

Sigma Theta Epsilon
National Christian Fraternity
National Constitution
Adopted 4/8/06

Preamble:

Appreciating the need for a closer Christian fellowship among college and university men, and believing that a fraternal organization can stimulate such fellowship, and believing that college and university men, if so organized, can have a much more effective influence on the life and leadership of the Church and the world, we unite ourselves as Sigma Theta Epsilon, National Christian Fraternity, Incorporated.

Article 1: Name

The name of this fraternity shall be Sigma Theta Epsilon, National Christian Fraternity, Incorporated. The name Sigma Theta Epsilon represents the first letters of the Greek words "Sunergoi Theou Esmen" taken from I Corinthians 3:9, meaning "Fellow workers with God."

Article 2: Purpose

Section 1: To extend our service projects through programs of action to meet unfilled human needs.

Section 2: To attempt, with the guidance of God, to live Christian lives of faith and service.

Section 3: To provide social activities through service and brotherhood.

Section 4: To provide a background for understanding ourselves, our faith, and our world.

Article 3: Government

Section 1: National Conclave of Chapters

- A. The government of the fraternity shall be vested in the National Conclave of Chapters, comprised of the National Officers and the Chapters.
- B. The National Conclave of Chapters shall meet in odd numbered years in order to conduct business and hold elections. The time and place of the meeting shall be set by the National Board. The National Board may call a meeting of the National Conclave of Chapters in even numbered years in order to conduct business. Other meetings may be held at the discretion of the National Board.
- C. Unless otherwise provided by this constitution, the voting power of the National Conclave of Chapters shall be vested in three delegates from each Chapter, each delegate having one vote. The chapter delegates shall consist of the chapter president or his designee, one other active chapter member as elected by the chapter, and one chapter alumnus as elected by the chapter. Chapters without an alumnus present will only have two voting delegates.
- D. The National Conclave of Chapters shall have the sole authority to revoke Chapter charters unless otherwise provided herein.

- Section 2: National Board
- A. The National Board shall be comprised of the National Officers.
 - B. The National Board shall transact all fraternity business between meetings of the National Conclave of Chapters, and shall have all powers not expressly reserved by the National Conclave of Chapters.
 - C. The National Board shall work under the direction of the National Conclave of Chapters, which may amend any action by a two-thirds vote.

Article 4: Officers

- Section 1: The National Officers shall be the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Pledgemaster, and Alumni Secretary. At the time of their election, all officers must be alumni for a minimum of one calendar year. The National President and the Alumni Secretary must be alumni for at least two calendar years at the time of their election. The National President shall have held a prior national office. Should no candidate be present at the Conclave who meets these minimum requirements, the National Board shall have the authority to fill the position by appointment.
- A. The National President shall:
 - 1. Preside at all meetings of the National Conclave of Chapters and the National Board.
 - 2. Have the power to call all meetings of the National Board.
 - 3. Have the power, subject to approval of the National Board, to enter into contract.
 - 4. Speak officially for the fraternity between meetings of the National Conclave of Chapters.
 - 5. Serve on the Board of Directors of the Sigma Theta Epsilon Housing Corporation.
 - 6. Be responsible for the promotion and the expansion of the fraternity, including the organization of Colonies.
 - 7. Have the power, subject to approval of the National Board, to appoint committees and chairmen of those committees.
 - B. The National Vice President shall:
 - 1. Serve in the capacity of the President upon the direction of the President or when the President is unable to fulfill his duties.
 - 2. Be responsible for the planning, writing, and implementation of all national rituals, including revisions of the Ritual as necessary, and the effective use of the rituals by local chapters.
 - 3. Implement a fraternity program focus for each year, which shall be published annually in the National Program Book.
 - 4. Be responsible for the oversight of chapter religious programs, including providing devotions and Bible study outlines to the chapters.
 - 5. Further the development of the religious and spiritual life of the fraternity.
 - C. The National Secretary shall:
 - 1. Serve as the secretary for the National Board, and publish and distribute the minutes of all meetings of the National Conclave of Chapters and the National Board.
 - 2. Compile and publish the Philoi on a regular basis.
 - 3. Be responsible for the care of the historical records of the fraternity, including the periodic revision of the national history.
 - 4. Serve as parliamentarian during meetings of the National Conclave of Chapters.
 - D. The National Treasurer shall:
 - 1. Receive all monies, record them, and transmit financial reports to the National Board.
 - 2. Disburse all money in accordance with national policy.

