

Sigma Theta Tau International
Honor Society of Nursing, Incorporated
2003-2005 Biennium
Chapter Bylaws Form
 Effective for Chapters and At-Large Chapters
 November 2003 - December 2005

Chapter Greek Name Rho Omicron
 College: Mount Carmel College of Nursing
 Chapter # 421 Region # 9

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ARTICLE I. NAME, KEY AND SEAL

The name of this chapter of the international honor society of nursing is Rho Omicron Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, Incorporated, located at Mount Carmel College of Nursing. It shall use the official key and seal of the Society.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSES

The purposes of this Society shall be to:

1. Recognize superior achievement.
2. Recognize the development of leadership qualities.
3. Foster high professional standards.
4. Encourage creative work.
5. Strengthen commitment to the ideals and purposes of the profession.

ARTICLE III. STATUS

Section 1. Nonprofit Organization

This organization is a nonprofit corporation and does not contemplate the distribution of gains, profits or dividends to the members.

Section 2. Limitation of Activities

No substantial part of the activities of this chapter shall consist of carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation and the chapter shall not participate or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP

Approved by the Sigma Theta Tau International Board of Directors
 January 2004

Section 1. Categories of Membership

- a. Regular Member

Section 2. Qualifications for Regular Membership

- a. Candidates for all categories of membership shall be considered without regard to race, age, gender, creed, color, national origin, disability or other legally protected categories dependent upon jurisdiction.
- b. Student candidates shall have demonstrated superior academic achievement, academic integrity, and professional leadership potential.
- c. Regular Member

1) Students in Basic Program

- a) Definition – Basic program is defined as a baccalaureate or equivalent nursing degree program which leads to the first professional nursing degree.
- b) Grade point average – Students shall have a grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale or an equivalent of this measure of academic achievement when grade point averages are not available or used by the nursing degree program, i.e., “B” or the second highest grade of the institution as indicated by the official record of grades.
- c) Rank in class – Basic students who are elected shall rank not lower than the highest 35 percent of their class in scholarship.
- d) Curriculum – Students shall have completed at least one-half of the required nursing curriculum.
- e) Exceptions – Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the chapter’s governance committee following the guidelines adopted by the International Board of Directors.

2) Students in Graduate Programs

- a) Definition – Graduate program is defined as an accredited program of graduate study in nursing including master, post-master, doctoral, and post-doctoral.
- b) Grade point average – Students in graduate programs shall be eligible for membership if they have achieved a grade point average of at least 3.5 on a 4.0 scale, or an equivalent of this measure of academic achievement when grade point averages are not available or used by the nursing degree program.
- c) Curriculum – Students shall have completed a minimum of one-quarter of the required graduate curriculum.

d) Exceptions – Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the chapter’s governance committee following the guidelines adopted by the International Board of Directors.

3) Nurse Leader

A nurse leader, who is a registered nurse, legally recognized to practice in his/her country with a minimum of a baccalaureate degree or the equivalent in any field, and who has demonstrated achievement in nursing, shall be eligible for membership.

Section 3. Selection of Members

a. Regular Members

- 1) Student member candidates are required to be enrolled in an institution of higher learning where the chapter is located to be considered for membership in that chapter.
- 2) The nurse leader candidate may be selected for membership by any chapter.

Section 4. Membership Status

Members may be designated as active or inactive. Active members pay annual chapter and international fees. Inactive members have not paid annual chapter and international fees, but shall become active at any time by paying current renewal fees.

Section 5. Rights and Responsibilities of Active Members

a. Regular Members

- 1) Active regular members shall receive:
 - a. official Society publications;
 - b. priority for education programs; and
 - c. priority for research funding.
- 2) Active regular members at the chapter level shall:
 - a. receive all communications and announcements;
 - b. be able to attend meetings;
 - c. be able to participate in activities;
 - d. be considered for awards; and
 - e. be eligible to vote;
 - f. hold elective and appointive office as outlined by the chapter bylaws.
- 3) Active regular members may hold dual membership in more than one chapter by remitting multiple chapter fees and the Society fee annually.
- 4) Active regular members may transfer from one chapter to another.

Section 6. Revocation of Membership

Membership in the society may be revoked at any time by the inducting chapter for just cause and after due process. Revocation of membership shall be determined at a meeting of the inducting chapter, at which a quorum is present, by at least three-fourths vote for revocation by those present.

ARTICLE V. CHAPTER ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1. Organization

This chapter is a constituent of the organization of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, Incorporated. It shall function under bylaws, policies, and procedures which are not in conflict with those of the Society.

