

BRIEF HISTORY OF GRADUATE CHAPTERS

Graduate chapters in Phi Gamma Delta have an interesting historical background, dating back to the earliest days of the Fraternity. However anxious graduate brothers were for organizational identification, those entrusted with the care of the Fraternity's government felt they had good and sufficient reason for holding up the organization of graduate groups.

The earliest records show that some graduation action was contemplated from the time the first Deltas departed college. In the early minutes of Alpha, references to visits from alumni brothers and their participation in chapter affairs shows the development of a bond, which should be given official recognition.

The first concrete action came as a resolution on July 30, 1851, in Alpha's minutes:

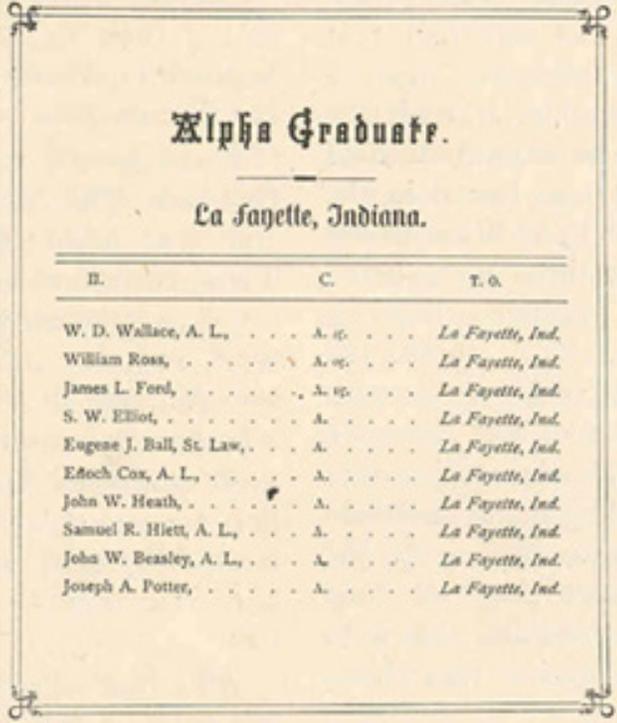
“Resolved, 1st. That every member of our order be requested to keep his chapter informed of his residence, occupation, and prospects, by correspondence at least once during the college year, and oftener should he change his location or anything of importance occur.”

“Resolved, 2nd. That every chapter be required to forward periodically to the Grand Chapter the name, residence, and occupation of each of its members and the Grand Chapter distribute copies of the same to each other Chapter, whence they may be further distributed to individual members.”

It was many years before these resolutions bore fruit, but undoubtedly the first issues of the catalog were an outgrowth of these ideas.

In December 1856, Allegheny City graduates, meeting at irregular intervals, asked the Grand Chapter to determine the attitude of the Fraternity toward a graduate organization. No action was forthcoming, however. In the first issue of the *Phi Gamma Delta* (January 1879), H. L. C. (probably Hershel L. Campbell, 1879) debates the issue. In the next issue, an Alabamian categorically opposed the idea. Editor McDowell commented in print, “properly regulated alumni chapters would be a boon to the Fraternity's growth.”

In 1880, Fraternity vote empowered the Grand Chapter to grant charters to alumni organizations. So, after 23 years, Allegheny City graduates were officially sanctioned. The new law did not bring a rush of petitions.



The image shows a historical document titled "Alpha Graduate. La Fayette, Indiana." It contains a table with three columns: "H.", "C.", and "T. O.". The table lists names and their affiliations, such as "W. D. Wallace, A. L., . . . A. G. . . . La Fayette, Ind." and "Joseph A. Potter, . . . A. . . . La Fayette, Ind." The document is framed with decorative corner ornaments.

H.	C.	T. O.
W. D. Wallace, A. L., . . .	A. G. . . .	La Fayette, Ind.
William Ross,	A. G. . . .	La Fayette, Ind.
James L. Ford,	A. G. . . .	La Fayette, Ind.
S. W. Elliot,	A.	La Fayette, Ind.
Eugene J. Ball, St. Law., . . .	A.	La Fayette, Ind.
Enoch Cox, A. L.,	A.	La Fayette, Ind.
John W. Heath,	A.	La Fayette, Ind.
Samuel R. Hiett, A. L.,	A.	La Fayette, Ind.
John W. Beasley, A. L.,	A.	La Fayette, Ind.
Joseph A. Potter,	A.	La Fayette, Ind.

Early Graduate Chapter Roster

Finally, in 1883, New Albany (Indiana) petitioned and was chartered as the Gamma Chapter under the new law. This was the third graduate group. Two earlier ones, existing before the law of 1880, were Alpha at Lafayette, Indiana, and Beta at Indianapolis. Both are still in existence today.

The first graduate chapters used the Greek letter alphabet as did the undergraduate chapters. The practice was discontinued in 1904, when the first graduate group to have other than a Greek name was formed at Allentown, Pennsylvania, as the Allentown Graduate Chapter with a relationship established with the newly chartered undergraduate chapter at Muhlenberg College. Later, however, two new graduate chapters took Greek letter names. These chapters were Delta Mu at Detroit, founded in 1907, and Delta Chi founded at Washington, DC, in 1916. The first foreign graduate association was chartered in Shanghai, October 1921.

Over the years, there have been 200 different graduate chapters chartered all over the world. The first Canadian graduate chapter was chartered in Toronto, Ontario, on May 6, 1924. The Toronto Graduate Chapter is still active today. Other Canadian graduate chapters include Vancouver, Calgary and Edmonton.

The growth of graduate chapters from 1912 to 1970 was astounding. Over 150 new graduate chapters flourished. Cities large and small had graduate functions of some kind or another. It wasn't until the early 1970s that the growth of graduate chapters slowed. This was also the time when membership in fraternities in general began to decline.