



Archi Symposium Expansion: Architecture and the Allied Arts Saturday, March 27

Background

For many years, the collective memory and wisdom of the Grand Council operated under the presumption that Alpha Rho Chi chapters must be located at institutions where an architecture program was accredited by the National Architecture Accrediting Board (NAAB.)

A few years ago, students and faculty at the University of Memphis approached us seeking admission into APX. The University of Memphis offers a 4-year Bachelor of Fine Arts in Architecture, a program that is not accredited. Initially, we were prepared to decline their request for admission, but upon careful review of our organizing documents (Constitution and By-Laws) – we found no cause to refuse their admittance. The C&BL do not make accreditation of the program of study a prerequisite for affiliation. We gladly have welcomed the Imhotep chapter at the U of Memphis, and believe that they are a worthy addition to our family.

However, by not having the objective criteria of accreditation as a prerequisite for affiliation, we are then left with Constitutional language that can be broadly or narrowly interpreted as to what makes a particular collegiate location a good candidate for an Alpha Rho Chi chapter. As we have become more widely known, primarily through our website presence, we have begun to have requests for information from students in programs that perhaps stretch the original intent of our founding.

For example, last fall we had two such requests. One was from Eastern Michigan University, which does not offer courses in architecture, but does offer degree programs in Urban Planning – which is certainly an “Allied Art.” Another request came from Rankin Technical College in St. Louis, MO. Rankin, at the time of their request, offered a Bachelor of Science in Architectural Technology, (although it appears that this program is no longer offered.) The problem with Rankin, in the eyes of the Grand Council, is that it offers primarily two-year, Associates degrees, much like a Community College. Both of these requests for possible affiliation with APX were politely declined, but brought to the forefront issues regarding how we go about consideration of a particular location for expansion possibilities.

There are three sections of the APX Constitution that are relevant to the discussion:

C. A II. S 01 The objectives of the Fraternity are: To organize and unite for education and professional development purposes the students of Architecture and its Allied Arts in the universities and colleges of America and the alumni members of this Fraternity in order that this Fraternity may promote the artistic, scientific, and practical proficiency of its membership and the profession.

This section establishes the fundamental purposes of our organization. It also indicates where locations of the fraternal chapters should be located (universities and colleges of America), and who should be admitted (students of Architecture and its Allied Arts.)

C. A VII. S 05: ESTABLISHMENT OF CHAPTERS AND COLONIES

Chapters shall be established and instituted in accordance with the rules specified in this Constitution and the By-Laws of this Fraternity. The Grand Council shall regulate and administer the procedures for the development and colonization of new Chapters and shall promulgate such rules and requirements as it deems reasonably necessary to promote and encourage the establishment of new Chapters, including the development of interim organizations to be known as Colonies, provided that such rules and requirements shall be consistent with, and not in contravention of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Fraternity and the edicts and directions of the membership duly assembled in Convention.

This section gives the Grand Council the ability to determine the procedures, rules, and requirements for establishing new chapters. The intent is not to codify every rule, but give the Grand Council some leeway to react to changing conditions, and at the same time establish clear guidelines for admission of new chapters.

C. A VII. S 01: CLASSES OF MEMBERSHIP

(A) Active Members: Active members shall consist of students registered in the departments, schools, colleges or professional courses of architecture or architectural engineering, or in professional courses in landscape architecture, interior design, sculpture, or allied fields leading to a Bachelor's degree, or equivalent thereof, provided however the membership of any active Chapter shall consist of at least fifty percent (50%) of students registered in architecture or allied fields. When an active member transfers to another school, at which a Chapter of this Fraternity is located, he may affiliate as an active member of the second Chapter with its approval.

At the outset, this section appears to be a clear definition of our organizational makeup. But it raises as many questions as it answers. For example, what can be included as an "Allied Field?" In the broadest interpretation, many would find allies in architecture from nearly every field of study. Additionally, what can be considered an "equivalent thereof" of a Bachelor's degree? Is the determinate the number of hours of credit?

Panelists

Chooch Pickard, Expansion Director, Anthemios AA
Emily Dziubek, Vitruvius Chapter
Theresa. Dorsey, Satyros Chapter
Carlos Machado, Cleisthenes Chapter