Section 2. House of Delegates

There shall be two official delegates to represent the chapter at the House of Delegates of the Society. If only one delegate can attend, that delegate shall have two votes. If the chapter has a nominee for an officer in the Society, it should consider sending this individual as a delegate to the House of Delegates. A delegate is required to be an active member of this chapter.

Section 3. Chapter Standing

To be in good standing, this chapter shall fulfill the following requirements:

- a. Support the purposes of this Society.
- b. Cooperate with other chapters and the Board of Directors of Sigma Theta Tau International in promoting these purposes.
- c. Select and induct eligible members a minimum of one time annually.
- d. Observe the provisions of these bylaws.
- e. Comply with the Society's policies and regulations.
- f. Meet all financial obligations.
- g. File required reports according to established guidelines.
- h. Participate in the biennial convention House of Delegates.

Section 4. Suspension or Revocation

- a. The activities of this chapter may be suspended by the Board of Directors of Sigma Theta Tau International for failure to comply with the Sigma Theta Tau International Bylaws, this chapter's bylaws, or Society policies and regulations.
- b. Upon recommendation of the Sigma Theta Tau International Board of Directors, the House of Delegates may revoke the charter of this chapter.

ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS

Section 1. Regular Meetings

This chapter shall have at least one annual business meeting and at least two programs of a scholarly nature during each fiscal year. The annual business meeting, where officers and committees present written annual reports to the membership, may be held in conjunction with a scholarly program.

Section 2. Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the president or upon request of six (6) members of the chapter.

ARTICLE VII. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Membership

The members of the Board of Directors of this chapter shall consist of the elected officers and one or more elected directors (optional). The elected members of the Board of Directors are the voting members.

Section 2. Focus

The elected members of the Board of Directors have the authority and responsibility to manage the chapter consistent with these bylaws and in an appropriate legal manner.

Section 3. Functions

- a. Carry forward the Society's objectives.
- b. Manage the business and fiscal affairs of the chapter.
- c. Monitor the income and disbursement of funds.
- d. Make policies for its own actions and the actions of its committees.
- e. Appoint chairs of elected committees and appoint members and chairs of non-elected committees.
- f. Overseeing elected committees, board advisory councils and board task forces.
- g. Supervise and manage the committees and publications.
- h. Act as a liaison between the chapter and school.
- i. Assure appropriate eligibility process for selection of candidates for membership.
- j. Assure that the chapter fulfills the requirements to maintain good standing in the Society.

Section 4. Meetings

The Board of Directors of this chapter shall meet as necessary to conduct the business between meetings of the general membership.

ARTICLE VIII. OFFICERS

Section 1. Titles

- a. The officers of this chapter shall be: president, president-elect (optional), vice president (at-Large chapters shall have one vice president representing each school), secretary, treasurer, and counselor (at-Large chapters shall have one or more counselors from each school). Officers are active members of this chapter.
- b. The president, with the approval of the Board of Directors, when appropriate, shall appoint such other persons as may be necessary to conduct the business of the chapter.

Section 2. Vacancies

The vice president fills the vacancy of president (at-Large chapters shall designate a vice president to fill such vacancies); other offices are filled by appointment of the Board of Directors until the next election.

Section 3. Duties

The duties of the chapter officers shall be as follows:

- a. The president shall be the executive officer and shall administer all business of the Society as provided for by the bylaws. The president serves as chief representative of the chapter in inter-chapter activities, and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees except Leadership Succession Committee.

- b. The president-elect (optional) shall succeed into the presidency at the end of the term of office and shall promote the purposes of the Society.
- c. The vice president shall perform the duties of the president in the president's absence. (In an at-Large chapter a designated vice president shall perform these duties.)
- d. The secretary shall prepare and distribute meeting minutes and correspondence.
- e. The treasurer shall be the custodian of the funds of this chapter and may be bonded in an amount equal to three-fourths of the worth of the chapter. The treasurer shall propose a budget to the board.
- f. A counselor shall be a member of the faculty at the college/university where the chapter is located. The counselor shall serve as chairperson of the Governance Committee.
- g. Each officer shall submit a report at each Board of Directors meeting and to members at the annual business meeting, and assist in preparing the Chapter Annual Report form for submission to Sigma Theta Tau International Headquarters.

ARTICLE IX. ELECTIONS

Section 1. Elections

Elections shall be held at the annual business meeting or by mail ballot. Those elected shall assume their duties by July 1 of the year in which they are elected.

