NPC member sororities, the extension process provides them with the opportunity to expand the reaches of their sisterhood, allowing more collegiate women the chance to be a part of the Greek community and have access to its substantial resources. In addition, more members results in increased revenue for the NPC member sorority. While this would not have been a significant factor in the founding days of sorority life, it has become one due to the scale that sorority operations have reached on a national level.

While the extension process has become streamlined and standardized through to the efforts of the NPC, the setting in which the effort occurs has a great impact on what additional efforts must be taken to ensure success. Because the researcher desired for her final body of work to be used by the Panhellenic community at the University of Mississippi to aid in their upcoming colonization

effort and future extension efforts, the researcher chose to narrow her study to three colleges within the SEC. By doing so, dynamics such as housing, competitiveness of recruitment, and chapter operations would be held as constant as possible, allowing for the researcher to better determine if a “recipe” for extension success exists, one that would be most useful to an SEC Panhellenic community.

CHAPTER I: HISTORY OF SORORITIES

The first Greek-letter fraternity in the United States, Phi Beta Kappa, was established on December 5, 1776 at the College of William and Mary (Torbenson, 2009). The first sorority was that of the Adelphean literary society, founded in 1851 on the campus of Wesleyan Female College in Macon, Georgia, and currently known as Alpha Delta Pi (Wells, 2002). The Philomathean literary society was formed on the same campus shortly thereafter in 1852 and is currently known as Phi Mu Fraternity (Wells, 2002). At the time of their founding, neither group identified themselves as a “fraternity” or sought to expand their membership onto other campuses (Wells, 2002). In 1867, I.C. Sorosis was founded as the first national women’s fraternity at Monmouth College in Monmouth, Illinois (Wells, 2002). The organization would later take on the name Pi Beta Phi in 1888 in order to capitalize on the perceived advantages to be gained by the adoption of Greek letters (Wells, 2002). I.C. Sorosis was also the first sorority to open chapters on other campuses, but these efforts quickly folded (Wells & Worley, 2011).

In 1870, Kappa Kappa Gamma was founded at Monmouth College and Kappa Alpha Theta at DePauw University (Wells & Worley, 2011). Both Kappa Kappa Gamma and Kappa Alpha Theta intentionally adopted the principles and practices of men’s organizations (Wells & Worley, 2011). In 1872, Alpha Phi was established at Syracuse University, and Delta Gamma was founded at the University of Mississippi

the following year in 1873 (Wells, 2002). Gamma Phi Beta was the first group to actually identify as a sorority upon its founding in 1874 at Syracuse University (Wells, 2002). Syracuse University Latin professor Dr. Frank Smalley is credited with having coined the actual term “sorority” in reference to Gamma Phi Beta (About Gamma Phi Beta, n.d.). Prior to this, sororities existed as secret societies without Greek nomenclature or referred to themselves as “fraternities” (Wells & Worley, 2011).

The turn of the twentieth century saw a rapid growth in the founding of new sororities at institutions of various types (Wells & Worley, 2011). This growth followed a particular pattern of sororities often beginning in close proximity to existing chapters, thereby providing them with an established group with whom to compete and models to emulate (Wells & Worley, 2011). This trend was seen at Longwood College in Farmville, Virginia, where Kappa Delta (1897), Zeta Tau Alpha (1898) and Sigma Sigma Sigma (1898) originated, and at Stephens College in Columbia, Missouri, where Kappa Delta Phi, Zeta Mu Epsilon, and Theta Tau Epsilon were all founded in 1921 at the junior college (Wells & Worley, 2011).

In their origins, fraternities and sororities served a basic purpose of providing students with a foundation for forming relationships while at college, in addition to assisting the university in fulfilling the needs of housing, dining and student behavior regulation (Wells & Thelin, 2002). On a deeper level, however, these organizations served as vehicles for the reinforcement of Protestant values such as etiquette, competition, exclusion and personal success (Wells & Thelin, 2002). Fraternities and sororities did have their significant differences, however, in both their goals and underlying motivations. Specifically, sororities served as a vehicle for enhancing women’s position within the male-dominated campus political structure

(Wells, 2002). In addition, they provided women with increased control of their identity and sexuality, and the opportunity of joining a sorority and possibly a “better” sorority offered college women validation of self-worth (Wells, 2002). Fraternities adopted their names from the beginning letters of words or phrases that served as watchwords or secret mottos in an act of rebellion against the restraints of college life (Wells & Thelin, 2002). Sororities, however, were not as stirred by rebellion as their male counterparts, but rather desired simply to extend their campus life as the men of fraternities had done (Wells & Thelin, 2002). This desire led to the adoption by sororities of mottoes, colors, badges, songs, rivalries and initiation rights (Wells & Thelin, 2002).

In 1891, the first national pan-Hellenic convention was held at the urging of Kappa Kappa Gamma (Wells, 2002). Fierce competition known as “rushing” was prominent among the early social sororities, and in an effort to curb such problems as concurrent membership in different groups, prevent external regulation by college faculty and administration, and promote existing agreements, representatives from the nine existing sororities came together to form what would become known as the National Panhellenic Conference (Wells & Worley, 2011). The NPC formed for the stated purpose of maintaining on a “high plane fraternity life and interfraternity relationships, to cooperate with college authorities in their effort to maintain high social and scholastic standards throughout the whole college, and to be a forum for the discussion of questions of interest to the college and fraternity world” (Wells, 2002). Despite these early efforts at reform and promotion via a national organization, anti-Greek sentiments could not be entirely diminished, and sorority

chapters were established and closed during the same era at a number of colleges and universities (Wells, 2002).

