



# Resolved to Educate

## Educational support for: Setting and adjusting total

### What is total?

Total is the allowable chapter size as determined by the College Panhellenic. Total includes both new and initiated members. The purpose of total is to provide for growth of the Panhellenic community and parity among the chapters and to allow the maximum number of women to participate in the sorority experience.

If a chapter has met total, it is no longer eligible to invite new members to join until 1) the chapter is below total, 2) it is the primary membership recruitment period or 3) the chapter has not yet matched/pledged to quota from the primary membership recruitment period. If at any time during the academic year a chapter falls below total, the chapter is eligible to recruit new members, through continuous open bidding (COB), to reach total.

### How is total determined?

The NPC Manual of Information contains all NPC policies that outline how to determine total in a Panhellenic community.

First, each chapter must accurately count its members. Members who are not present on campus for one academic term (e.g., participating in a study abroad program, student teaching, internship) count in chapter total calculations unless granted inactive status the entire academic year.

### **Calculating Total (1955, 2009, 2015) – POLICY**

The procedure for determining total states: Total is the allowable chapter size as determined by the College Panhellenic and includes both new members and initiated members. Any member who is away from campus for the entire academic year is not counted in total. Members away for one academic term are counted in total. The Panhellenic reviews total each term to ensure that existing total reflects current campus conditions and the Panhellenic goal of growth and parity, and to allow the maximum number of women to participate in the sorority experience.

NOTE: The following NPC policies further clarify how to count members in the chapter.

- *Chapter Membership Roll (1955, 2018) – POLICY*
- *Graduating Seniors in Chapter Total (2002) – POLICY*
- *New Member (1981) – POLICY*
- *Transfer Member (1977) – POLICY*
- *Vacancies (1978) – POLICY*

Second, the College Panhellenic Council selects one of the four available options in determining total and documents the choice in the College Panhellenic recruitment rules. The College Panhellenic Council should be communicating appropriately to the chapter and inter/national organization regarding any changes in the method to determine total.

### Where should information about total be stated?

- **Bylaws:** Under the article for The Panhellenic Council there should be a section titled "Authority" that states: "... annually review the parameters as adopted in the recruitment rules for the evaluation and/or adjustment of total every regular academic term ..."
- **Recruitment rules:** In the College Panhellenic recruitment rules there should be a section titled "Statement of Automatic Reset of Total" that states the method used to set total.
- **College Panhellenic Council meeting minutes:** Each term following the automatic reset of total, the actual number for the new total is recorded in the minutes and communicated to all chapters.

### ***Options in Determining Total (2009, 2015, 2019, 2020, 2022) – POLICY***

College Panhellenics must use one of the following methods to determine total:

1. Average or median chapter size (whichever is larger).
2. Midpoint between median and largest chapter size.
3. Largest chapter size.
4. Largest chapter size plus up to 20 women.

Panhellenics with half or more of chapters not meeting housing capacity must use method 4.

Finally, depending on the timing of primary recruitment on campus, the Panhellenic evaluates or adjusts total accordingly per NPC policy.

### ***Automatically Adjusting Total (2013, 2015, 2016, 2019) – POLICY***

A College Panhellenic should evaluate total every term. In the academic term that primary recruitment is held, total will be **automatically adjusted** no later than 72 hours following bid distribution.

If a College Panhellenic has deferred recruitment, total will be **automatically adjusted** within one week (no more than 7 days) from the start of the first term of the academic year.

If a College Panhellenic hosts a fall primary recruitment and resets total in the academic term(s) in which primary recruitment is not held, then total must be reset within one week (no more than 7 days) from the start of the academic term(s), and cannot be set to less than 95% of the total that resulted from the automatic adjustment in the most recent academic term in which primary recruitment was held.

### **Why should total be evaluated or adjusted each academic term?**

A College Panhellenic should evaluate total every term to ensure that total reflects current campus conditions and the Panhellenic goals of growth and parity. This means each academic term, after appropriately counting members in each chapter, the College Panhellenic Council should calculate total in accordance with the method stated in the College Panhellenic recruitment rules.