Section 2. Positions

Elected positions shall be the chapter officers, directors (optional) and members of the Governance and Leadership Succession Committees.

Section 3. Vote

- a. A majority vote shall elect officers.
- b. A plurality vote shall elect the non-officer members of the Board of Directors and members of the Governance and Leadership Succession Committees.
- c. When there are more than two (2) candidates running for the same office, the candidate with the highest number of votes wins the election.
- d. In the event of a tie, the election shall be determined by lot.

Section 4. Terms

- a. The length of the term of all officers is two (2) years.
- b. Terms of office are staggered so that all officers, directors and Governance and Leadership Succession Committee members do not end their terms at the same time. Proviso: If a two year term for president-elect is not possible, the president-elect may hold office for one year and succeed to president for two (2) years.
- c. No member of the Board of Directors shall exceed a total of six consecutive years on the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE X. COMMITTEES

Section 1. Standing Committees

- a. The standing committees shall be: Governance Committee and Leadership Succession Committee, and others if desired.
- b. The term of office shall be two years. A member may be reappointed or elected for a second consecutive term, except for members of the Leadership Succession Committee who may serve a maximum of two (2) years and are elected according to Article IX. Elections Section 4.
- c. Each standing committee shall present a report to the business meetings of the Board of Directors and an annual report to the membership at the annual (business) meeting.
- d. Each committee prepares, reviews and makes recommendations regarding policies corresponding to its area of responsibility for Board of Directors approval.

Section 2. Governance Committee

- a. The Governance Committee shall oversee bylaws compliance, make recommendations for bylaws changes and oversee member and chapter eligibility issues.
- b. The Governance Committee shall consist of at least three (3) elected members and the elected counselor.

Section 3. Leadership Succession Committee

- a. Mission – The Leadership Succession Committee shall develop members in organizational leadership roles across the span of their careers, mentor members to assume organizational board and officer positions at all levels of the organization. The committee shall select nominees and prepare the ballot. The ballot will be sent to the Board of Directors at least four (4) weeks prior to a scheduled election.
- b. Membership – The Leadership Succession Committee shall consist of three (3) elected members.
- c. The Leadership Succession Committee members shall not be eligible for any elected office of the current ballot.

Section 4. Additional Standing Committees

Additional standing committees, advisory councils, and task forces may be appointed by the Board of Directors if deemed appropriate. The purpose of these groups will be to carry out the work of the chapter.

Membership Involvement and Retention Committee

- a. Mission-The Membership Involvement and Retention Committee will make recommendations for innovative ways to increase involvement and retention of chapter members.
- b. Membership- The Membership Involvement and Retention Committee shall consist of at least 3 appointed members. The Chair of the committee will be the immediate past-president of Rho Omicron.

Section 5. Board Advisory Councils

- a. Mission – Board Advisory Councils shall inform the board of current and future issues, directions, and priorities of the chapter.

- b. Membership – Board Advisory Councils shall be appointed by the Board of Directors for a term through the close of the biennial convention unless reappointed.

Section 6. Task Forces

- a. Mission – Task Forces are formed to complete an assigned task within a specified time frame.
- b. Membership – Task Forces are formed by the Board, Standing Committees, and Board Advisory Councils. They are made up of members who bring expertise, interest, and commitment to complete an assigned task.

ARTICLE XI. FINANCE

Section 1. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year shall be July 1 through June 30.

Section 2. Chapter Fees and Assessments

- a. A fee shall be levied on this chapter annually, in accordance with the Sigma Theta Tau International Bylaws, Article XI, Section 2.a.
- b. Special assessments may be levied on this chapter by the House of Delegates, by a three-fourths vote.

Section 3. Induction and Renewal Fee Changes

Adjustments to the fee schedule shall be approved by the chapter Board of Directors. Fee schedule adjustments shall not occur more than once a biennium and shall not exceed the cumulative Consumer Price Index (CPI) percentage rate. Any adjustments, accompanied by rationale, will be provided to membership sixty (60) days in advance of the effective date.

Section 4. Induction Fee

Each new member shall pay, through the chapter treasurer, a Society induction fee and a chapter induction fee as determined by the chapter Board of Directors. This shall entitle the new member to active membership with all its benefits from the date of induction for one year to the member's anniversary date of induction. The chapter induction fee is \$10.00 plus the Society induction fee.

