



Fraternity housing is an issue that will vary with every campus. However in many cases, chapter housing can be a key competitive advantage within a Greek community and may impact long-term success. While the General Fraternity leaves the housing situation primarily in the hands of the colony/chapter and alumni, there are several ideas that are important to address.

There are basic steps that should be followed no matter what the specific situation on campus might be. The following should act as a guide to begin the process.

1. An Alumni Housing Chairman should be selected/appointed/step forward to lead the effort. This should be separate from the Alumni Advisory Board, but can be one of its members; it is recommended that it not be the AAB Chairman. For both chapters and colonies, it is recommended that this process be started as soon as possible to lock down all of the details.
 - a. The chairman has two primary areas of responsibility, being a Campus Liaison and a Real Estate Liaison, in addition to communicating information back to the alumni and colony/chapter. The undergraduate House Manager should be brought into the loop (for colonies this will be once he is appointed).
 - i. Campus Liaison: Contact institution to determine what the rules are and options for living on campus. This can include leasing/buying land on campus, renting/buying an institution-owned building, living in residence halls, etc. Also researching the housing status quo for current on-campus fraternities.
 - ii. Real Estate Liaison: Contact a real estate agent, ideally an alumnus, and investigate if there are land/housing options around campus.
2. Begin investigating what the current fraternity housing situation is on campus. A meeting should be set up with the Greek Life professional on campus, or other administrator who deals with student/fraternity housing. Below are some questions that should be asked.
 - a. Are fraternities currently on campus housed? If so, are the chapters with larger numbers all housed?
 - b. What is the average percentage of a chapter's membership that lives in the chapter house on this campus?
 - c. Can you see a direct link between long-term success and housing?
 - d. Are they owned by the organizations, or rented from the institution?
 - i. For either, what does it take to buy, lease and/or build on campus?
 - e. Are there restrictions from the campus or city on where Greek housing can be located?
 - f. What does it take for a house to become recognized by the institution?
 - i. Are there insurance-related requirements associated with being recognized by the University? If so, please obtain a copy of the policy stating said requirements and forward it to the General Fraternity.
 - g. What does the institution provide in terms of support, if any?
3. Bring up the idea of future housing to the colony/chapter and get their thoughts on what they would like to see. The undergraduate House Manager can facilitate recording the wishes of the colony/chapter and conveying that information to the Housing Chairman.
4. The Housing Chairman should come up with a commitment document to determine the actual number of men who will require housing. Any plan should not depend on more than 30%-50% of the chapter membership living in the house (depending upon campus and chapter traditions).

5. For colonies, use the Sigma Nu staff to be the ‘man on the ground’ while he is on campus. There are a variety of functions he can serve while on campus.
 - a. Speak with campus administrator(s) (there should always be an alumnus present as well).
 - b. Look at properties to see if they meet the needs of the chapter/alumni.
 - c. Assist the undergraduate House Manager in the coordination effort.

6. The alumni need to conduct open and honest discussions and see if a House Corporation should be created and what level of commitment the alumni are willing to make. There should also be serious planning, including financial projections, undertaken to ensure that the colony/chapter would be able to sustain a housing option. The critical piece is that any lease or purchase agreement should be made only through a corporation.
 - a. To learn more about forming a House Corporation, interested alumni should contact a local attorney with knowledge of both not-for-profit and corporate law to properly organize the House Corporation in the state where they are operating. This individual should help with the necessary corporate filings to the Secretary of State, and the Internal Revenue Service on a federal level.
 - b. Also, interested alumni should contact a local insurance broker to discuss property insurance options and costs. The General Fraternity does not provide property insurance; however, Willis North America, the leading insurance broker for men’s fraternities, offers a Greek-specific property insurance program, Fraternal Property Management Association (FPMA) Property Program, that may fit the House Corporation’s needs. More information about FPMA can be found at http://www.willisfraternity.com/FPMA_Property_Program/.

Important Items to Consider:

1. Does the chapter have a restricted account with Sigma Nu Educational Foundation, Inc.? In certain situations, funds at the Foundation may be utilized for housing projects. Or, does a capital campaign need to be started?
 - a. To learn more about capital campaigns and restricted chapter accounts, please contact the Sigma Nu Educational Foundation, Inc., at (540) 463-1869 or visit www.sigmanufoundation.org.

Note: Make sure any option decided upon does not financially overextend the colony/chapter, or the alumni. It is also important to keep in mind that there are ebbs and flows in chapter membership numbers, which can cause future problems if not taken into account early.

Possible Housing Solutions

1. On Campus

- a. Standard Greek Housing with space
 - i. Campus owned
 - ii. Chapter owned
 - iii. Chapter owned and the land is institution leased
- b. Greek organizations have housing, but no space is currently available to build or lease
- c. Residence halls

2. Off Campus

- a. Buy land and build
- b. Purchase existing property that is ready to move in
 - i. There may be a property that has previously been used for fraternity housing. Ask the Greek advisor, or campus official, if there are any options such as this.
- c. Purchase existing property that needs to be renovated
- d. Renting an existing property