The founding of groups such as the NPC serves as a legacy of the era of new and progressive emphasis upon democratic student governance (Wells & Thelin, 2002). Seven years after the founding of the NPC, the North-American Interfraternity Conference was established for fraternities in 1909 (Wells & Thelin, 2002). The National Pan-Hellenic Council, Inc. was founded in 1930 with a mission of promoting and supporting racial uplift for its internationally predominantly Black Greek-letter organizations (Wells & Worley, 2002). Of the nine NPHC member groups, four are historically Black sororities (Wells & Worley, 2002). Alpha Kappa Alpha was the first to be established in 1908, followed by Delta Sigma Theta in 1913 and Zeta Phi Beta in 1920, all at Howard University, a historically Black university located in Washington, D.C. (Wells & Worley, 2002). The fourth, Sigma Gamma Rho, was founded in Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1922 (Wells & Worley, 2002). It would not become a collegiate sorority, however, until its chartering at Butler University in 1929 (Wells & Worley, 2002).

Today, some sororities remain isolated chapters on college campuses, but many have grown to exist apart from college campuses as large, multichapter, national or international corporations (Wells & Worley, 2011). Such groups are characterized by executive offices complete with full-time staff, multi-million dollar budgets, and independent philanthropic foundations (Wells & Worley, 2011). As a whole, sororities raise millions of dollars annually for various charities and philanthropic causes in addition to providing countless hours of community service work (Wells, 2012). Twenty-six member sororities currently compose the NPC

conference body for a total of over 4.1 million initiated women at over 650 college and university campuses in the United States and Canada and 3,887 alumnae associations in the United States and other countries (NPC Extension Process Explanation of the NPC, n.d.). It is now one of the largest women's organizations in the world and formulates policies on matters of interest and concern to the interfraternity community in addition to studying evolving educational perceptions and contributing to interfraternity understanding and friendship (NPC Extension Process Explanation of the NPC, n.d.).

CHAPTER II: ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

The researcher's interest in the topic of the NPC extension process on SEC college campuses stems from her serving as Recruitment Chair and Chapter President of the Alpha Delta Chapter of Phi Mu Fraternity at the University of Mississippi. While she was serving as Chapter President, the Panhellenic community opened for extension in the spring of 2012. In the fall of 2012, the researcher was presented with the opportunity to participate in the extension process by attending roundtable discussions as well as the formal presentations of prospective NPC groups. As Chapter President, she was tasked with the responsibility of ensuring her chapter members understood what the extension process entailed and how it would affect their chapter and the Panhellenic community as a whole. This task necessitated constant communication with area and national officers in order to consider which of the potential groups would be the best fit for the Panhellenic community. In addition, the researcher worked closely with the campus's Panhellenic Council and her chapter's public relations chairman to plan marketing strategies to promote the colonizing groups.

With her knowledge of the recruitment process and the internal operations and logistics of managing a chapter of over three hundred women, the researcher was well aware that whatever groups were selected to come onto campus would face a number of challenges. The researcher's view of these challenges was influenced not

only by her leadership experience within a sorority but also by her area of academic interest. As a student pursuing a degree in business administration, the researcher was able to consider these challenges and the extension process not only from the vantage point of the sorority community but also from a corporate standpoint. The researcher understood that the prospective groups would need to possess solid plans of how they would confront the financial risk of constructing a house, conduct a successful marketing campaign to educate and garner the support of the current Greek community, complete a strong colonization and first recruitment, and develop a retention program to ensure stability of their membership numbers.

Combining these vantage points and experiences, the researcher found the extension process to be essentially a business plan comprised of variables that should add value through each stage of the extension process, culminating in the final product of a strong colony. What these variables were exactly, however, was a question the researcher determined to find an answer to through her research. The researcher considered these variables in the context of a “recipe for success” and questioned if such a thing might exist for an extension effort. It was the researcher’s desire for her findings to be used by the Panhellenic community at the University of Mississippi in their upcoming colonization efforts and any future extension endeavors, and for this reason the research chose to de-limit her study to universities within the SEC, of which the University of Mississippi is a member. This decision would hold constant any factors that may be unique to SEC Panhellenic communities and provide a more useful tool of comparison in developing a “recipe” for extension success for an SEC Panhellenic community.

The researcher felt that because of her active membership in a NPC chapter, collecting information from leaders and administrators within collegiate Greek and Panhellenic communities as well as the national offices of the NPC and their member groups would not be difficult. The reality was the opposite, however, as the researcher encountered far more hesitancy and even outright refusal than expected. Many people were willing to discuss the extension process in general but balked at commenting on the specific extension efforts of a particular NPC member sorority. Even the professionals who agreed to be interviewed refrained from some commentary on specifics, noting that they had signed confidentiality contracts during the particular extension effort being discussed.

In reaction to this hesitancy, the research took a number of steps to protect the identity of the research participants, the three SEC campuses examined, and the NPC member groups that colonized in each case study. The researcher completed training under and received approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of Mississippi, whose role is “to review all proposed research involving human subjects to ensure that subjects are treated ethically and that their rights and welfare are adequately protected” (Institutional Review Board, n.d.). The research project was designed to adhere to IRB guidelines, including correspondence of interview requests, compilation of questions, documentation of interviews, and approval of final narratives. The researcher is aware that the SEC campuses and NPC member groups may be identified by the secondary sources used for research purposes, but in an effort to avoid stereotypes and any pre-conceived notions that may be associated with particular SEC colleges or NPC member groups, the researcher has chosen to maintain their anonymity throughout this body of work.

In addition to the challenges of participant hesitancy and providing anonymity, the researcher struggled to maintain her relationships with members of the Greek and Panhellenic community, a challenge that limited the depth of her probing for information. These challenges were accompanied by limitations such as inconsistent terminology and a limited availability of quantitative data.

While this struggle to obtain willing interview participants presented a significant challenge, it only reinforced the realization of the importance that the Greek community places on a process such as extension and the level of professionalism with which it is expected to be conducted. In addition, the researcher interpreted the decision of the NPC member sororities to refrain from commenting on their extension efforts and strategies in order to protect what they consider a competitive advantage.