Section 5. Renewal Fee

- a. Membership Status - Following the first year of membership, members are designated as active or inactive. Each member shall pay an annual renewal fee as designated by the chapter board of directors and the Society renewal fee as designated by the International Board of Directors for active member benefits. The annual chapter renewal fee is \$25.00. The annual chapter fee for life members (status for some members prior to 1976) is \$N/A.
- b. Retired members and full-time students are eligible to pay half of the renewal fee for regular members.
- c. Renewal Fee Collection - Chapter and Society fees are collected by Sigma Theta Tau International Headquarters.

Section 6. Chapter Financial Responsibilities

This chapter is an independent, autonomous organization affiliated with Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, Incorporated. The chapter determines the amounts of its fees and assessments. The chapter has control of its income, expenses, contracts, accounting system and internal reports.

ARTICLE XII. QUORUM

Section 1. Membership

- a. A quorum at a chapter business meeting shall consist of three (3) officers and seven (7) members.
- b. In the event of a revocation of membership vote, 30 days' notice of the meeting with the revocation issue announced is required and a quorum shall consist of three (3) officers and 10% of the active membership of the chapter in attendance.

Section 2. Board of Directors

A quorum of the Board of Directors shall consist of three (3) members.

ARTICLE XIII. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern this chapter in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws or special rules of the Society.

ARTICLE XIV. AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

Section 1. Amendments with Notice

These bylaws may be amended by a three-fourths vote of the chapter members present and voting at any meeting of the chapter. Proposed amendments shall be in the hands of the chapter secretary at least forty-five (45) days before the date of the meeting and shall be appended to the call to the meeting sent thirty (30) days prior to the meeting.

Section 2. Amendments without Notice

These bylaws may be amended by unanimous vote of the members present and voting at any scheduled meeting without previous notice.

Section 3. Chapter Bylaws Approval

- a. Even-Numbered Years: One (1) copy of the updated chapter bylaws and Chapter Bylaws Compliance Form shall be submitted to Sigma Theta Tau International Headquarters for review and approval by the Sigma Theta Tau International Bylaws Committee.
- b. Odd-Numbered Years: If no changes were made in the bylaws since their even-numbered year submission and review, chapters are not required to submit either the chapter bylaws or the Chapter Bylaws Compliance Form. If amendments were made to the chapter bylaws since their even-numbered year submission and review by the Sigma Theta Tau International Bylaws Committee, or if the chapter bylaws were found unacceptable by the reviewer, one (1) copy of the revised chapter bylaws shall be sent for review with the Chapter Bylaws Compliance Form.

Section 4. Sigma Theta Tau International Bylaws Amendments

Any amendments to the Sigma Theta Tau International Bylaws approved by the House of Delegates or editorial changes approved by the Sigma Theta Tau International Board of Directors that are also applicable to the chapters shall be incorporated into the chapter bylaws.

ARTICLE XV. DISSOLUTION

The process for dissolution of a chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, Incorporated, shall be as follows:

Section 1. Initial Action

- a. Chapter officers contact Sigma Theta Tau International Headquarters to discuss the process of chapter dissolution or other potential options available to the chapter.
- b. A resolution for dissolution of the chapter is presented at a regular meeting and must be signed by a majority of active (voting) members present at the meeting. Chapter officers then call a special meeting of the chapter to vote on the resolution for dissolution of the chapter. Three-fourths of the active members present must vote to dissolve.

Section 2. If Chapter Approves Dissolution

- a. The chapter officers shall notify the Sigma Theta Tau International Board of Directors of the chapter's decision and take the necessary steps to conclude the affairs of the chapter in accordance with statutory requirements existing at the date such action is taken.
- b. The chapter's charter and coat-of-arms shall be returned to Sigma Theta Tau International Headquarters.

Section 3. Disposition of Chapter Funds

- a. All cash and other assets remaining after the chapter's outstanding debts are paid should be returned to Sigma Theta Tau International Headquarters and designated for a specific fund, (i.e. research, library, sustaining fund). Or, if a majority of the dissolved chapter's members transfer to the same chapter, remaining funds may be contributed to that chapter. [The recipient organization shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue law) or the governing law of that chapter's country.]

Section 4. Options for Chapter Members

- a. If the chapter dissolves, all members have the opportunity to transfer their membership to a chapter of their choice. Those members not indicating their choice of where their membership should be transferred will be transferred to a chapter in the area by Sigma Theta Tau International Headquarters. Anytime after this transfer by Sigma Theta Tau International Headquarters, these members may transfer to any other chapter of their choice.