

Process for Evaluating Viability of Campuses and Developing a Strategic Pioneering Plan

By Paul Austin, National Chi Alpha Pioneering Director

Why do some states seem to have multiple Chi Alpha chapters and others struggle to maintain a consistent presence on one or two campuses? History has taught us that the current model of ministry within Chi Alpha (XA) functions best on a state college that has a high level of residential housing and a less rigorous academic culture. When a vibrant XA is established that produces interns we see these states are able to plant ministries on most of its major campuses. Conversely, we have observed that states that don't have this strategic ("Key") XA ministry are unable to reach the other untouched campuses within its borders. In order to help each state develop a strategic approach to prioritize the order of campuses to pioneer, and to identify best staff models for these campuses, we are setting forth to develop a system to classify each college within a given state.

Campus classifications

Key Campus — *A campus with the highest probability to see a sustained Chi Alpha chapter established **and** whose students have high potential to join the ranks of XA as career missionaries.* One may want to think of this as a gateway campus, if a district will first establish a strong XA on a Key Campus they will be able to raise up teams that will plant on the Prime and Open campuses. This must be the top priority for each state, if one has not been established. Contrary to conventional wisdom, this may not be the most known or prestigious campus within a state; often it is not. It goes without saying that those released to lead a Key campus must be of highest character, competence and dynamic in leadership to ensure leaders are raised up to carry the mission to the other campuses in the district. The best leadership model for a Key campus is one led by a trained, experienced missionary, bringing a team of other trained missionaries who make a minimum commitment of 5 years.

Prime Campus — *A campus with a very good probability to see a sustained Chi Alpha chapter established **but** whose students are less likely to join the ranks of Chi Alpha as career missionaries.* A Prime campus often carries a high profile and trains strategic members of the marketplace. It may also be a campus that has enrollment over 25,000, or has a higher number of academically rigorous programs, or is a Historically Black College. These campuses are important to reach but aren't the first priority until the Key campus has been planted and is in the process of producing interns. The best leadership model for a Prime campus is one led by a trained missionary, bringing a team of other trained missionaries who make a minimum commitment of 5 years.

Open Campus - *A campus with a likelihood to see a sustained Chi Alpha chapter, but which faces some obstacles over a Key or Prime campus.* An Open campus may have a population of under 3,000 students, be a junior college, or operate as a private institution. It may be commuter-based, set in an urban metro environment, or have other dynamics that make XA's traditional strategy more challenging but nonetheless a good opportunity for reaching college students. This campus should not be tackled prior to the establishment of a Key campus. Depending on the scope of the Open campus, a church-based or volunteer leader may be able to lay the groundwork for a sustain ministry and will

benefit by receiving staff support from a nearby Key or Prime campus. We ask the leader on an Open campus to make a commitment to invest for at least 3 years.

Why classify campus as a Key, Prime or Open campus?

Proverbs 29:18 is clear, “without vision, the people perish.” Just as the Lord led Joshua and the people of God from one city to the next, God leads his people in a strategic way to bring complete occupation of the promise land, not just a presence on a few cities (campuses). Leadership becomes difficult when we allow others to pick the strategic course. Leadership and decisions become clear when we’ve prayerfully sought the Lord in advance. When we know what kind of leadership, team and commitment is needed in advance, we can more easily guide the process; otherwise the process becomes personal not objective.

To develop one’s strategic pioneering plan for a district, a district leader will want to classify the major campuses before anyone applies to plant XA on any campus. It is best to identify the top two campuses that have the highest probability to become “Key” campuses to establishing the XA program that will be able to produce staff to reach other campuses. Secondly, identify those “Prime” campuses which may not be our first campus, but will be a critical next campus for which we cannot compromise on how or by whom it is reached. Finally, all the other campuses you long to see the gospel take root on. Once the strategic identification process is completed, one would be wise to present the plan to the district leadership for input and ratification (in a preemptive step) when more and more will be desiring to join the next student revival in our land.

How to classify campuses?

How available are students determines the scope of ministry on any campus. The more available students are the more likely they are to become involved in ministry and consider campus ministry as a career. If students are not living on or near campus they are less likely to join the community of faith in a Chi Alpha chapter. Additionally, if students are in focused academic programs like engineering or other science based majors, they are less likely to consider a ministry career but are more likely to become vital members of the marketplace. In addition to availability one must discern the spiritual and political environment on a campus. Are there local evangelical churches that students embrace? Is the cost of living prohibitive for staff? These are some of the factors that can separate a campus from being classified as a Key or Prime or even Open campus. The following tool is designed to answer the question of student availability. We call it the Measure of Student Availability (MOA).

Using a www.nwxa.org/MOA to help identify campus classification

The form on the site identifies the major factors that will help measure each campus and give a MOA Score. Using your knowledge of the campus, <http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator>, <http://collegedata.com>, and Wikipedia, one will be able to answer the questions without too much difficulty. *(To use the website one will need a login and password. As of August 2016 it is “MOA1survey” for both login and password.)* The form is intended for Chi Alpha’s use only.

Is campus public 4 year, 2 year, private 4 year or 2 year?	
Population of host city	
Total enrollment	
Undergraduate enrollment	
Percentage of students under age 24	
Admission Rate	
Freshman Retention Rate	
Total number of bachelor's degrees issued	
Total number of Science, Biology, Math, Engineering degrees issued	
Total number of visual & performing arts issued	
Average GPA of freshman	
% of students living on campus	
% of freshman living on campus	
Total number of social frats & sororities	

Once one submits the form from www.nwxa.org/moa an automated email will send you a score.

MOA 1–2 This type of campus has not produced many interns historically. These are campuses with a very large population (30,000+), demanding technical programs, or a high number of commuters.

