There are three recognized phases in the process of becoming a fully chartered chapter: pre-start-up, start-up, and emerging. The following table describes a typical chapter formation process.

|  | **Description** | **Phase** |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Determine need and viability of new Sigma Theta Mu chapter | Pre-start-up |
|  | Generate interest from students and faculty members | Pre-start-up |
|  | Identify a “core team” of 5-6 persons | Start-up |
|  | Hold an informational meeting to introduce Sigma Theta Mu to the institution | Start-up |
|  | Hold an organizational meeting to elect interim officers and approve constitution | Emerging |
|  | Grow the chapter and petition for Sigma Theta Mu Charter | Emerging |
|  | Receive charter from Sigma Theta Mu International Society | Chartered |

Each phase is associated with a set of activities. A consequence of stepping through the process is an increase in the number of potential Sigma Theta Mu members affiliated with the chapter. Sigma Theta Mu considers a core group that does not have local officers and local constitution a “Start-up Chapter,” and requires local officers and constitution approved under the rules of the local academic institution as an “Emerging Chapter.” A Chapter is “Chartered” when it petitions to the International Society and the Board of Directors of the International Society votes to approve its petition and directs the Society Secretary to issue a charter. At a minimum, a chartered chapter should have a faculty advisor and officers to retain its charter.

A frequently asked question is, “How long does it take to start a chapter?” Fortunately, the answer is, “It depends.” There is no pressure to hurry through the process. On the other hand, a firmly committed team can proceed at their own pace and is not hampered by bureaucracy or other hindrances.

Three document that are available to assist in completing a petition to charter a chapter:

1. The Chapter Startup Guidelines with instructions for completing the process and the petition <<link>>
2. A Chapter Roster to be completed and attached to the petition <<link>>
3. The Constitution of the Sigma Theta Mu International Society for reference <<link>>