When total is too low:

- The Panhellenic community is unable to grow because of the lack of sufficient spaces to accommodate women interested in sorority membership.
- The smaller chapters are unable to close the size disparity with the larger chapters in the community.

When total is too high:

- Potential new members (PNMs) could withdraw from the primary recruitment process and join chapters during the COB process when they do not receive an invitation to return to the chapter of their choice.
- Larger chapters participate in COB, interfering with the effectiveness of smaller chapters' recruitment.

Adjusting total immediately following the primary recruitment period (no later than 72 hours following bid distribution) allows chapters to participate in COB quickly and integrate any new members into the existing new member education programs, if desired.

If a College Panhellenic has deferred recruitment, total will be **automatically adjusted** within one week (no more than 7 days) from the start of the first term of the academic year. Much like when total is set too high, having every chapter open to accept members may negate the primary recruitment process. Primary recruitment is the time to focus on the growth of the community where the majority of PNMs are ready to become members of the community. The non-primary recruitment term is the opportunity for Panhellenic communities to focus on the opportunity for parity of chapters.

Automatically adjusting total during the fall term for College Panhellenics with deferred recruitment:

- Accounts for the women who graduated at the end of the previous academic year.
- Maintains an accurate depiction of the Panhellenic community.
- Provides for parity of chapters.
- Manages the expectations of PNMs during the COB period while also promoting the upcoming primary recruitment.

### Setting total to promote growth.

Enrollment in higher education is falling in the United States. As fewer students enroll, this affects the number of women who could participate in recruitment. Similarly, some Panhellenic communities need to focus on growth as they continue to grapple with how to best promote the sorority experience and Panhellenic relevance for today's collegiate woman. The following are some characteristics that may indicate the Panhellenic should consider a total-setting method focusing on growth:

Institutional characteristics:

- Enrollment at the institution is declining.
- Women's enrollment at the institution is declining.

Panhellenic characteristics:

- Panhellenic total has been declining.
- The open house pool (i.e., the number of women who register and show up to the first round of recruitment) is declining.
- Closing of chapters in the Panhellenic community due to dwindling interest.

### Myths and facts about adjusting total

**Myth:** Raising total makes our chapters/community larger.

**Fact:** Chapter size is a function of quota, not total. Quota is what adds to a chapter's size — the more women who go through recruitment and sign membership recruitment acceptance binding agreements (MRABAs), the larger the quota and the larger chapters become. Raising total only allows those chapters that are smaller than others to have the opportunity to achieve the Panhellenic goal of parity.

**Myth:** Total should never change.

**Fact:** NPC policy states that total will be automatically adjusted no more than 72 hours following bid distribution. For campuses with deferred recruitment, total must be reset each academic term. It should reflect the current sizes of chapters on campus — that means total may rise or fall — but by evaluating it each regular academic term and automatically adjusting it, total should be an accurate reflection of the community's size.

**Myth:** Total is too hard to change because it is in our bylaws.

**Fact:** Total should never be in the Panhellenic bylaws. Instead, the bylaws should state that the Panhellenic will evaluate or adjust total according to the method adopted in the recruitment rules. The recruitment rules will state the approved method of calculating total according to NPC policy and not the actual number. For campuses on a trimester or quarter system the recruitment rules will also state the second term outside of the primary recruitment terms when the Panhellenic will evaluate/adjust total.

## How should a College Panhellenic Council decide on the best method to determine total?

The method to determine total belongs in the College Panhellenic recruitment rules and voted upon annually by the College Panhellenic Council. The selected method should be dependent on the overall trends of the community and not just a reaction of one academic term.

The College Panhellenic Council should consider the following questions to determine the best method and if that method balances growth and parity.