MOA 2–5 CMIT programs on these campuses typically produce multiple interns a year. Many campuses may be a Key campus. It also seems possible to "beat" the averages by having a strong discipleship culture and a staff team with longevity.

MOA 5++ We believe this indicates a campus capable of producing a very high number of interns *per capita*. Apart from other factors (including a false MOA), this is clearly a Key campus

It is possible that a college/university with a high MOA is not truly a Key campus. Therefore it is important to weigh other factors that might limit student availability but which are either not part of the current MOA or are not quantifiable. Such as:

- A high percentage of driving commuters;
- A low population of Christian students;
- Lack of a student center or gathering point;
- Limited access to students at community colleges, elite private schools, or in urban settings.

It is also important to consider anything which affects ministry health or the ability to launch Chi Alpha, including:

- The openness of school administration to Chi Alpha;
- The support of healthy local churches
- The impact of other active campus ministries (positive or negative);
- The cost-of-living for staff and interns.

Evaluation of the Matrix

Once one has spent time in prayer, reviewing MOA and other non-measurable factors, a strategic plan can begin to emerge. Remember, one is trying to identify the top 1 or 2 Key campuses, and separate the remaining into either Prime or Open campuses. The significance between a Prime and Open is who should be released to pioneer. Prime campuses should be pioneered by fully vetted and Chi Alpha trained leaders whereas, open campuses, can be initiated by volunteers and churches.

District buy-in to the strategic pioneering and leadership plan

Identifying Key and Prime campuses is the first goal when developing a strategic plan. As stated earlier, a priority and focus should be on establishing Chi Alpha with a CMIT program on the Key campus(es). Once this has been established, the order of the other campuses is less critical. It is suggested that a document (like the sample provided on the last page) be submitted to the district leadership for buy-in and approval. This will give guidance to the district about the priorities and expectation for who may direct a Chi Alpha chapter on a given campus. This also will give clarity when someone without Chi Alpha experience or training approaches the district to pioneer a Key or Prime campus. This should also empower local churches to pursue Open campuses that may be within their cities. Having clarity about a campus' classification, prior to someone's applying to pioneer a campus, will mitigate complications in approval process and help the district understand the strategic plan of reaching all the campuses within your state.

Conclusion

A strategic approach will bring clarity and direction for each district leader. This clarity should empower recruiting and approval process for pioneering. This may also add clarity when navigating the push to establish Chi Alpha on "flagship" campuses prior to Key campuses. The national team is ready to assist navigating this important process. Your Area Director and the Pioneering Team (austincomplex@gmail.com) are ready to pray with you and walk through this process to develop a strategic plan and work with you in recruiting in teams to pioneer your Key Campuses. From the Key campus we believe we'll see team raised up to reach the remaining campuses.

EXAMPLE: Northwest Chi Alpha Campus Viability Report

Using nationally recommended tools to evaluate the viability of a Chi Alpha Chapter we have listed the major campuses within Washington and Northern Idaho in one of three classifications; Key, Prime, and Open. These classifications identify leadership requirements and priorities for pioneering and staffing these campuses.

Key Campuses: Campus with a high potential for vibrant Chi Alpha ministry that can produce future Chi Alpha missionaries through a CMIT program. Campus missionary must be a veteran Chi Alpha missionary who can build and lead a team with a minimum of 5 yr commitment.

Prime Campuses: Campus with a high potential for vibrant Chi Alpha ministry, but faces greater challenges in establishing community or has alumni less likely to enter a CMIT program in lieu of marketplace positions. Campus missionary must be a trained Chi Alpha missionary who can build and lead a team with a minimum 5 yr commitment.

Open Campuses: Campus with a lower potential for sustained Chi Alpha ministry but offers an opportunity to impact thousands of lives with the gospel. These campuses range from elite private institutions to 2-year junior colleges. Campus leaders may range from a veteran Chi Alpha missionary (for example, on an elite campus) to a volunteer- or church-staffed chapter with a minimum of a 3 yr commitment.

Key Campuses:	Prime Campuses	Open Campuses	
Western Washington	Univ. of Washington	Skagit Valley College	Whitman College
Central Washington	Washington State	Seattle Central College	Walla Walla University
	Eastern Washington	Everett Community College	University of Puget Sound
	Bellevue College	Wenatchee Valley College	Whitworth University
	University of Idaho	Columbia Basin College	Seattle Pacific University
	Evergreen State	Yakima Valley College	Pacific Lutheran University
		Lewis-Clark State College	Gonzaga University
		Big Bend Community College	All UW & WSU extensions
		Whatcom Community College	

Pioneering Strategic Plan

Key campuses that do not have a Chi Alpha Director are our top priority for recruiting and supporting pioneering teams. These campuses will receive first priority in the case of a transition of an existing director as well. Prime Campuses that do not have a Chi Alpha Director are high on our prayer list, and we are ready to support a leader who may emerge. If all Key Campuses have directors then Prime campuses become our first priority in recruiting pioneers and/or directors in transition. Finally, on the remaining Open campuses we are ready to facilitate and encourage any who would want to establish a Chi Alpha chapter.

Approval Process for Directors

Anyone desiring to pioneer or direct a Key or Prime campus will be processed by the national standards of approval. This include adequate Chi Alpha training and experience, evaluation and reference checks along with District Chi Alpha Committee approval. Directors will meet all conditions for approval and recruit a staff team to lead the local ministry. Directors of Key and Prime campuses will have full itineration privileges within the Network.

Directors of an open campus will have an approval process appropriate for candidate applying for the position. The leader and supporting church, if applicable, must agree to participate in Network Chi Alpha staff and students events and training. The leader is asked for a minimum of a three year commitment to the campus. Directors of an Open campus will have limited itineration privileges within the Northwest Ministry Network.