

SIGMA PHI LAMBDA CONSTITUTION

Article I Name:

The sorority is named Sisters for the Lord. The Greek letters used to symbolize this are Sigma Phi Lambda (Phi Lamb), which is the basis for our symbol the lamb. Psalm 100:3, "Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture." We are the sheep for whom the spotless lamb committed the ultimate sacrifice.

The sorority verse is Romans 15:5-6, "May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Article II Statement of Purpose:

Sigma Phi Lambda exists for the sole purpose of glorifying our Lord Jesus Christ and making His name great. This is done by providing a source of fellowship to Christian women who sincerely seek to know His person, His will, and His ways. Sigma Phi Lambda is an organization of sisters for the Lord where fellowship with our most high God is fostered by growth in unity with one another. The purpose comes from the name, "for the Lord". Col 3:23, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord."

Because of this purpose, the sorority is not presently, nor will it ever be Panhellenic. It is the sorority's desire to abide by the rules God has given rather than the rules and traditions of Panhellenic organizations.

Article III Statement of Beliefs:

Sigma Phi Lambda has adopted the Apostles' Creed as its statement of beliefs:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ His only son our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He went down to the dead. On the third day He rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the holy catholic church*, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

* The word catholic is used in this context to mean universal.

Article IV Membership:

Any female student enrolled at the university is eligible for membership in Sigma Phi Lambda. No individual will be refused membership on the grounds of race, national origin, age, disability, appearance, social status, or religion. Because of the nature and purpose of Sigma Phi Lambda, the organization reserves the right to gender discriminate and limit membership to females only. Each Sigma Phi Lambda chapter is ensured this right to gender discriminate under a federal group exemption, section 501(c)7.

At the beginning of a semester, potential members will be introduced to Sigma Phi Lambda during a week of rush. With the guidance of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, the officers will interview each potential member, questioning each one about their desire to grow in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The potential member will then decide whether or not Sigma Phi Lambda is right for them. The new members will serve one semester of pledgeship. At the end of that semester, the pledges will be initiated into the sorority and assume full membership.

Article V Officers:

To become an officer, a member must either A) have been active for at least one year at the beginning of her term or B) be at least a fourth year student at the university who has been active for at least a semester at the beginning of her term. She will hold her position for one school year. The role of the officers is to be servants of Sigma Phi Lambda. ("...whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant" Matt 20:26) The officers exist to guide the members of the sorority as the Lord shows them. All members of Sigma Phi Lambda are called upon to share in the duties of the sorority.

Elected Officers:

Elected officers make up a council that is responsible for the leadership of the sorority. This leadership is a cooperative effort of all five officers and relies upon their delegation of responsibility to various committees. If an officer is incapable of fulfilling her duties, she will be dismissed by the sorority and her position maintained by the remaining four officers until an election can be held. In extenuating circumstances, the current officers will consult with the Alumnae Council, Regional Director, and/or Board of Directors to appoint someone to the position.

Each chapter's officers will correspond with an assigned Regional Director and with an Alumnae Council (if established) to communicate and ensure accountability. The officers will meet with the Regional Director and Alumnae Council (if established) at the annual Officer Training Retreat held before each fall semester.

The officers will be directly responsible for the minor and routine decisions of Sigma Phi Lambda. The officers will also be responsible for major decisions, but these decisions will be made with input from the Regional Director and/or Alumnae Council. No major decision will be made without prayer and confirmation of the Lord's will. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" Phil 4:6-7

1) President - The president is the supervisor and coordinator of all activities within and concerning the sorority. She is a figurehead and the public representative of Sigma Phi Lambda. The president is responsible for directing the meetings.

2) Vice President - The vice president is overseer of all social activities. She will ensure that each social activity reflects the original purpose of Sigma Phi Lambda.

3) Chaplain- The chaplain is involved in the spiritual growth of the sorority and in keeping it focused on the Father's plan for us. She is in charge of Sigma Phi Lambda's prayer life, devotionals, and retreats. The chaplain is responsible for the praise and worship time at the meetings.