Throughout the research process, the researcher was able to compare her findings to her personal experience as a member of a SEC Panhellenic community. The researcher witnessed significant growth in the interest of joining the Panhellenic community during her collegiate years, with the pledge class size of her own chapter growing from 86 in the fall of 2009 to 136 in the fall of 2012. While the researcher understood this growth to be clear evidence of more young women becoming interested in Greek Life, her experience as a recruitment chair does not insure that they are interested in being a part of just any Greek organization. The researcher has seen the effects of preconceived stereotypes on recruitment in her Panhellenic community and the challenge it has posed to existing chapters. In addition, the researcher has witnessed the difficulty that some new members find in transitioning into sorority life.

In the end, the researcher's work was fueled by a desire for the final body of work to result in not only a deeper personal knowledge and understanding of the extension process but a final product that would aide the University of Mississippi in its upcoming colonization efforts in the fall of 2013 and fall of 2015. It is the sincere hope of the researcher that these findings prove beneficial to the University of Mississippi's Office of Greek Life and Panhellenic community, and that the knowledge imparted will help ensure the Panhellenic community accomplishes the goals it has set for itself by way of the NPC extension process.

CHAPTER III: THE EXTENSION PROCESS

The extension process has been carefully outlined by the NPC in order to guide its member sororities and collegiate Panhellenic communities through the process of adding new NPC chapters to a Panhellenic community. According to a Greek Life administrator, the Greek community must feel a significant need for the expansion of the Panhellenic community before considering the possibility of extension (personal communication, March 28, 2013). Often, this need is realized when the number of women participating in recruitment has experienced significant growth and is expected to continue growing, while current NPC chapters feel that they have grown too large and will not be able to absorb the increase in women participating in recruitment (personal communication, March 28, 2013).

In this discussion of whether a campus should move forward with extension, a number of questions should be considered in regard to evaluating the needs of the students and campus community. For campuses on which there is no collegiate Panhellenic Council, the administration must consider such questions as if the institution meets the criteria as a senior college or university; if a significant pool of women exists from which to draw prospects for sorority membership; how the college or university will market the sorority membership opportunity and how the establishment of a sorority will fit into the strategic plan of the college or university (NPC Extension Process College/University Administration Steps 1-3, n.d.).

For a campus that is home to two or more chapters of NPC sororities, the collegiate Panhellenic Council is responsible for the determination and selection for extension, and their first step is exploration. The Panhellenic Council should notify their NPC area advisor of their desire to explore the possibility of adding another NPC group and begin consultation with the NPC Extension Committee Chairman. The Panhellenic Council should then propose a vote to establish an extension exploratory committee who will make an official recommendation of whether or not the campus should undergo extension (NPC Extension Process College Panhellenic Steps 1-4, n.d.).

According to the NPC Extension Process Timeline, the extension process should be expected to require nearly one year duration and the Panhellenic Exploratory Committee should be formed in the early fall. This committee may consist of a variety of individuals ranging from collegiate Panhellenic officers, delegate alumnae, faculty and administration. The exploratory committee must first examine statistics related to campus enrollment and recruitment in order to gain a better understanding of if a need for an additional member of the Greek community exists. Statistics related to the current Greek community to be examined may include the growth in undergraduate enrollment, the number of full-time female students at the university, the male-to-female student ratio, the percentage of students residing on campus as well as the percentage of in-state and out-of-state students (NPC Extension Process College Panhellenic Steps 1-4, n.d.).

The exploratory committee will also compile and examine data specifically related to the campus's Panhellenic community, such as growth in chapter total, growth in recruitment quota, the availability of permanent or temporary housing and

meeting locations for a new groups, current percentage of the student body that is Greek, the number of women registered for recruitment and the number of women pledged during formal recruitment. It is recommended that the committee analyze all statistics and trends over a period of five years. According to a Panhellenic advisor, the exploratory committee may also distribute surveys and conduct presentations in order to gain a clearer understanding of where the Panhellenic community stands on extension knowledge and their feelings toward it (personal communication, March 24, 2013). Based on these findings, the committee compiles an official report and recommendation of whether or not the campus should extend. This report is passed on to the college's Panhellenic Council for review before any type of vote for extension is taken (NPC Extension Process College Panhellenic Steps 1-4, n.d.).

In December, the NPC recommends that the official vote to open the campus for extension be taken. It is crucial that the Panhellenic Council efficiently sets the stage for the official vote. The exploratory committee's official report should be shared with the Panhellenic delegates as well as with the NPC delegates of the campus's existing NPC chapters. The date for the official vote is to be set so that it occurs at a Panhellenic Council meeting at least two weeks after the presentation of the official report to the NPC chapters. This time period is to allow existing NPC chapters the opportunity to consult with their national headquarters, NPC delegate and other members of the Panhellenic community. The Panhellenic bylaws will define the vote required in order to pass the vote for extension as either 2/3, majority or unanimous. Each Panhellenic delegate represents her respective chapter in the extension vote (NPC Extension Process College Panhellenic Steps 1-4, n.d.).

Following the official vote and announcement of its result, the meeting minutes of the extension vote should be sent to the NPC Extension Committee chairman and a Panhellenic Extension Committee should be formed in the event the vote is in favor of extension. The Panhellenic Extension Committee is separate and distinct from the exploratory committee and serves the purpose of handling solicitations, determining selection criteria of the new chapters, reviewing submitted materials, determining the groups to be invited to make a formal presentation and recommending which group(s) to invite to colonize (NPC Extension Process College Panhellenic Steps 1-4, n.d.). In the event that no Panhellenic is present on the campus, the Vice President of Student Affairs or Dean of Students is responsible for sending an official letter to the NPC Extension Committee Chairman, and campus administration should designate a campus coordinator to work with the NPC extension committee throughout the extension process (NPC Extension Process College/University Administration Steps 1-3, n.d.).

