

How to petition for a Tau Beta Pi chapter

We appreciate your interest in Tau Beta Pi, the honor society for all engineering students recognized for their distinguished scholarship and exemplary character.

Director of Chapter Programs Roger Hawks at Headquarters is your contact for information on the process. Please contact him by email (tbp@tbp.org) or phone (865-546-4578), and furnish your email address and the name of your college or university.

A group of students of an institution may petition for a charter if the institution meets the recommended requirements:

Requirements to submit a preliminary petition

1. Either:

A unified undergraduate engineering curriculum accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission (EAC) of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET),
Two or three engineering curricula all of which are accredited, or
Four or more engineering curricula at least three of which are accredited.

Engineering curricula are defined by TBP Constitution Article VIII Section 2(a) [see below].
Engineering technology curricula are ineligible for membership in Tau Beta Pi.
International institutions should have at least three undergraduate engineering programs accredited by an ABET-approved or equivalent agency.

2. A minimum of 40 engineering graduates per year

3. At least three faculty members should be members of Tau Beta Pi and

4. Operation of a local society patterned after a Tau Beta Pi chapter for at least two years.

The petitioning process

TBP Constitution Article VI, Section 2 [see below], describes the petitioning process for new chapters.

You begin by organizing a local engineering honor society patterned after a Tau Beta Pi chapter. Members would be selected from the top fifth of the senior class and the top eighth of the junior class who are in curricula meeting the requirements of TBP Constitution Article II Section 2(a). A document describing the process will be provided.

Your society should govern itself and elect members exactly like a Tau Beta Pi chapter for at least two full academic years before a preliminary petition may be submitted for consideration. This requirement allows those in your school and community an opportunity to see how an organization of this type can serve its students and institution before becoming committed to national affiliation.

The best way to get started is to review the Model Chapter Bylaws provided for a typical Tau Beta Pi chapter and to model your local society's bylaws after these. We would be pleased to review your bylaws after they are established and answer any questions you may have.

You may form your local society if you do not yet meet the requirements stated above. You may not, however, submit a preliminary petition until you do meet them. The time you operate prior to meeting the requirements to petition would count towards the two academic year operation requirement.

Once all the requirements have been met, an electronic copy of your preliminary petition would be sent to Headquarters. A sample preliminary petition will be sent to you.

The Executive Council would review your preliminary petition and, if appropriate, direct that an inspection visit be made.

If the recommendation of the inspecting team is favorable, we would ask you to prepare a final petition prior to June 1 for submission to that year's Convention.

You would send at your own expense at least two representatives, a student and an advisor, to the Tau Beta Pi National Convention in October. Only the Convention of Tau Beta Pi can grant new chapters.

Following Convention approval, your chapter's first members would be initiated and your chapter formally installed on a mutually agreeable date the following winter.

Our concept of Tau Beta Pi as an honor society is that we must be more than simply a key-hanging society in order to excel as broadly based engineers in our society. We believe that our members have been blessed with many gifts and that we have an obligation to give something back to our college, our campus and university, and our community. Therefore, our chapters are involved in a wide variety of projects.

The Tau Beta Pi Association, Inc., Petitioning Process Flow Chart

September 2020	Begin operation
June - December 2022	Prepare and submit preliminary petition
July 2022 - January 2023	Executive Council reviews preliminary petition and recommends inspection visit
August 2022 - March 2023	Conduct inspection visit
June 1, 2023	Submit final petition for consideration at Convention
October 2023	Attend Convention; Petition committee reviews final petition
January - 2024	Install new chapter

Constitution & Bylaws referring to the petitioning process

Bylaw IV - Establishment of Collegiate Chapters

SECTION 4.01. Petition.

