

**Alpha Mu-Beloit**

**Fast Facts:**

* Installation date: February 11, 1922
* Closure date: June 30, 1963
* Location: Beloit, Wisconsin
* Region: 5

**History:**

Beloit College developed from the vision of seven New Englanders, a vision that began taking shape as they met in a stateroom of the steamer Chesapeake, crossing Lake Erie in early summer 1844. Their plans led to a series of four conventions involving both clergy and laity from northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin. Known as Friends of Education, these participants gathered to consider offers for a frontier college.

The Friends of Education accepted an offer of $7,000 in supplies, materials, labor, and a small amount of cash from the village of Beloit. This was the backbone of the College's corporeal form. Members of the third and fourth conventions chose a Board of Trustees. The board members adopted a charter that was enacted into law by the Territory of Wisconsin Legislature on Feb. 2, 1846. The foundation for Middle College, the oldest college building northwest of Chicago in continuous academic operation, was laid in 1847, and classes began that fall. The College conferred its first degrees in 1851.

Over the years, Beloit College has continued to stress the values of individual concern and growth, reliance on the students' desire to learn, flexibility in the process of that learning, and a rigorous academic program in the best traditions of the liberal arts.

Interest in bringing a chapter of Delta Gamma to Beloit began in 1913. At the time, a Delta Gamma alumna had been in contact with one of her cousins attending Beloit College. The cousin was a member of a local sorority that wished to affiliate with a national sorority. Despite this interest in 1913, a formal petition was not signed until October 1, 1916. Twenty-six women of Theta Pi Gamma signed the petition, but the expansion committee and Council felt it was inadvisable to establish a chapter at Beloit.

In June of 1919, representatives of Beloit College were in contact with Delta Gamma, providing information necessary for Council to make a decision about whether or not to expand to Beloit. At Convention that year, Council recommended to the Convention body that a chapter be established, but after hearing some dissenting remarks, decided to postpone a vote until the chapters in opposition could submit reports detailing their dissent.

On May 21, 1921, the women of Theta Pi Beta once again petitioned Delta Gamma. Ultimately this petition was accepted, and the Alpha Mu chapter was installed at Beloit College on February 11, 1922.

Alpha Mu’s first decade consisted of establishing a truly successful chapter of Delta Gamma. The chapter was successful in recruiting, and the women were prominent leaders on campus, excelled academically, and represented the Fraternity well.

In 1923, the alumnae supporting the Alpha Mu chapter began making plans for a chapter house. In order to furnish house, the women of Alpha Mu held bridge and Mah Jongg parties, as well as sold cookbooks. The house was completed by March of 1924; alumnae donated much of the furniture and the collegians were able to purchase a baby grand piano. The chapter had a formal housewarming party on May 25.

In December of 1927, the pipes of the house froze and burst, flooding the first floor of the home. Fortunately, the alumnae were able to assist in refurbishing the space, and the walls and flooring were restored to their former glory.

In the early 1950s arose scholarship concerns of the chapter. For many semesters, Delta Gamma was ranked third on campus, but the Fraternity was interested in seeing improvement. The following year they moved to second place, but by 1954 they were in last place. Fortunately, they were very successful in turning that around, and by April 1955 were ranked first at Beloit.

The early 1960s brought great scandal to the Fraternity. Beginning in 1958, the Alpha Mu chapter began the pursuit of pledging a black woman named Pat. She was described by the Alpha Mu’s as possessing the “same qualities of honesty, integrity, loyalty, and high scholastic aptitude all abound together in a warm and sincere friendliness that we look for in any girl we would desire as a member of Delta Gamma.” After maintaining contact with Pat for a few years, the Alpha Mu’s seriously began to pursue pledging her in late 1961.

At the time, it was the opinion of the Fraternity that although the chapter was following all policy and would not be stopped by Executive Offices, the women of Alpha Mu were cautioned against pledging Pat. However, the Alpha Mu chapter was suspended by the Fraternity in April of 1962. Despite having told the women of Alpha Mu and officials of Beloit otherwise, the Fraternity stated that they suspended the Alpha Mu chapter for, “failure to abide by the rules, regulations, and procedures.” A final decision about the status of the chapter was to be made in June at Convention after the Fraternity mandated 60-day period for assessment. During this period, collegiate chapters, alumnae chapters, and individuals of the Fraternity submitted letters in support or opposition of the decision to suspend the Alpha Mu chapter.

After the Fraternity mandated 60-day period, on June 30, 1963, Council voted to officially withdraw Alpha Mu’s charter.