The following month, the campus should post their extension opportunity in the NPC Extension Bulletin, which is distributed to all of the twenty-six NPC member groups. The bulletin should contain pertinent information and statistics related to the campus such as campus statistics, fraternity and sorority history, housing information, meeting facilities, Panhellenic recruitment information, a timeline of the extension process and contact information (NPC Extension Process College Panhellenic Steps 1-4, n.d.). In addition to posting in the NPC bulletin, the campus may solicit their extension opportunity to specific groups. During this month, interested NPC member groups may conduct what is known as an exploratory visit if the campus has decided to allow such (NPC Extension Process Exhibit A: Timeline,

n.d.). These visits are to serve the strict purpose of collecting information and no contact is to be made between the visiting group and collegians or Panhellenic officers. These visits should in no way affect the decision of which member groups to invite to make an extension presentation (NPC Extension Process Best Practices in Extension, n.d.).

If an NPC group is interested in the extension opportunity, they will submit a packet to the campus's extension committee. The NPC Extension Process sample timeline suggests that the deadline for interested NPC member groups to submit these materials be set in February. The extension packet should contain the information requested in the NPC Extension Bulletin, as the extension committee will review the extension packet and invite groups to campus to make formal presentations based on its contents (Extension Process Outline – Phi Mu, 2012). While a group may have completed an exploratory visit, it does not mean they will submit a packet. Reasons for which a group might not submit a packet after completing a campus visit may be due to financial concerns about the housing component (personal communication, March 24, 2013). A group may have decided after viewing the campus that the money spent on the effort would not be worthwhile, or that they would be unable to build a house during the proposed timeline (personal communication, March 24, 2013). In addition, the NPC notes that it is not uncommon for groups to decline an opportunity to submit a packet because of colonization commitments elsewhere. The NPC suggests that Panhellenic leaders keep letters of intent from any such NPC member groups on file for future extension endeavors (NPC Extension Process Exhibit A Timeline, n.d.).

When reviewing the applicants, leaders from the Office of Greek Life or members of the extension committee may consider reaching out to campuses where the prospective candidates have recently extended to inquire as to how well the groups performed, as suggested by an Panhellenic advisor (personal communication, March 24, 2013). A campus should invite no more than three NPC member groups to make on-campus presentations for every extension opportunity available. An exception to this is made, however, when several local sororities or interest groups are affiliating with NPC member groups at the same time (NPC Extension Process Best Practices in NPC Extension, n.d.).

The Panhellenic Extension Committee should complete reviews of submitted packets and notify prospective groups of their invitation to campus for formal presentations by the end of February. The committee should also notify the NPC groups that were not selected to present. The NPC Extension Committee advises that the packets sent to the selected sororities include a schedule for their presentation day, information on lodging options, transportation and maps, information regarding equipment available for presentations, and general information about the campus, student handbook, Panhellenic Constitution and Bylaws and Panhellenic Recruitment Rules (NPC Extension Process Exhibit C: Presentations, n.d.).

The NPC Extension Process sample timeline suggests that formal presentations be held in late-March to mid-April. The schedule of events for each group's campus visit should be identical and provided in advance if possible (NPC Extension Process Best Practices in Extension, n.d.). A day of presentations may consist of meetings with Fraternity and Sorority advisors, campus administrators, extension committee and collegiate panhellenic in addition to campus tours and the

formal presentation. It is left to the discretion of the campus to determine whether or not the formal presentations will be made public to the entire campus community or limited to only the extension committee. Prospective groups send presentation teams that consist of between 4-6 representatives from either the national organization, collegiate members, chapter consultants, headquarters staff members, local alumnae, national and/or area officers or members of the national council. In their formal presentations, prospective groups discuss information such as their mission and values, history, member programming, national philanthropy, extension plan and colony plan. The presentation should display how their organization's goals and inner operations relate to those of the university as well as how their organization will provide a cultivating atmosphere for its new members in the period following colonization (Extension Process Outline – Phi Mu, 2012).

The style and methods used for a formal presentation vary from group to group. Some groups may utilize banners that display their colors and open motto, tables of sample promotional merchandise and displays highlighting the progress of recent colonization efforts, such as pictures of recruitment events and plans for the construction of new permanent housing. With advances in modern technology, these formal presentations have reached a new level of allowing the audience to experience the NPC group in a more interactive way. Some groups Skype in members from campuses on which the NPC member group has recently colonized, allowing the member to share their personal experience of the colonization effort and being a founding member. Many presentations also utilize audio and video elements.

Upon the conclusion of all formal presentations, the Panhellenic Extension Committee must decide what groups to recommend for extension. Their

recommendations will be passed on for a vote by the Panhellenic Council. After the vote has been taken, the selected groups should be notified by phone call or letter. Groups that made formal presentations but were not selected should be notified as well (NPC Extension Process Exhibit A, n.d.).

If the Panhellenic community expects rapid growth in the upcoming two to four years, *stacking* the selected NPC groups is a possibility. The decision to stack must be approved by a vote of the college Panhellenic Council with the language that NPC Group #1 would be offered to colonize no sooner than (date) and no later than (date), and upon the review/vote of the college Panhellenic Council that is in the position to add a group. In the event that the stacking method is utilized, the first group to colonize should complete at least two formal recruitments before the second group colonizes. The NPC does not recommend that stacking be more than four years out (NPC Extension Process Best Practices in NPC Extension, n.d.).

The first colonization should be expected to take place immediately the following fall. Prior to this, the collegiate Panhellenic should take measures to ensure the new chapter's success, beginning with a review and adjustment of campus total. This will guarantee equality among the existing NPC groups and allow the colonizing group to maximize the number of women pledged. In addition, the NPC requires the collegiate Panhellenic to use the NPC Release Figure Method (RFM) if it does not already do so. The RFM began in 2003 and is a mathematical model that determines the number of invitations issued by chapters during the recruitment process (RFM Update 2012, 2012). The RFM requires a setting of "quota", which is the number of PNMs a chapter may accept during formal recruitment (Greek Definitions, n.d.).

The NPC also requests that a campus allow special courtesies for colonizing groups. The NPC asks that the colonizing group be allowed to pledge average chapter size or a size comparable to other Panhellenic groups in the event they all exceed campus total. In addition, the NPC requests that Continuous Open Bidding be suspended if needed for a period no longer than three weeks, and that the campus consider delaying further extension efforts for a period of two years or more. This is done in an effort to allow the colony to build its membership and stabilize its numbers (NPC Extension Process: Exhibit D: Supportive Efforts for Colonies, n.d.).

