

CONSTITUTION and LAWS  
of  
PHI ETA SIGMA  
NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY, INC.

REVISED

December 2021

**CONSTITUTION AND LAWS  
OF PHI ETA SIGMA  
NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY, INC.**

**PREAMBLE**

We, the members of the Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society, Inc., in order to promote a higher standard of learning and to encourage high scholastic attainment among the freshmen in our institutions of higher learning, do ordain and establish this constitution for the government of our society.

***Article 1 - Names and Insignia***

Section 1. This society shall be known as Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society, Inc.

Section 2. The society's colors shall be black and gold.

Section 3. The seal shall be circular in form, and the outer edge shall contain the name "Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society, Inc." The center portion shall contain a lamp of knowledge, beneath which shall be the Arabic number 1923.

Section 4. The coat-of-arms shall be a shield of black, bearing a gold band extending from the upper left corner diagonally across the shield, upon which shall be superimposed the Greek letters for Phi Eta Sigma. In the upper section thus created shall be a lamp of knowledge in gold and in the lower section a pyramid of gold, the shield being surmounted by three gold links and a star, radiating its brilliance; the motto being placed below the shield on a scroll.

Section 5. The emblem of the organization shall be a gold key in the form of a scroll, with the letters superimposed thereon.

Section 6. Regulations changing the standard of dimensions, quality of material, and display use of the insignia may be prescribed by statute.

***Article II - Organization***

Section 1. The members of Phi Eta Sigma shall be those persons who have been initiated according to the ritual as herein provided.

Section 2. Active chapters shall be those established in regularly incorporated colleges and universities, as herein provided.

Section 3. Chapters of Phi Eta Sigma shall be limited to four-year, degree-granting colleges or universities which are accredited by the appropriate regional accrediting agency.

### **Article III - National Chapter**

Section 1. The supreme legislative power of the society shall be vested in a National Chapter, holding regular sessions each year at such times and places as shall be designated by the Executive Committee as herein provided. The National Chapter shall be known as the National Convention and the Executive Committee Meeting. The National Convention shall be composed of delegates from the chapters as herein provided, the members of the Executive Committee and the past National Presidents. Special sessions of the National Chapter, the purposes of which shall be stated, may be called upon thirty days' notice by a three-fourths vote of the active chapters voting upon such call.

Section 2. Each active chapter shall have the option to elect one delegate and one alternate to act in the absence of the delegate, who, with the chapter adviser of the society, appointed as herein provided, shall be the chapter's representative to the National Convention. Delegates of active chapters shall be representatives of the chapter which they represent, and no delegate to the National Convention shall represent therein more than one chapter unless authorized by vote of the National Convention. Each chapter, if present, shall be entitled to one vote. A quorum shall be constituted by a majority of the delegates in attendance at the National Convention, provided all chapters have been duly notified of the National Convention.

Section 3. No active chapter which is reported by the Executive Committee as delinquent under the rules of the society's Constitution or Statutes shall be entitled to representation in the National Convention except by a majority vote in the National Convention.

Section 4. The officers of the National Chapter shall be: A National President, a National Vice-President, a National Historian, and such other officers as it may elect.

Section 5. The National Chapter shall have power (a) to effect its own organization, to elect its own officers, and to adopt rules for its government and procedure; (b) to grant charters to active chapters as herein provided; (c) to revoke the charter of any active chapter and to recover all the archives, paraphernalia, and other property of the society, to suspend the chapter from the exercise of any or all of its powers and privileges, and to punish any chapter, officer, or member in any manner it may deem necessary; (d) to elect the officers of the society herein specified and to appoint such special committees as may be necessary; (e) to provide by statute or resolution for the creation and disbursement of the revenues of the society; (f) to provide by statute or resolution for the regulation of the officers and chapters and members of the society, and to define their respective duties and privileges as herein provided; (g) to alter or amend the society's Constitution, statutes, and ritual as herein provided; (h) to enact, subject to this Constitution, all laws, rules and regulations necessary to protect the welfare of the society, its officers, chapters and members.

