

PART III: CONSTITUTIONS
CONSTITUTION
DELTA SIGMA RHO-TAU KAPPA ALPHA
Adopted December 27, 1974

The name of this society is Delta Sigma Rho-Tau Kappa Alpha, derived from 'Oratory, the key to power' and "Honor for merit"

Article IV- Purposes, Powers

Section 1. Purposes. This Society is organized and operated exclusively for educational purposes, with no part of net earnings inuring to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual; no part of its activities is to carry on propaganda, or otherwise attempt to influence legislation; and the Society is not to participate in, or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. The specific purposes are: (1) to promote interest in and to award suitable recognition for excellence in forensics and original speaking, and (2) to foster an appreciation of freedom of speech as a vital element of democracy.

Section 2 Powers. The Society may grant charters to colleges and universities meeting accreditation requirements of the Association of College Honor Societies for the establishment of campus chapters.

Article III - Membership

A person may become a member by election while a resident undergraduate or after graduation through nomination and election as member-at-large. Persons who were honorary members of Tau Kappa Alpha in 1963 remain as bona fide members of the Society.

Section 1. Selection. One may qualify for membership by fulfilling the following conditions:

- a. Participation as a student at a high level of excellence in at least two years of cocurricular audience speaking or contest speaking, including individual events supervised by the Faculty Sponsor of a Campus Chapter or by a qualified member of the speech staff. If speaking activity was commenced in the senior year, one year of such participation shall suffice.
- b. SUPERVISION OF A CAMPUS CHAPTER AS A FACULTY SPONSOR.
- c. Candidates will have completed at least three semesters or five quarters of college prior to initiation and will be ranked academically in the upper one third of their class.
- d. Election of any member requires the recommendation of the Faculty Sponsor and a majority vote of the members of the campus chapter present and voting.
- e. No person shall become a member until an official application form has been completed and sent to the National Secretary with all fees and until the Secretary has authorized initiation by the chapter.

- f. Persons who meet requirements for election to membership but are no longer resident undergraduates may be elected as members-at-large by recommendation of any active chapter and with approval of the National Council upon recommendation of the National Secretary.

Section 2. Membership in other societies. Membership in any other bona fide society will not jeopardize a person's eligibility for membership in this Society.

Section 3. Extension of chapter rights. Campus chapters will extend all the rights and privileges of their own membership to resident persons elected and initiated by other campus chapters including members-at-large.

Article IV - Officers

The officers of this Society will be: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Editor, Trustee, and Historian.

Article V - National Council

The National Council will consist of the officers of the Society, the President of the Student Council, the Regional Governors, the Chairpersons of Standing Committees, the immediate past President, and two Council-persons-at-Large. The National Council will have the responsibility of conducting the business of the Society by correspondence and by meetings called by the President.

Article VI - Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees will consist of the President, the Treasurer, and the Trustee, who will serve as Chairperson. The principal duties of the Board will relate to the administration of funds as outlines in the By-Laws.

Article VII - Meetings

Section 1. General Membership. An annual meeting of the membership will be held during the National Conference. This meeting will have advisory powers only.

Section 2. National Council. The National Council will meet annually in conjunction with the National Conference and will hold such additional meetings as the President deems necessary.

Article VIII – Committees

Section 1. Standing Committees. There will be five standing committees. Standards, Research and Publication, National Conference, Alumni and Service Awards, and Speaker of the Year Award.

Section 2. Special Committees. Special committees may be created at the discretion of the President or at the direction of the National Council.

Article IX - Regional Structure

Delta Sigma Rho-Tau Kappa Alpha
Constitution

Section 1. Organization. All regions will be created by the National Council Each region may establish, its own procedures and programs consistent with the principles of the Society.

Section 2. Officers. Each Region will be under the directorship of a Governor elected by chapters composing the Region. Each Region will also elect a Lieutenant Governor. Both officers will be elected for two-year terms, with each chapter having but one vote. ELECTIONS SHALL BE HELD IN ODD-NUMBERED YEARS IN ODD-NUMBERED REGIONS AND EVEN-NUMBERED YEARS IN EVEN-NUMBERED REGIONS UNLESS THE REGIONAL CONSTITUTION SPECIFIES OTHERWISE. Should the office of Governor become vacant, the Lieutenant Governor will become Governor immediately, and a new Lieutenant Governor will be elected by the member chapters of the region to serve the remainder of the term involved.

Section 3. Duties. Regional Governors will serve as chairpersons of regional organizations. They will encourage collective activity of the respective chapters, make annual written reports to the National President and to the National Council, and perform such other duties as are prescribed by the President or by the National Council. The Lieutenant Governor will assist the Governor as directed.

Article X - Quorum

Section 1. National Council. Eight members will constitute a quorum.

Section 2. Board of Trustees. Two members will constitute a quorum.