The NPC Extension Process: Supportive Efforts for Colonies specifies that the NPC requests that the College Panhellenic and college/university continue to provide assistance to the colonizing group until the new group has reached a healthy membership level. This level is designated by campus total or average chapter size, whichever is greater. Methods of support include providing the colonizing group with Panhellenic rules, exempting women registering for colony membership from paying a recruitment fee, and providing meeting facilities (NPC Extension Process Exhibit D, n.d.).

CHAPTER IV: SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE COLLEGE #1

At SEC College #1, the last three years have seen a tremendous increase in undergraduate enrollment. Accompanying this growth in student enrollment has been a growing interest in Greek life, with approximately 40-42% of freshmen students choosing to participate in the recruitment process and join the Greek community, and 22% of the student body being Greek (Razorback Parent Newsletter, 2012). Table I shows the growth in the new member pledge class sizes of the eight NPC sororities that existed prior to extension efforts and the total number of women receiving bids from 2008 to 2011.

TABLE I				
<u>NPC Chapter</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
Chapter #1	131	64	53	51
Chapter #2	137	101	80	80
Chapter #3	135	104	82	82
Chapter #4	137	101	80	81
Chapter #5	136	105	82	81
Chapter #6	134	105	84	82
Chapter #7	132	103	82	80
Chapter #8	137	103	80	68
<u>Total</u>	1079	786	623	605

(Benchmarking and Assessment, 2012)

In 2010, quota for NPC chapters on the campus reached 131, the highest quota recorded by a Panhellenic community in the nation that year. This surge in numbers prompted Greek Life officials to look into the possibility of extension in hopes of halting or reducing quota. Greek Life officials felt that it would be crucial to add chapters to the Panhellenic community as interest in Greek Life was already strong and expected to continue to grow (personal communication, April 4, 2013).

The campus opened for extension in 2010 and approximately five groups completed exploratory visits to the campus, while a number of additional NPC groups reached out to the Office of Greek Life to express interest in the extension opportunity. When the time came for packets to be submitted, however, none of the groups chose to submit one. The reason for this was the housing component. On this campus, sororities reside in large houses, and the interested NPC groups felt that unless opportunities for similar housing were immediately available they would not be able to be competitive with existing NPC groups. At the time of the 2010 extension effort, no housing plan was in place for either extension or colonization (personal communication, April 4, 2013).

During the 2011 Panhellenic formal recruitment, quota increased to 151, once again the highest quota in the nation for a Panhellenic community. In November of 2011, the campus opened for extension once again (Razorback Parent Newsletter: Greek Edition, 2012). This time, Greek life officials were prepared for the challenge of providing housing plans to prospective groups. During the year in between extension efforts, Greek life leaders were able to make arrangements for short-term facilities to offer the new chapters and begin researching land availability on which the new chapters could build their permanent homes. In January of 2011, eight NPC

groups submitted packets to be considered for invitation to formally present at the campus (Razorback Parent Newsletter: Greek Edition, 2012). Five groups were invited to present and participate in the interview process (McLendon, 2012). It was known from the beginning that two groups would be selected to colonize simultaneously. All prospective groups made formal presentations and were interviewed by the extension committee (personal communication, April 4, 2013).

In March of 2012, SEC College #1 invited two NPC groups to extend onto their campus, planning for both groups to colonize simultaneously in the fall of 2012 (McLendon, 2012). The two groups that were selected for colonization displayed strong alumnae involvement, dedication to philanthropy, and a national office committed to providing the colony with support and chapter consultants for the first initial years. This would be a re-colonization effort for the groups, as both previously had chapters on the campus but were forced to close due to low membership numbers (McClendon, 2012). NPC Group #1 was established on the campus in December of 1961 and left in 1977 (Alpha Chi Omega, n.d.; McLendon, 2012). NPC Group #2 first colonized on the campus in October of 1923 and was last on the campus in 1995 (Phi Mu, n.d.; McClendon, 2012). This factor provided both groups with strong alumnae bases both in the local and surrounding area that would support the new chapter in years to come. In addition to their strong alumnae presence, both groups presented concrete plans for housing (personal communication, April 4, 2013). Plans for temporary housing in a campus dormitory were arranged to go into effect in the fall of 2013 (McLendon, 2012). NPC Group #2 also displayed a strong presence within the state as well as the SEC, as this extension would make their fourth chapter in the state and twelfth in the SEC (Phi Mu, n.d.).

Prior to the colonization effort, campus total was raised to 300. Historically, no groups within the Panhellenic community had struggled to meet quota during recruitment in the last two to three years. Since all groups had successfully met or exceeded quota in recent years and were in support of the extension effort, the Panhellenic community and Greek Life leaders were able to solely focus on ensuring the success of the new chapters without the added concern a historically weak chapter would have brought (personal communication, April 4, 2013).

Greek Life leaders placed great importance on thoroughly educating the Panhellenic community on just what the extension and colonization processes would entail and familiarizing them with the colonizing groups. Discussions were held among recruitment counselors and advisors to familiarize them with both processes and allow them to ask questions about the events that would unfold on campus. Representatives from the colonizing chapters held colonization events on campus and passed out merchandise to students such as t-shirts, plastic sunglasses, buttons and cups. Members of existing NPC chapters wore such merchandise, which featured the colonizing chapters' letters and symbols. In addition, a team of women from existing NPC chapters formed for the sole purpose of aiding the colonizing groups in whatever way they could, whether helping with presentations at student orientation or contacting individuals to collect the names of women who might be interested in pledging one of the colonizing chapters. This team included some recruitment counselors but was not solely comprised of them (personal communication, April 4, 2013).