Section 6. Enactments of the National Chapter, other than amendments to the Constitution or the ritual, shall be classified as either statutes or resolutions. Matters of a permanent character shall be in the form of statutes, while those of a temporary character shall be in the form of resolutions.

### **Article IV - Executive Committee**

Section 1. There shall be an Executive Committee, to wit: The National President, the National Vice-President, the National Historian, and eight members, three of whom shall be current advisors of active Phi Eta Sigma chapters, three of whom shall be student members of Phi Eta Sigma, and two

alumni positions to be elected as herein provided. The Past National Presidents, three student alternate members and the Executive Director shall serve as non-voting members of the Executive Committee for advisory purposes.

Section 2. The general officers of the Society shall be elected by vote of the National Convention and shall hold office until their successors have been duly elected. The term of General Officers shall be four years with half of the officers being elected at each National Convention. The student members of the Executive Committee shall be elected at each National Convention for a two-year term. A majority vote of the National Convention shall be necessary to elect the said officers. The Executive Committee shall fill by majority vote all vacancies in its own membership occurring between each National Convention. At the expiration of their respective terms of office, the members of the Executive Committee shall severally deliver to their successors all books, records, papers and other property of the society in their possession or under their control.

Section 3. The Executive Committee shall meet at the call of the National President upon ten days' notice or upon the written request with ten days' notice of a majority of the members of the Executive Committee. A majority of members shall constitute a quorum.

Section 4. During the recess of the National Convention, the Executive Committee shall have general supervision over the society and shall have all the power of the National Chapter, except that the Executive Committee shall not have power to revoke the charter of an active chapter. The Executive Committee shall have the power to propose amendments to the society's Constitution, ritual, or statutes, but shall not have the power to alter or amend them except by approval of the chapters as provided herein.

Section 5. Whenever the members of the Executive Committee shall by majority vote decide that the interests of the society demand the surrender, suspension, or revocation of the charter of an active chapter, it shall forthwith submit to all the chapters the facts connected therewith; and after a majority of the chapters vote to accept, suspend, or revoke such charter, the charter shall be surrendered, suspended, or revoked.

Section 6. The Executive Committee shall have the power to determine the detailed specifications of the key, coat-of- arms, and other insignia of the society and may contract for the manufacture of the same. The Committee shall also have power to make and enforce regulations concerning the manufacture, sale, and distribution of the insignia of the society.

Section 7. Each National President who has completed the term of office shall be known as a Past National President and shall become a non-voting Executive Committee Member Emeritus for advisory purposes.

Section 8. There shall be three non-voting student members of the Executive Committee elected as herein provided, and they shall be known as Student Alternate Committee Members. A Student Alternate Committee Members may become voting member of the Executive Committee in the event one or more of the student members is no longer able to fulfill their duties as a result of resignation, removal, or abandonment of the position.

Section 9. Any member of the Executive Committee may be removed for just cause. Sufficient cause for such removal may be violation of the society's Constitution, Statutes, rules, regulations, practices, or procedures; or other conduct deemed by the Executive Committee to be prejudicial to the best interests

of the society. For removal of a member of the Executive Committee for cause, it shall be necessary for the Executive Committee to hold a formal hearing. A statement of the charges shall be sent by registered mail to the most recent address of the member, accompanied by notice of the time and place of the meeting at which the charges are to be considered. At least thirty days' notice shall be given, and the Executive Committee member shall have the opportunity to appear in person or to be represented by counsel and to present any defense to such charges before action is taken. The Executive Committee shall adopt such rules as may be necessary to assure due process for the Executive Committee member. The decision for removal shall be by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee members.