- In addition to complying with Article VI of the Constitution of this Association, a petition for a Charter and the establishment of a Chapter at an institution must set forth:
 - The requirements for admission to the entering class of the institution.
 - The net number of weeks required to be spent on the campus in strictly academic classroom and laboratory work, exclusive of examination periods, for a first degree in engineering.
 - The gross length of the college curriculum for a first degree in engineering.
- The petition shall give in tabular or graphical form, or both, the numbers of regular engineering students in each of the engineering classes and the names and numbers of the undergraduate engineering degrees awarded in each curriculum during the last five years.
- A copy of the petition, marked copies of the college's catalog or bulletin which are descriptive of the curricula and courses offered, and the equipment available for student use, and such other printed matter as may be available and which will be helpful to the Executive Council in reaching its decision, shall be submitted for each member of the Council and for the Secretary-Treasurer, with extra copies for inspectors.
- The petition shall give the professional, scientific, technical, and honor societies to which each member of the engineering faculty belongs.
- A group of students of an institution should not petition for a Charter if:
 - The institution confers less than forty strictly engineering bachelor's degrees each year; or,
 - Its numbers of students are tending to decrease to or below this minimum limit; or,
 - The institution gives degrees in fewer than three undergraduate engineering curricula, which have been accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (A.B.E.T.) or by an A.B.E.T.-approved agency (exclusive of curricula in pure science and architecture), unless the institution offers three or fewer such curricula, all of which are accredited by A.B.E.T. or by an A.B.E.T.-approved agency; or,
 - The petitioning group of students has not been organized and operated as a local society patterned after a Tau Beta Pi Chapter, and so proved its intentions for at least two full years after the adoption of a charter and installation of charter members; or,
 - The petitioning group cannot be represented at the Convention by at least one alumnus or member of the faculty and preferably by one who is a member of the Association, and also by a member of the petitioning group; or,
 - There are not at least three members of the faculty who are members of the Association; or,
 - A majority of the engineering professors and associate professors are not members of their respective technical, professional, and scientific national societies; or,
 - A complete preliminary petition cannot be submitted prior to the June 1 deadline.

SECTION 4.02. Inspection.

Before approving, conditionally approving, or disapproving the preliminary petition for a charter, the Executive Council shall:

- Delegate one of its members, and/or other well-qualified representative, preferably the Secretary-Treasurer, to visit and inspect the institution as a whole as well as the engineering departments from whose students a petition has been received.
- Request neighboring chapters, if practicable, to send visiting delegations to inspect the institution with the representative(s) of the Council.
- Require the Inspection Committee, upon completion of the inspection visit, to submit a written report to the Council with recommendation for:
 - o Approval,
 - o Conditional approval (based upon specific reasons), or
 - o Disapproval.
- Obtain the written opinions of members of the Association living in the vicinity as to the reputation of the institution and of its engineering departments.
- Obtain, if practicable, the written opinions of the membership of the neighboring Chapters as to the qualifications of the petitioners for membership in the Association.

Constitution Article VI - Collegiate Chapters

SECTION 2. Petition for Chapter.

- A preliminary petition for the establishment of a Collegiate Chapter may be made by students and graduates of any regionally accredited college or university who are eligible under Article VIII of the Constitution. This petition shall be addressed to the Executive Council to reach headquarters prior to June 1 of the calendar year before the Convention would take action on it. The petition shall be made in accordance with the requirements of Bylaw IV, shall set forth the desires of the petitioners, and shall pledge their willingness to subscribe to and obey the Constitution and Bylaws of the Association. The petition shall include a statement of approval for the establishment of a Chapter by appropriate authorities of the institution. The petition shall contain a statement certified by authorities at the institution that each of the petitioners meets the eligibility requirements specified in Article VIII of the Constitution and in the Bylaws of the Association.
- The Executive Council shall review the preliminary petition and determine if the institution is qualified for detailed inspection. If the Council determines that the institution is qualified for it, this inspection shall be made in accordance with the Bylaws. If the Council determines that the institution is not qualified for inspection, the petitioners shall be so advised and the reasons therefore given to them, and this action shall be reported to the next Convention. The Convention may sustain the action of the Council, or it may vote to request the Council to proceed with an inspection in accordance with the Bylaws.
- The Executive Council shall consider the report and recommendation of the Inspection Committee as prescribed in Bylaw IV, Sec. 4.02. The decisions of the Inspection Committee and the Council will be reported to the Convention following the inspection.
 - o If the Council approves, the petitioners shall submit copies of a formal petition and catalog in accordance with the Bylaws for the Petitions Committee of the Convention. The formal petition will include any required updates or changes to the preliminary petition.
 - o If the Council considers further actions by the petitioners necessary, conditional approval may be given to allow correction of the specified deficiencies prior to June 1 of the year in which the Convention would take action on the petition. The Council would then reconsider its decision and visit the institution if necessary.
 - o If the Council disapproves, the Convention may approve the preliminary petition and request the petitioners to submit a formal petition in accordance with the Bylaws, to be considered by the next Convention.

Constitution Article VIII - Membership

SECTION 2. Eligibility of Undergraduates

- To be eligible for election, the candidate shall be a student pursuing an undergraduate engineering curriculum of the institution. An engineering curriculum is defined as one that meets any of the following criteria:
 - o (i) is accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (EAC/ABET) or its engineering-accreditation successor(s);
 - o (ii) is administered by a unit (a department, school, or college) of engineering and has the same name as any program accredited as described in criterion (i); or
 - o (iii) is administered by a unit of engineering and includes the noun 'engineering' in its name. Candidates for membership shall meet the scholarship provisions of this Constitution and shall have exemplary character as enunciated in the Eligibility Code of the Association.