3. Prepare a national budget for approval by the National Conclave of Chapters.
 4. Prepare and file all necessary tax returns.
 5. Have the financial records audited within thirty days prior to any meeting of the National Conclave of Chapters.
 6. Serve on the Board of Directors of the Sigma Theta Epsilon Housing Corporation.
 7. Oversee the finances of the chapters and review chapter audits on a regular basis.
- E. The National Pledgemaster shall:
1. Supervise the pledging of Colonies by serving as the Pledgemaster of the Colonies or appointing an alumnus to so serve.
 2. Be responsible for the planning, writing, and implementation of the national pledge program, which shall include, but not be limited to, the Pledge Manual, the National Pledge Test, the Pledgemaster's Handbook, and all national pledge requirements.
 3. Be responsible for supervising all local pledge programs to ensure that they meet the standards of the national pledge policy.
 4. Thoroughly investigate any allegations of hazing, and promptly report any findings to the National Board.
- F: The National Alumni Secretary shall:
1. Set policy and activities for and administer the national alumni program.
 2. Maintain, in cooperation with the National Executive Director, a record of the alumni of the fraternity.
 3. Coordinate and supervise the local alumni associations.
 4. Compile and publish an alumni newsletter on a regular basis.

Section 2: The National Officers shall be elected by the National Conclave of Chapters and shall serve a term of two years beginning at Conclave at which they are elected and continuing until their successors are installed at the following Conclave. The National President shall have the power to fill any vacant officer position, subject to the approval of the National Board. National Officers may be removed from office for cause by a four-fifths vote of the National Board or by a two-thirds vote of the National Conclave of Chapters.

Article 5: Executive Director

Section 1: The National Board shall have the authority to hire, and to set a salary for, an Executive Director. The Executive Director shall serve at the discretion of the National Board.

Section 2: The Executive Director shall:

- A. Be responsible for the operation of the national office, from which he shall conduct the routine correspondence and activities of the fraternity.
- B. Have the express authority, subject to funding approval by the National Board, to hire additional administrative employees.
- C. Appoint or hire an Information Technology Director, whose responsibilities shall include the design and maintenance of any websites operated by the fraternity as well as assist the Executive Director with any other information technology.
- D. Coordinate communications between the chapters and the National Board.
- E. Be responsible, in cooperation with the National President, for the promotion and the expansion of the fraternity.
- F. Maintain a complete record of the membership of the fraternity.
- G. Be responsible for the design, acquisition, and sale of all merchandise and jewelry.
- H. Bill and collect all dues, and turn over all monies to the National Treasurer.
- I. Distribute publications, supplies, forms, and other materials to the chapters.

- J. Compile the policies of the fraternity in the Standard, which shall be published and distributed on a regular basis.
- K. Assist the National Officers in their duties.
- L. Do any other such duties as assigned to him by the National Board or the National Conclave of Chapters.

Section 3: In the event that an Executive Director is not hired by the National Board, or at any time when the Executive Director is unable to carry out his duties, the duties assigned to the Executive Director in Article 5, Section 2, subsections F, I, and J shall revert to the National Secretary. The duties in Article 5, Section 2, subsections G and H shall revert to the National Treasurer. All other duties shall revert to the National President.

Article 6: Chapters

Section 1: Government of a chapter shall be vested in the active membership of that chapter. Government of each chapter shall be established according to Robert's Rules of Order. Each chapter shall also elect a sponsor who shall advise the chapter and its officers.

Section 2: Chapters shall be designated by the letters of the Greek alphabet or a successive combination thereof, except that the Omega chapter shall be reserved for the deceased members of the fraternity. The naming of new chapters shall continue in order through the Greek alphabet.

Section 3: Each chapter shall have, at minimum, the following offices or their equivalents: president, chaplain, secretary, treasurer, pledgemaster, service director, social director, alumni director, and steward. Additional offices shall be at the discretion of the individual chapters.