#### ***Article V - The National President***

Section 1. The National President shall be the official head of the society. The National President shall act as chairman of the Executive Committee; call all regular and special sessions of the National Chapter, as herein provided; sign all charters and official documents issued by the society; submit to the Executive Committee such recommendations from time to time as seem to the benefit of the society; report on the condition of the society at the National Convention succeeding election. The National President shall have the power to veto any act of the Executive Committee concerning the collection and expenditure of the society's funds, provided that the veto must be communicated to the Executive Director within ten days after such act is passed. Any enactment vetoed by the National President shall require an affirmative vote of two-thirds of all voting members of the Executive Committee to be passed.

#### ***Article VI - The National Vice-President***

Section 1. The National Vice President shall assist the National President in such ways as may be deemed proper, and shall fulfill the duties of the National President if the National President is unable to do so.

#### ***Article VII - National Historian***

Section 1. The National Historian shall collect and compile historical and biographical material for the use of the society and shall direct the publication of the same as may be prescribed by statute.

#### ***Article VIII – Executive Director***

Section 1. The Executive Director shall be selected by the Executive Committee, and shall serve as Secretary of the Executive Committee and of the National Chapter. The Executive Director shall receive such monetary compensation as the Executive Committee may determine.

Section 2. The Executive Director shall act as business manager of the society and editor of the *Forum*. The Executive Director shall give a good and sufficient bond, to be approved by the Executive Committee and paid for by the society.

## Article IX – Membership

Section 1. The members of Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society, Inc. shall be those persons who have been initiated according to the ritual as herein provided, or, in such cases where it was not possible to assemble other students, have been duly initiated by proxy by the local chapter adviser without the requirement of going through the initiation ceremony.

Section 2. CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP. Any person, irrespective of membership in other organizations and associations, shall be eligible for membership in Phi Eta Sigma if all of the following criteria are met:

(a) The person is a student in the college or university in which the chapter proposing initiation is chartered, or resident in a temporary branch of the institution if the student is matriculated in the mother institution;

(b) The student achieves a grade-point average of at least one-half the highest grade and one-half the next highest grade at the close of any curricular period of the first year of registration in the college or university;

(c) The student is enrolled in a baccalaureate (Bachelor's) degree program during the curricular period in which the requisite grade-point average is achieved;

(d) The academic work upon which the grade-point average is based is acceptable toward a bachelor's degree;

(e) The academic work upon which the grade-point average is based is completed during the first year of registration in the college or university;

(f) The student is classified by the proposing institution as a full-time student during the curricular period in which the requisite grade-point average is achieved; and

(g) The student has not completed more than twenty semester hours or thirty quarter hours at another college or university after high school graduation and before matriculation in the institution of the chapter proposing initiation. A student who enters an institution with advanced standing, and/or with college credit obtained prior to graduation from secondary school, but no credits obtained in residence at a college or university, may be initiated into Phi Eta Sigma on the same basis as any other candidate for the society. Where these requirements for determining the grade-point average are deemed to work a hardship on the individual chapter, the Executive Committee shall have authority to consider and adjust the eligibility requirements for initiation, but in every instance a candidate must rank in the upper 20% (twenty percent) of his or her respective class.

Section 3. Such honorary members may be initiated by any chapter upon the express recommendation of the chapter adviser, the president of the chapter, and by a two-thirds majority vote of active members, or may be initiated by the Executive Committee upon express recommendation of an Executive Committee member and by a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Executive Committee.

Section 4. No member of Phi Eta Sigma can be suspended or expelled from membership except by the unanimous vote of the Executive Committee, such action to be reported by the Executive Committee at the next National Convention.

Section 5. Persons suspended or expelled from membership may be reinstated by a unanimous vote of the Executive Committee.

Section 6. A member shall remain an active member of the society for the first year subsequent to initiation, and for as much longer as the local chapter shall determine.

Section 7. Any student meeting the requirements of Phi Eta Sigma at an institution which has an established chapter of Phi Eta Sigma and transferring to another institution before initiation, will, upon request, be automatically initiated at the next regular initiation of the chapter of the institution to which the student has transferred.

### **Article X - Active Chapters**

Section 1. Active chapters may be chartered and established in regularly incorporated colleges and universities as herein provided.