- Are there a large number of women interested in joining a sorority even after primary recruitment?
- Are there a large number of transfer students during the non-primary recruitment term interested in joining the Panhellenic community?
- Are chapters participating in COB when spaces are available? Is the Panhellenic promoting joining opportunities year-round to alleviate any stigma with COB?
  - Achieving high retention rates and maximizing open spaces during the non-primary recruitment term is key to growing and maintaining the size of Panhellenic communities. College Panhellenics should work to market the sorority experience year-round, not just in preparation for the primary recruitment period.
- Is the method selected to determine total allowing the entire Panhellenic community to grow?
  - NPC member organizations have prioritized the growth of Panhellenic communities and understand that one of their chapters may be holding back the opportunity of growth for the rest of the community. College Panhellenics should be having these critical conversations to understand the needs of the overall community.

Most College Panhellenics may not need to select a method to determine total outside of average or median chapter size (whichever is larger). The options in determining total provide for further options for the College Panhellenics to explore opportunities for growth.

Since the College Panhellenic Council votes on the recruitment rules, including the method to determine total, the new calculated total number is not voted upon by the College Panhellenic Council. Instead, the Panhellenic shares the new total number with all chapters and documents it in the College Panhellenic Council meeting minutes after it is reset.

### Who counts on a chapter's roster?

From *Calculating Total (1955, 2009, 2015) – POLICY*

... includes both new members and initiated members. Any member who is away from campus for the entire academic year is not counted in total. Members away for one academic term are counted in total. ...

*Chapter Membership Roll (1955, 2018) – POLICY*

For all Panhellenic purposes:

1. Every regularly enrolled undergraduate woman who is a new member and/or initiated member of a chapter on that particular campus shall be counted as a member of the college chapter.
2. Every regularly affiliated undergraduate transfer shall be counted as a member of the college chapter on that campus, affiliation to be defined as meeting the requirements of the individual member organization.

### What if a sorority member transfers from another campus and wants to affiliate with a chapter that is already over total?

*Transfer Member (1977) – POLICY*

If a chapter is at total and wishes to affiliate a transfer member, it may do so even though the addition of that member will put the chapter over total.

## When and how should the College Panhellenic adjust total for the primary recruitment academic term?

A College Panhellenic should evaluate total every term. In the academic term that includes primary recruitment, total will be automatically adjusted no later than 72 hours following bid distribution.

## When and how should the College Panhellenic adjust total for the non-primary recruitment academic term?

### Fall primary recruitment:

Fall primary recruitment campuses should evaluate total in the non-primary recruitment term to ensure that total reflects current campus conditions and the Panhellenic goals of growth and parity.

The College Panhellenic Council must vote on the choice to reset total and record the decision in the meeting minutes. If a College Panhellenic chooses to reset total, then total must be reset within one week (no more than 7 days) from the start of the academic term. Total cannot be set less than 95% of the total established after primary recruitment.

In an effort to prioritize growth of Panhellenic communities, the policy states the reset of total cannot be set to less than 95% of the total that resulted from the automatic adjustment from the most recent primary recruitment. If a College Panhellenic chooses to reset total and the calculation is less than 95% of the total from primary recruitment, total will automatically adjust to the 95% calculation.

### Example:

- Fall primary recruitment total was set to 100.
- 95% of 100 equals 95.
- In spring, the Panhellenic reevaluates total and calculates it at 93.

In this example, total automatically adjusts to 95 since 93 is less than the 95% threshold required to reset total in the non-primary recruitment term.

The College Panhellenic Council must keep in mind appropriate timing according to Robert's Rules of Order. Conversations about total, amendments to recruitment rules to change the method to reset total and motions to reset total in the non-primary recruitment term may need to happen in the prior academic term.

### Deferred primary recruitment:

If a College Panhellenic has deferred recruitment, total will be **automatically adjusted** within one week (no more than 7 days) from the start of the first term of the academic year.

This automatic adjustment will use the method as stated in the College Panhellenic recruitment rules. If a College Panhellenic Council wishes to adopt a different method to determine total, amendments to recruitment rules may need to happen in the prior academic term.

Campuses with deferred recruitment are not held to the same 95% threshold in the non-primary recruitment term. With the graduation of students at the end of the academic year, the reset of total in the non-primary academic term will be a smaller calculation until the opportunity to recruit more students becomes available through the primary recruitment process.