Section 4: Chapter officers are to be elected for terms of one year. The officer election must be held prior to the start of the final academic period of the school year.

Section 5: All chapters shall maintain a total active membership of no fewer than eight men. Should the total active membership fall below this number after the first calendar year following activation, the chapter shall automatically be deemed to be on probation for an academic year.

Article 7: Expansion

Section 1: The National Board shall have the authority to establish a process by which a group of men may petition for pledge colony status. The National Pledgemaster shall supervise the organization of the pledge colony. After meeting all requirements for the formation of a pledge colony, the National Pledgemaster shall recommend to the National Board that the Pledge Initiation Ritual for a Pledge Colony be conducted. Pledge colonies shall be named according to the college or university at which the pledge colony is located.

Section 2: Upon the completion of the pledging process and all other requirements as established by the National Board, the National Pledgemaster shall recommend to the National Board that the members of the pledge colony be granted Formal Activation. Upon Formal Activation of the initial pledge class, the pledge colony shall become a colony. Members of a colony may take on any membership status of the fraternity, and a colony may initiate additional pledge classes. Colonies shall be represented by a non-voting delegate at the National Conclave of Chapters. All rituals performed by a colony must be overseen by either the National Pledgemaster or another fraternity official appointed for that purpose.

Section 3: After a time period established by the National Board, the National Pledgemaster shall recommend to the National Board that a charter be granted to the colony if the colony has successfully completed all requirements as set forth by the National Board. A two-thirds vote of the National Board shall be required to grant a charter. Upon the granting of a charter, the colony shall go through the Chartering of a New Chapter ritual.

Article 8: Chapter Sanctions

Section 1: The National Board shall have the authority to levy sanctions, including financial sanctions, upon chapters for violations of the National Constitution or of fraternity policy. Any sanction levied by the National Board may be amended or overturned by a majority vote of the National Conclave of Chapters.

Section 2: A chapter may be placed on probation for a period of up to one year by the National Board as a result of serious violations of the National Constitution or of fraternity policy. Chapters on probation shall be subject to oversight by the National Board, which may override any action of the chapter. While on probation, the chapter president shall serve as the sole voting delegate to the National Conclave of Chapters. Chapters on probation shall continue to be responsible for all national financial obligations.

Section 3: A chapter may be placed on suspension for a definite period of time, not to exceed two academic years, by the National Board as a result of major or repeated violations of the National Constitution or of fraternity policy. Chapters under suspension shall be denied voting privileges in the National Conclave of Chapters and shall be subject to oversight by the National Board. Chapters under suspension shall continue to be responsible for all national financial obligations.

Section 4: A chapter may be declared inactive by the National Board as a result of major or repeated violations of the National Constitution or of fraternity policy while on suspension, or as a result of having no active members. Inactive chapters shall be denied voting privileges in the National Conclave of Chapters and all other rights granted to chapters herein. Inactive chapters may be re-activated within a time period of three years subject to approval of and oversight by the National Board. Inactive chapters shall forfeit their charter after being inactive for a period of three calendar years. Subsequent efforts to form a chapter at that college or university shall follow the process outlined in Article 7.

Article 9: Regions

Section 1: The National Board shall establish Regions composed of chapters of a specific geographical area, and shall assign each chapter to a Region. The National Board shall have the authority to re-allocate chapters between the Regions and create new regions as necessary. Any change in the division of Regions shall be effective the following academic year.

Section 2: Regional Conclaves shall be held in even numbered years, if there is no scheduled meeting of the National Conclave of Chapters. Regional Conclaves shall include spiritual and social activities in addition to any business conducted. Regional Conclaves may consist of more than one region at the discretion of the National Board.

Section 3: In addition to Regional Conclaves, Fall Gatherings may be held each year. Fall Gatherings are to be gatherings of multiple chapters or colonies within a region for spiritual, social, and service activities.