The week of recruitment fell at the beginning of September, and both groups set up information tables in a student building on campus to allow PNMs the

opportunity to stop by and acquire information on the groups as well as ask questions of each group's colonization team (Dunaway, 2012). During the formal recruitment process, the recruitment numbers were adjusted so that current chapters were able to invite fewer women back to rounds, thus increasing the pool from which the colonizing chapters could draw their members. At the conclusion of the colonization effort, the new chapters extended 321 bids combined. This was the largest amount of bids ever distributed in NPC history for a colonization. The colonies' new pledge classes were mainly composed of PNMs who chose to withdraw from the recruitment process in order to pledge the new chapters as well as PNMs who had been released from formal recruitment (personal communication, April 4, 2013).

Reflecting on the extension effort, a Greek Life administrator considered the one area that could have been improved on to be the communication and education aspect of preparing the Greek community for the extension process and colonization (personal communication, April 4, 2013). Ideally, more conversations between the NPC, Greek Life leaders, advisors and Panhellenic would have occurred, and an overall stronger joint effort between the national organizations and collegiate Greek community would have existed. In addition, more attention could have been given to educating recruitment counselors and PNMs on membership recruitment acceptance binding agreements and what signing these "pref" cards entailed in regards to the recruitment process and colonizing chapters (personal communication, April 4, 2013).

CHAPTER V: SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE COLLEGE #2

On February 2, 2009, SEC College #2 voted to open its campus for extension, what would be the first extension effort on the campus in approximately twenty years ((Allouch, 2009; personal communication, January 24, 2013). At the time the decision to extend was made, the Panhellenic community was ranked the largest student organization on the campus, consisted of fourteen chapters, and had experienced an increase in the number of female students joining its ranks (Allouch, 2009).

The extension committee, composed of an equal number of alumni and undergraduates, reviewed the materials submitted by NPC member groups and invited three to make formal presentations on the campus (Allouch, 2009). From these three, two groups were invited to extend. A variety of qualities made the selected groups stand apart from other applicants. NPC Group #1 had recently completed several successful extension efforts, one of which was at another SEC university. In addition, NPC Group #1 expressed a strong desire to further develop their presence in the South and hoped to utilize the draw of being a new group to recruit women. NPC Group #2 had also completed a number of successful extensions recently and expressed a strong desire to extend onto campus. Unlike NPC Group #1, however, NPC Group #2 had a presence at other colleges and universities in the state

and therefore had the advantage of name recognition (personal communication, January 24, 2013).

It was decided that the stacking method would be utilized, with NPC Group #1 colonizing in the fall of 2009 and NPC Group #2 in the fall of 2011. Since the campus had not executed an extension in approximately fifteen to twenty years, the Office of Greek Life wanted to ensure that the campus had time to be educated on what the process would entail and how to ensure a successful extension, and so the decision was made to allow two years between colonizations. In addition, the extra year gave the first group the chance to complete its first formal recruitment without the added concern that a colonizing chapter would have brought. When deciding the order in which the groups would colonize, it was decided that NPC Group #1 should be given the first slot as they did not possess the name recognition of NPC Group #2. The mentality was that this name recognition was an added advantage for NPC Group #2 that would allow them to complete a strong colonization regardless of their placement (personal communication, January 24, 2013).

After the extension process was closed, the groups began preparing for the colonization phase. During colonization, the colonization team for each new NPC group set up a lounge area near the sorority houses so that PNMs were able to stop by and ask questions about the new chapters. Other NPC and IFC groups wore buttons and other promotional materials in support of the new groups and also recommended the names of women who were not Greek to the new chapters so they could be contacted about potentially pledging (personal communication, January 24, 2013).

An additional effort that aided in the success of the extension process was allowing the new colonies to pledge above campus total. According to a Student Affairs administrator, a colony traditionally has a lower retention rate than established chapters, and so this was considered when setting the total number that could be pledged during the colonization process. At the conclusion of colonization, both groups saw a balance in their final pledge class between women dropping out of formal recruitment to pledge and women who had been released from formal recruitment or did not participate at all (personal communication, January 24, 2013).

Both of the new chapters experienced challenges during their initial years on campus, the first of which was the struggle of meeting quota during recruitment and retention of members. The first formal recruitment saw both groups perform below the level of the other NPC chapters. While NPC Group #1 was able to closely approach campus total after its first recruitment, NPC Group #2 did not see similar results. Table II displays the exact figures recorded by both groups as well as the Panhellenic quota and campus total for each year (personal communication, January 24, 2013).

TABLE II					
<u>Year</u>	<u>Colonizing Group</u>	<u>Formal Bids Issued</u>	<u>Quota</u>	<u>Chapter Size at End of Fall Term</u>	<u>Campus Total</u>
2009	NPC Group #1	0	55	127	173
2010	NPC Group #1	63	63	172	179
2011	NPC Group #1	59	58	175	182
2011	NPC Group #2	0	58	100	182
2012	NPC Group #1	65	65	188	193
2012	NPC Group #2	49	65	158	193

(personal communication, January 24, 2013)

Acquiring housing was also a concern for the new colonies. NPC Group #1 held its meetings in an academic building while plans for permanent housing were being constructed. The group applied for property owned by the university on which they planned to build permanent housing, but the land was awarded to another organization. After this, the chapter looked to demolish an existing structure and rebuild a house capable of accommodating 45 to 50 women, consisting of three stories and approximately 17,500 to 18,500 square feet. This effort was met with opposition, as some individuals were concerned with the demolition and fact that the proposed structure would be of a higher occupancy than current Greek residences (Clemons, 2011). NPC Group #2 was able to obtain temporary housing beginning in early August of 2012 by leasing the house of fraternity that had been suspended in the 2011-2012 academic year (Orwick, 2012). Prior to this, the chapter had held its meetings in the Student Center on campus (Orwick, 2012). The leasing agreement was orchestrated between the national headquarters of NPC Group #2 and that of the suspended fraternity (Orwick, 2012). NPC Group #2 possessed plans to complete a permanent facility by January of 2014 (Orwick, 2012).