Section 2. Active chapters shall have the power to adopt by-laws for the local government and for the regulation and control of their revenues and expenses, provided that no by-law shall be, in legal effect, in conflict with the Constitution or any enactment of the society.

Section 3. The chapter officers shall be President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chapter Historian, and/or Correspondent, and their duties shall be described by Robert's Rules of Order. Active chapters shall have the authority to elect additional officers as deemed appropriate.

Section 4. Initiation shall be held in the form and manner prescribed by the ritual.

Section 5. Active chapters shall pay dues, maintain records, and make reports as shall be prescribed by statute or resolution of the society; and any such statute or resolution may provide for the forfeiture of the charter of any non-complying chapter at the next succeeding session of the National Chapter.

Section 6. Each active chapter shall have the option to elect one delegate and one alternate to each National Convention, who with the chapter adviser shall represent such chapter at the National Convention.

Section 7. Each chapter shall have a chapter adviser selected by the chapter, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee.

Section 8. Every chapter is encouraged to sponsor and promote activities of an academic nature as well as social and service-oriented projects. These activities may encompass both the campus and surrounding communities.

### **Article XI - Charters**

Section 1. An active chapter in Phi Eta Sigma may be established upon petition of not fewer than forty undergraduate students, other than from the senior class, enrolled in a four-year, degree-granting college or university which is accredited by the appropriate regional accrediting agency and which is approved by the Executive Committee. All petitioners must fulfill the requirements for initiation herein provided. The procedure is as follows: (a) the petition shall be transmitted to the Executive Director with all necessary

information as to the school's academic standing; (b) upon receipt of the petition and information as prescribed above, the Executive Committee shall make full and speedy examination of the authenticity and general merits thereof; (c) no charter shall be granted except by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Executive Committee.

Section 2. The petition for a charter to an active chapter may also be granted by a vote of two-thirds of the delegates of any National Convention, provided said petition is presented in the same manner as required for presentation to the Executive Committee.

Section 3. Active chapters shall be installed under the direction of the Executive Committee.

Section 4. Any chapter failing to initiate members for two consecutive years shall be declared inactive and shall be notified by the Executive Director that failure to initiate members for a third consecutive year will result in the loss of its charter.

Section 5. An inactive chapter may be re-chartered by meeting the requirements of this article or by a special new-member installation ceremony under the direction of the Executive Committee.

#### **Article XII - Revenues**

Section 1. The revenues of the society shall be gained from such sources, apportioned to such funds and in such manner as shall be prescribed by the statutes.

#### **Article XIII - The Ritual**

Section 1. The enactments shall be those contained in the ritual. These enactments shall have equal force and validity in all respects with this Constitution.

Section 2. The Executive Director shall be responsible for keeping the ritual and making copies of the ritual available to chapters of the society.

#### **Article XIV - Amendments**

Section 1. The society's Constitution, ritual, and statutes shall remain unaltered and unamended except by a three-fourths vote of the delegates at any National Convention or special session of the National Chapter. Between sessions of the National Convention, amendments may be made as follows: (a) By a two-thirds favorable vote of the active chapters casting votes, upon submission of the proposed amendment to them following a two-thirds favorable vote by the Executive Committee; or (b) By a two-thirds favorable vote of the active chapters casting votes and of all members of the Executive Committee, upon a petition of at least one-fifth of the active chapters; or (c) By a two-thirds favorable vote of the Executive Committee on any matter referred to it by the National Convention. In the case of amendments brought under (a) or (b) above, notice of the character of the proposed amendment shall be submitted to each chapter and to each member of the Executive Committee at least thirty days before a vote can be taken.



## **STATUTES**

### ***Statute I - Revenues***

Section 1. The funds of the national organization shall be kept in a bank or other depository to be designated by the Executive Committee and shall be paid out by the Executive Director only on order of the Executive Committee.

Section 2. Every member shall upon initiation pay the national membership fee of \$35 to the Executive Director. Each new member is entitled to receive an official key and membership certificate.