Article XI - Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution may be initiated by the National Council or by petition of ten or more chapters. Amendments initiated by petition must be approved by a majority vote at a meeting of the National Council. amendments initiated from within the Council must be approved by a two thirds vote at a meeting of the National Council. Approved amendments will be submitted by the Secretary to all active chapters within thirty days after the Council meeting. Where there is less than a unanimous summary of arguments pro and con, chapters must vote within forty-five days. The amendment will become effective immediately upon ratification by two-thirds of the chapters voting. The Secretary will publish the results in the next issue of Speaker and Gavel.

Article XII - Parliamentary Authority

The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order will be the authority for all parliamentary situations not covered by rules elsewhere stated in this document.

BY-LAWS

Article I –Officers

Section 1. Election, and terms of office. The President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer will be elected for two-year terms by a majority vote of the chapters voting. Each chapter will have but one vote. The Editor, the Trustee, and the Historian will be appointed by the President with the approval of the National Council and shall serve three-year terms. These terms of office

will be staggered so that a new Editor will be selected in 1977 and every three years thereafter.

Section 2. Duties

- a. The President. The President will preside over meetings of the National Council; appoint standing committee members with the consent of the National Council; and sign charters, certificates of membership, and other official documents issued by the Society. The President will plan council programs and report annually to that body. The President will also preside over meetings of the general membership.
- b. The Vice-President. The Vice-President will succeed to the Presidency should that office become vacant and serve the unexpired term. The Vice President will serve as Chairperson of the standards Committee and perform such other duties as assigned by the President of by the National Council.
- c. The Secretary. The Secretary will be in charge of the National Office, keep all official records of the Society, and maintain correspondence with Chapter Sponsors. The Secretary will authorize all initiations to membership, receive orders for keys or insignia, issue and sign certificates of membership, and collect all fees and make proper accounting to the Treasurer.
- d. The Treasurer. The Treasurer will have custody of all monies of the Society. The Treasurer will receive and disburse all funds at the direction of the National Council and the Board of Trustees. The officer will render an annual financial report and present a proposed budget for the approval of the National Council. All accounts will be audited yearly. The officer will be bonded at the Society's expense in an amount no less than five hundred dollars.
- e. The Trustee. The Trustee will be the senior financial advisor and shall serve as Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.
- f. The Editor. The Editor will be responsible for the publication of the Speaker and Gavel, official organ of the Society.
- g. The Historian. The Historian will maintain all historical records of the Society and shall be in charge of the Archives.

Section 3. The Student Council. The National Student Council consists of all student members of the Society. The National Student council will meet annually at the National Convention. Every chapter may send delegates to the National Conference. Every chapter may send delegates to the National Student council meeting, and each chapter will have one vote in all matters.

Article 11 – Committees

Section 1. Standards. This committee will consist of two members appointed for a two-year term and the National Vice-President who will serve as Chairperson. This committee will formulate and recommend to the National Council standards for chapters and shall periodically determine satisfactory maintenance of chapter standards. In cases of suggested action, the Committee will report in writing to the National council.

Section 2. Research and Publication. This committee will consist of three members appointed by the

President for a term of two years. This committee will make recommendations related to research and or publications to be undertaken in the name of the Society and supervise enterprises as directed by the National Council.

Section 3. National Conference. The National Conference Committee will consist of four members appointed by the President for a two-year term. The Committee will be responsible for recommending the time and place of the National Conference to the National Council, will plan and supervise activities of the Conference, and appoint annually a National Tournament Director. The National Tournament Director and the National Student President will serve as an ex-officio member without vote on the National Conference Committee for one year.

Section 4. Alumni and Service Awards. This committee will consist of five members appointed for a two-year term. The Committee will select persons for the Distinguished Alumni and Service Awards. The Committee will secure nomination from the chapters of distinguished alumni who exemplify in professional life and the ideals of the Society, investigate merits of nominees, select those for recognition, prepare an appropriate citation for each recipient, and carry out such other responsibilities as may be involved in implementing provisions for the distinguished alumni awards. Similarly, the committee will secure nominations from the chapters of persons who have provided dedicated service to the Society and to the field of forensics, investigate merits of nominees, select those recognition, prepare an appropriate citation for each recipient, and carry out such other responsibilities as may be involved in implementing provisions for the service awards.

Section 5. Speaker of the Year Awards. This committee will consist of at least five members, geographically distributed, who will serve for a term of two years. The committee will be charged with the selection of the Speaker of the Year in accordance with the rules approved by the National Council.

Article III – Elections

Section 1. Nominations. The President will, a year in advance of the elections, appoint a nominations committee, consisting of three members of the National Council and two chapter sponsors who are not members of the Council. After soliciting nominations from the chapters, the Nominations Committee will prepare a list of two nominees for each office and report its selections to the National Council for approval or additions. The nominees for Councilpersons-at-Large will not have served on the previous National Council in any capacity.

Section 2. Election Procedures. The President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer will be elected for two-year terms by a majority vote of the chapters voting. If there are more than two candidates for an office, a preferential ballot will be utilized. Each chapter will have but one vote. All elected officers will assume office July 1 following the election. Balloting will be conducted by mail, with the ballots sent from the Secretary at least thirty days prior to the National Conference. The new officers will be announced at the Conference Banquet and in the Speaker and Gavel.