While the new members of each new group were excited to be a part of Greek Life, they lacked the role models of older activities to set an example of maturity and acceptable behaviors. According to a Student Affairs administrator, this led to the new members being more socially engaged and immature in their behavior (personal communication, January 24, 2013). An effort was made to curb this reality for NPC Group #1, however, as a member of the Panhellenic Council coordinated an effort in which active members of other NPC sororities on campus served as “big sisters” for a ten-day period (Perkowski, 2009). According to the Panhellenic Council member

responsible for the effort, the time limit was imposed so that they did not “overstep their boundaries” (Perkowski, 2009).

A unique challenge faced by SEC College #2, its Panhellenic community, and new colonies was the closing of an NPC chapter in between colonizations. In 2010, a NPC chapter made the decision to close due in part to struggling with low membership (Saltz, 2010). A news release issued by the chapter stated that “following an extensive public relations campaign and multiple informal recruitment events, it was determined not enough of the many factors required to sustain an effective chapter were present” (Saltz, 2010). Currently, the chapter plans to return to campus in 2014. This group was the last to colonize prior to the 2009 effort mentioned with the exception of some turn around colonizations (personal communication, January 24, 2013).

CHAPTER VI: SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE COLLEGE #3

In 2007, the Greek community at SEC College #3 was comprised of over 5,000 students, accounting for over 25% of the student body. It was home to 53 Greek organizations and more fraternity and sorority members than any other institution in the Southeastern United States. Of those 53 Greek organizations, 18 were a part of the campus’s Panhellenic community. Despite the large size of the Panhellenic community, the NPC chapters had doubled in size and the Panhellenic community felt strongly that the time was right for its community to grow. Table III shows these growth patterns within the Panhellenic community from 2002 to 2010, highlighting the significant increase in the number of women pledging NPC chapters in the 2006 recruitment that drew attention to the potential need for extension (personal communication, March 28, 2013).

Table III			
<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Women Pledged</u>	<u>Percent Increase</u>	<u>Average Pledge Class Size</u>
2002	617	N/A	44
2003	756	22.53%	54
2004	785	3.84%	56
2005	827	5.35%	59
2006	1024	23.82%	73

(personal communication, March 28, 2013)

Thus, in 2007 the campus opened for extension for the first time in over twenty years, an NPC group not having been added to the campus since the late eighties. The administration at the university and local alumnae of NPC chapters were supportive of the possibility of extension, and so an exploratory committee was formed and the process of extension begun. Of the groups that submitted packets, three were invited to make formal presentations and two were invited to extend. It was decided that the stacking method would be utilized, with the first group colonizing in fall of 2008 and the second in the fall of 2010. Because of housing concerns, however, the second group requested their colonization to be pushed back to the fall of 2011 in order for them to better prepare and have additional time to designate the exact location on which they would build their new house. Both chapters would be undergoing a re-colonization as both groups had previously had chapters on the campus before. NPC Group #1 had left in campus in the '60s while NPC Group #2 had left the campus in the '70s. Because of this, both groups had a local alumnae presence but of an older demographic (personal communication, March 28, 2013).

The order in which the groups were selected was strategic. NPC Group #1 did not have a strong regional reputation nor were they well-represented within the SEC. They did, however, have an impressive record of recent extension successes at large and mid-sized universities and colleges as well as a strong reputation in states such as Texas from which the university drew a large number of students. They came into the process with an extremely detailed plan for their colonization that left a strong impression on the extension committee. Unlike the first, NPC Group #2 did have a strong reputation within the SEC as well as the regional area. They possessed

tremendous external support and name recognition, and thus they were selected to come onto campus in the second slot (personal communication, March 28, 2013).

Both groups experienced similar success during their colonization efforts. Their methods centered around gaining the support of other NPC chapters; hosting focus groups with leaders from the Greek community to discuss recruitment, risk management and new member support; and partnering with fraternities to gain support for future social events as well as to collect names of women who might be interested in pledging the new chapter. The focus groups held by the colonizing chapters allowed current members and leaders of the Greek community to explain how such topics were uniquely conducted on campus and what events were most popular within the Greek community, such as Homecoming. These focus groups helped build support from the Greek community and allowed them to feel invested in the new chapters' success. NPC Group #1 was actually able to have an entire calendar of social events planned before they even had their first member (personal communication, March 28, 2013).

Correct housing was a critical factor as well. NPC Group #1 was able to move into an already-existing house immediately while NPC Group #2 faced the challenge of building a new house. Because of this, NPC Group #2 chose to delay their colonization until 2011 until an exact location on which they would build their house was decided. Support from the groups' national offices was crucial as well, both in the colonization effort and first recruitment. Particularly with NPC Group #1, the level of organization displayed during the beginning of the extension process carried through well beyond bid day. The group utilized modern technology to provide the new chapter with sufficient advisors as only a handful of the advisors resided in the

local area. In addition, at least one chapter consultant lived in the sorority house full time for the first three years of the chapter's existence. In the end, the second group was able to model their colonization effort after the methods that made the first group's effort a success (personal communication, March 28, 2013).

In the fall of 2008, 1,630 women registered for recruitment. Key to the success of the NPC Group #1's colonization effort was an effective "number game", as Greek Life was faced with the challenge of trying to take as many women as possible who did not match in the recruitment process and place them in the new chapter's pool. Many women withdrew from the formal recruitment process in order to pledge NPC Group #1, some whom choose to do so because their final options did not include their preferred houses. NPC Group #1's final pledge class was comprised of approximately 60-70% of such women. In addition, NPC Group #1 received a number of women who had originally signed single intentional preference cards, were mismatched, and thus decided to pledge the new chapter. Greek Life leaders wanted NPC Group #1 to be able to be as selective as possible in their colonization, and so they aimed for the new group to be able to interview at least 400 potential new members, a pool that was at least twice the size they hoped to hit for their first pledge class (personal communication, March 28, 2013).