Article 10: Membership

- Section 1: Membership in the fraternity shall be of the following types: Pledge, Active, Inactive, Associate, Alumnus, Honorary, and Sweetheart.
- A. Pledge: May be any man attending the college or university with which the local chapter is associated. Has provisional membership in the fraternity, received at the Pledge Initiation. May only hold pledge class offices, has no voting privileges in local chapter business, and may not serve as a chapter delegate to the National Conclave of Chapters. Pays all applicable dues and fees. Membership is revoked in the event of de-pledging and the former pledge retains no rights or privileges.
 - B. Active: Has full membership in the fraternity, received at Formal Activation. Must pay all applicable dues and fees to maintain membership status. Has full voting privileges and may serve as an officer of the fraternity. Eligible for the Degree of the Knotted Rope upon graduation.
 - C. Associate: May not hold chapter office. May attend chapter meetings and other functions. Must pay all applicable dues and fees. Must petition the local chapter for reactivation into the Brotherhood or for continuation as associate status at the end of each academic term. Must petition the local chapter in order to receive the Degree of the Knotted Rope.
 - D. Inactive: Has no status in the fraternity and may not hold chapter office. May attend meetings and other functions with the permission of the local chapter. Serves no office, has no rights, privileges, or responsibilities with the exception of any unpaid financial obligations. Is not eligible to receive the Degree of the Knotted Rope. May petition the chapter for Active or Associate status.
 - E. Alumnus: Has graduated, transferred, or withdrawn from the college or university and has received the Degree of the Knotted Rope. May not hold chapter office and has no voting privileges but retains all other rights and privileges of Active membership.
 - F. Honorary Member: May attend meetings and other functions but may not hold chapter office. Is not eligible to receive the Degree of the Knotted Rope. Honorary membership may be conferred by a local chapter on individuals who are not students at the college or university with which the local chapter is associated and who have made contributions to the fraternity worthy of special recognition.
 - G. Sweetheart: May be any woman attending the college or university with which the local chapter is associated. May not hold chapter office, has no voting privileges, and may not be required to pay any dues. May attend all meetings and functions of the chapter. Receives the Sweetheart's Degree of the Knotted Rope upon the expiration of her term as Sweetheart. A Sweetheart shall serve a term of one year and may not be re-elected. A chapter may only elect one Sweetheart per electoral year.
- Section 2: No chapter shall discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or disability in any aspect of the function or membership of the fraternity.
- Section 3: A member in good standing may transfer to another chapter, on petition to and acceptance by that chapter, without initiation or payment of special fees.

Article 11: Dues

- Section 1: The amount of national dues and pledge fees shall be set by the National Conclave of Chapters. Any increase in dues shall take place at the start of the fiscal year.
- Section 2: The date by which dues must be paid shall be set by the National Board. Pledge dues, which include the pledge fee and national dues, are due in full within thirty days of the Pledge Initiation. The National Board shall have the authority to impose penalties if dues or pledge fees are not paid by the said date.

Section 3: A chapter may petition the National Board for leniency due to financial hardship. The National Board shall have the power to waive any penalties if the situation warrants such action.

Article 12: Real Estate

Section 1: Neither the national fraternity nor the local chapters shall lease, rent, or own real estate.

Section 2: Any real estate leased, rented, or owned for the use of the national fraternity or the local chapters shall be done so by and through the Sigma Theta Epsilon Housing Corporation. Any property in which a substantial number of members of a local chapter reside and in which the chapter holds official meetings or functions shall be deemed to be used for the purposes of that local chapter. Exceptions may be granted by the National Board.

Article 13: Relationships

Section 1: The national fraternity shall not enter into any formal relationship with any group or organization that would alter the nature of the fraternity without prior approval of the National Conclave of Chapters.

Section 2: Each chapter shall be officially recognized as a student organization by the college or university at which the local chapter is located. Each chapter may interact with a campus religious life program or other Christian organization, subject to approval by the National Board. No chapter shall become affiliated with the Interfraternity Council or other such similar organization without the prior explicit approval of the National Board.

Article 14: Fiscal Year

Section 1: The National Board shall have the authority to set the fiscal year of the fraternity.

Article 15: Amendments and Implementation

Section 1: This constitution shall be ratified by a two-thirds vote of the National Conclave of Chapters. The constitution shall be effective at the start of the next National Conclave of Chapters after the constitution is ratified.

Section 2: Amendments to this constitution shall be submitted to the National Conclave of Chapters by either the National Board or by two-thirds of the chapters. Amendments shall be adopted by a four-fifths vote of the National Conclave of Chapters.