Section 3. Local chapters may charge local membership fees, in addition to national membership fees. The funds of the local chapter may be kept in a bank or other depository and shall be managed in accordance with the local chapter's constitution and bylaws and the chapter's respective college or university regulations.

Section 4. In the event a local chapter's charter is revoked, the local chapter's funds shall be transferred to the national organization.

### ***Statute II - Initiation***

Section 1. Active chapters shall, before the initiation of members, send to the Executive Director the names of the proposed initiates, upon forms to be provided by the Executive Committee, duly certified by the chapter adviser.

### ***Statute III - Regulations Regarding Officers***

Section 1. Each officer of the society, prior to the meeting of the regular session of the National Chapter, shall, if requested, make a report to the National President.

### ***Statute IV - Insignia and Membership Certificates***

Section 1. No person who is not a member of the society shall be permitted to wear the key.

Section 2. Each initiate after complying with the Constitution and statutes pertaining to membership shall receive a certificate of membership bearing the seal of the society and stating the full name of the initiate, the name of the chapter, and the date on which the person was initiated. Membership certificates shall be signed by the National President and the Executive Director.

#### **Statute V - Names of Chapters**

Section 1. The several chapters of the society shall be known by the name of the college or university in which they are located.

#### **Statute VI - The Forum of Phi Eta Sigma**

Section 1. The official publication of the society shall be the *Forum of Phi Eta Sigma*.

#### **Statute VII - The Founders Fund**

Section 1. The Trust Fund of Phi Eta Sigma shall be known as the Founders Fund, in honor of the founders of the society.

Section 2. This fund shall be established by the transfer of \$5,000 of the assets of the national society and shall be increased by the allocation of \$5.00, if earned, on an annual basis, from every initiation fee received from a member. Excess non-budgeted funds from the General Fund shall be deposited in the Founders Fund on an annual basis. All society excess of returns over expenditures generated from auxiliary enterprises shall be deposited in the Founders Fund.

Section 3. The members of the Executive Committee of Phi Eta Sigma shall act as Trustees of the Founders Fund.

Section 4. The Trustees shall apply the whole or any part of any income from the principal of the Founders Fund solely to the educational purposes as designated by the society.

Section 5. All of the income from the Founders Fund shall be used to grant annually to members of Phi Eta Sigma one or more scholarships designated for students pursuing graduate degrees, undergraduate degrees, or undergraduate research. The following criteria shall be used in granting scholarships:

1. High scholastic record with recommended minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.5 (on 4.0 scale);
2. Participation in local chapter activities;
3. Evidence of creative ability; and
4. Potential for success in chosen field.

Section 6. Endowed Distinguished Member Scholarships, as established during the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary National Convention in 1998, shall be known by the names of the founders of the society and other distinguished society leaders as approved by the National Chapter. The name and amount of each scholarship shall be designated in the Founders Fund Scholarship Policy.

Section 7. Chapter advisers of Phi Eta Sigma who have given loyal and devoted service to the society for a period of twenty-five years will be recognized with a Distinguished Member Scholarship in their name, provided there are sufficient funds to do so.

Section 8. The Executive Director of Phi Eta Sigma shall act as the Treasurer of the Founders Fund and shall make annual reports on the financial condition of the Fund.

### ***Statute VIII - Distinguished Service Awards***

Section 1. Members, chapter advisers, Executive Committee members, or national office staff members of Phi Eta Sigma who have given loyal and devoted service to the Society for a period of not less than five years may be recognized with the Distinguished Service Award, to be presented at the National Convention.

Section 2. Nominations may be made to the Executive Director at least three months prior to the date of the National Convention, by the officers or adviser of a local chapter, present and past members of the Executive Committee, former recipients of the Distinguished Service Award, or university officials at institutions where Phi Eta Sigma chapters are located.

Section 3. From candidates duly nominated, the recipient(s) will be selected by the Executive Committee.

**PHI ETA SIGMA NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY, INC.**

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