Article IV - Regional Operations

Section 1. Elections. elections will be via mail ballot following written nominations from the respective chapters.

The Regional Governor will place the names of the two top nominees on a ballot to be mailed to each chapter in the region. In the event of a tie among three or more nominees, all candidates involved will appear on the ballot. In the event of a tie when two names are on the ballot a second ballot will be circulated.

Section 2. Creating new regions. In the event the National Council creates a new region, the National Council will appoint a Regional Governor Pro-Tem to conduct an election in accordance with provisions in Section 1 of this article.

Article V - Chapter Organization

Section 1. Granting of charters. The Society may grant charters to colleges and universities which meet accreditation requirements of the Association of College Honor Societies.

Section 2 Chapter organization. Campus chapters will be composed of duly elected and initiated students and faculty who meet requirements prescribed by the Society. Campus chapters will be listed in the roster of chapters only by the name of the institution wherein they are situated.

- a. Each chapter must have a Faculty Sponsor experienced in forensics or original speaking. The chapter officers will consist of a President, a Secretary, and such others as desired by the chapter.
- b. Each chapter will have power to adopt its own name, constitution, and bylaws, consistent with the principles of the Society. Two copies of the chapter constitution and by-laws must be filed with the National Secretary, and no provision therein will become effective prior to such filing and acceptance by the National Secretary.

Section 3. Establishment of chapter. Upon receipt of an inquiry from a non-affiliated institution, the National Vice-President as Chairperson of the Standards Committee will acknowledge the inquiry in writing, with the understanding that this does not commit the Society to ultimate acceptance of the request. The Secretary will then forward a copy of the National constitution, a copy of the History of the Society, and necessary information forms. These forms will deal with basic facts about the petitioning institution, such as: student enrollment, names and qualifications of the speech faculty, name of the proposed Faculty Sponsor, a list of potential chapter members with their qualifications, list of speech courses, details pertaining to extracurricular speech activities, recent forensic budgets, a history of forensic activities, nature of present accreditation, and copies of the School catalogue (or Bulletins) describing the status of the institution. The completed forms should be accompanied by a written endorsement by the President of the Institution. The petition will then be sent by the Chairperson of the Standards Committee to the Regional Governor, who will return it with appropriate comments. If the Standards Committee approves the petition it will be sent to the National Council where a majority vote shall be necessary for final approval. Upon payment of a charter fee determined by the National Council and submission of proper membership applications and fees, the Secretary will issue the charter, and the chapter installation may proceed. The chapter will be installed by the National President, or by a member of the National Council, or by a person authorized by the National President.

Section 4. Status of an active chapter. The following conditions are necessary for a chapter to remain on the

active list

- a. The local institution must maintain an active speech program consisting of at least two one-term courses in public speaking, discussion debate, or some related field, and an extracurricular program in forensics or speaker's bureau under the supervision of a member of the forensics staff or of the Faculty Sponsor.
- b. The local chapter must be recognized and approved by the chairperson of the sponsoring department and by the institution's administration.
- c. The institution must continue to meet accreditation requirements of the Association of College Honor Societies.
- d. Except during period of national emergency, the chapter must elect and initiate at least two persons every three years.
- e. The National Council may by two-thirds vote establish additional standards for retaining active status.

Section 5. Inactive status. In case the qualifications for an active chapter are not adhered to upon recommendation of the Standards Committee and a majority vote of the National Council, the chapter shall be declared inactive and shall be removed from the active chapter rolls until:

- a. The administration of the institution indicates a desire to reactivate the chapter.
- b. The institution furnishes evidence that it sponsors a curricular and an extracurricular speech program which meets the standards set by the Society for an active chapter.
- c. A responsible and qualified member of the faculty is named to sponsor a campus chapter.
- d. A reactivation fee is paid.

Section 6. Withdrawal of a charter. a chapter may have its charter withdrawn upon the request of the President of the institution to which it was granted by a two-thirds vote of the National Council. The National Council will consider a vote for withdrawal of a charter when a chapter has been in an inactive status for more than five years or when a chapter pursues policies in conflict with the purposes of the Society.

Article VI – Finances

Section 1. Revenues. Revenues will consist of charter fees, initiation fees, income from invested capital, royalties, gifts, and assessments. Assessments may be authorized by a three-fourths vote of the National Council. All revenues will be received by the Treasurer and deposited as approval by the Board of Trustees.

Section 2. Disbursements. All disbursements will be handled by the Treasurer who will submit a detailed report of all finances to the National Council at least once each year.

Section 3. Accumulated funds. Monies accumulated in the Trust Fund, and any that may be added, will be

maintained intact.

Section 4. Funds for dissolution. In the event of dissolution of the Society, the last elected National Council will appoint a committee of five members to administer remaining funds, which will be distributed under the direction of the committee to colleges and universities in the United States for the purpose of providing undergraduate and graduate scholarships in speech.

Article VII - Amendments

The by-laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the National Council by a two-thirds vote of those present, providing written notice of intent to amend was received by all Council members at least thirty days prior to the meeting.