In addition to having sufficient numbers from which to pull from and allowing the new groups to invite back as many women as possible, the Office of Greek Life helped ensure the groups' success by doing a thorough job of selling the new groups, promoting them at student orientation and selling the idea of being a founding member. Recruitment counselors also underwent intensive training in order to thoroughly understand the colonization process and be able to answer any questions

a PNM may have concerning the process and the new group. The recruitment counselors were trained to strongly discourage single intentional preference, rather promoting the colonizing chapter and encouraging PNMs to consider them (personal communication, March 28, 2013).

At the time the campus opened for extension, one chapter within the NPC community had historically struggled to meet quota and maintain campus total since their colonizing at the university. Naturally, the group expressed concerns about the idea of extension and the threat a new group might pose to their livelihood. The group struggled during the 2008 formal recruitment as women who historically would have dropped from the process after having their options reduced to the weak chapter were now given a new option, which was the colonizing NPC Group #1. The weaker group was able to increase their numbers through continuous open bidding in the spring of 2009. The 2009 recruitment saw much improvement for the weaker group, however, as they made quota-plus and recorded their largest pledge class ever. Because of their growth, the system was strengthened and the number of women who would have historically withdrawn from recruitment decreased, presenting a challenge unique to NPC Group #2 in their 2011 colonization effort (personal communication, March 28, 2013).

The successful colonization efforts managed to halt the growth of quota, but more groups would need to be added in order to actually decrease it. The campus desired to bring on three additional groups in a future extension effort in order to accomplish this. The initial plan was for the three groups to be brought on over a span of six years, but only one group submitted a packet when the campus re-opened for extension, and it was voted down (personal communication, March 28, 2013).

CONCLUSION

Upon the conclusion of research and contemplation of its results, the researcher concluded that a fault-proof “recipe for success” in extension does not exist at this time, as the exact methods a Panhellenic community will use to ensure a successful extension will vary. In all three of the SEC extension efforts examined, however, there existed a common reoccurrence of several elements that were credited with having a significant importance in ensuring a successful extension effort. These elements are summarized in Table IV.

<u>TABLE IV</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A recognized and supported need for an additional chapter(s)• Efficient assessment and manipulation of related numbers prior to and during the colonization effort• Plans for a competitive and readily-available housing component• A thorough extension and colonization education program for members of the Greek community, recruitment counselors, and potential new members

Perhaps the most crucial of these elements is that a campus should not add to its Panhellenic community unless the need to do so exists. In order to determine if a true need for additional chapters exists, the Panhellenic community must examine if its current environment is ideal, and if not, if additional chapters will help it reach its

desired state . Usually the signal that a need for extension exists can be found in the numbers. At all three of the SEC campuses examined as case studies in this work, an increase in the number of women participating in formal recruitment was accompanied by an increase in quota for already large chapters. In addition to supporting numbers, a sense of urgency must exist, and the university and Greek community must buy into the plan. If the Greek community does not see the need for new chapters, they will not buy into the extension effort and will not support it, thus resulting in a less successful effort. An important factor in this aspect is the commitment of historically weaker NPC chapters on the campus. As was seen at SEC College #3, a historically weak chapter may struggle during the colonization of the new group, but the addition of a new chapter can provide them with the opportunity to grow and strengthen in the following years. Such chapters must be committed to seeing the extension process and colonization effort through despite hardships, rather than leaving campus mid-way as seen at SEC College #2.

An effective “number game” is necessary and begins with the initial comparison of chapter size to the number of women participating in the formal recruitment process when considering whether or not extension is necessary. It is important that the number of women going through the recruitment process is on the rise and that additional numbers such as campus total and expected return rates are altered efficiently in relation to this increase. The colonizing group should aim to recruit as closely to chapter average as possible, and so raising campus total to better reflect chapter average in the spring prior to the group’s colonization should strongly be considered. During the recruitment process, expected return rates of existing chapters should be lowered in order to push more women into the colonizing

chapter's pool, thereby allowing the colony to be more selective of its founding members. The colonizing group should also be able to pledge a larger number of women than existing chapters in order to compensate for the struggles they will likely face with retention.

The housing component is essential in allowing the new chapters an even playing field. As seen at SEC College #1, some prospective NPC groups will not act on an extension opportunity unless the university can assure that an opportunity for equal housing will be made available to them. The role of housing is especially significant on SEC campuses where large, stately sorority houses decorate the landscape, with interiors consisting of dining halls, living quarters and lounge areas. During formal recruitment, many NPC sororities host all of their formal and sometimes informal rounds in their homes. For new groups, it would be difficult to compete with such a setting during their first formal recruitment, as they would be limited to locations on campuses such as ballrooms, banquet halls or meeting spaces. Another reason the housing component is vital is that it ensures the colonizing members and national office of the NPC chapter that there will be a location capable of meeting the housing, dining and operating needs of the chapter. The thought of not knowing where such activities would be held is enough to deter both a prospective NPC group from colonizing and a PNM from pledging.

The main hurdle the collegiate Panhellenic community must overcome in an extension effort is educating its members and PNMs about the extension process and their role in ensuring its success. While a Greek organization may be able to insure financial stability, outstanding marketing strategies and a strategic plan for a future of hands-on support from their national office and local alumnae, no Greek

organization can ensure that the members of the collegiate Panhellenic community will thoroughly understand and support their move onto the campus. It is also imperative that recruitment counselors thoroughly understand the colonization process and their role in leading PNMs through the colonization and helping the colony achieve as large a pool of PNMs as possible. If these members of the Panhellenic community do not understand the benefits that a new chapter can bring and their role in the process, then the success of the new chapter will ultimately be delayed or possibility denied entirely, and goals of the extension process will not be achieved.

Ultimately, the NPC has provided a detailed outline of the extension process and strong supportive materials that have proved themselves effective through repeated use by its member sororities. Following the NPC extension process guidelines will provide a collegiate Panhellenic community with a solid foundation for their extension effort, but they must also recognize and account for any challenges and characteristics that are unique to their campus. Specifically for SEC collegiate Panhellenic communities, addressing the four specific topics previously outlined will provide an additional step to success, but in the end, only the Panhellenic community on the particular SEC campus will be able to write their “recipe for success” in their extension effort, and no two “recipes” will be the same.

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