4) Treasurer - The treasurer is responsible for the financial decisions and transactions of Sigma Phi Lambda. She is also responsible for the maintenance and communication of all financial records.

5) Secretary - The secretary is responsible for all correspondence during the year, including the summer immediately following her election, minutes of the meetings, room reservations, enrollment verification, service projects, and the calendar of events.

In some circumstances, the removal of a chapter officer is warranted. Removal of an elected officer should occur for instances involving financial irresponsibility, illegal activity, violation of organizational or university policies, or other officer misconduct as determined by the Board of Directors.

If the removal of an officer is warranted, the following procedures will be followed. First, the Alumnae Council, Regional Director, and Board of Directors will hold a meeting to evaluate the situation and vote on the removal of the officer. The officer will be informed of the decision immediately and the chapter will be informed at the subsequent chapter meeting. All materials related to the officer position must be surrendered immediately upon removal. If financial responsibility is in question, the faculty advisor and student life department will be notified immediately. If illegal activity is in question, the appropriate information will be given to campus authorities. The chapter will then go immediately on probation, so that the Alumnae Council, Regional Director, and/or Board of Directors may oversee see the transition of the officer(s). The removed officer will become inactive and may reactivate her membership only with approval of the Alumnae Council, Regional Director, or Board of Directors.

If a situation requires officer discipline, but not necessarily removal, the following procedures will be followed. The officer in question will be approached by the other officers to resolve the issue(s) at hand. The Alumnae Council, Regional Director, and the Board of Directors will be notified and will meet with the officer group to assist them in dealing with the issue(s) if necessary. Personal issues or issues outside of the scope of Sigma Phi Lambda officership will be referred to outside mediation. The Alumnae Council, Regional Director, or Board of Directors may create a timeline or set of disciplinary procedures for the officer to complete. Officer discipline may cause a chapter to be placed on probation.

Article VI Meetings:

Regular meetings, pledge meetings, and officer meetings will be held weekly for one and a half hours. An officer may call special meetings as the need arises.

The procedure of regular meetings is based upon Col 3:16, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God." Meetings should include worship, prayer, a short devotional, and a time of business. The devotional is a time for pledges and active members of Phi Lamb to share what God has been doing in their lives. Occasionally, an alumna may be asked to share a devotional. With approval from the Alumnae Council, or Regional Director if an Alumnae Council does not exist, an outside woman may be asked to give a devotional. Chapters may choose to incorporate small group time. The spiritual focus of the meeting should always take first priority.

Article VII Method to Amend the Constitution:

The constitution may be amended upon the unanimous consent of the active members of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors must be contacted with any requests for amendments. Refer to the Board of Directors Constitution for further guidance.

Article VIII Probation & Dissolution Clause:

A chapter of Sigma Phi Lambda may be placed on written probation by the unanimous consent of the Board of Directors. Refer to the Board of Directors Constitution for a description of probation.

A chapter of Sigma Phi Lambda may be dissolved by a unanimous vote of the Board of Directors. Refer to the Board of Directors Constitution for dissolution procedures.

Article IX Establishment of a New Chapter:

A new chapter of Sigma Phi Lambda may be established on any college campus with the approval of the Board of Directors. The new chapter must adopt the Constitution of Sigma Phi Lambda

and the Board of Directors Constitution. All chapters of Sigma Phi Lambda are subject to all federal, state, and local laws.

Article X New Membership:

New members will be activated at an initiation ceremony at the end of the semester. The ceremony will be held inside a church, if at all possible, and will be organized by the acting officers according to the precedents set by the founding members at the first initiation. The only written version of the initiation's format will be kept with the president to maintain secrecy.

Article XI Elections:

Elections for officers will occur in April of each year. This allows one month of training with the active officers before closing ceremonies when newly-elected officers will be activated and assume responsibilities. Nominations for officers will be held at least one week before elections. Nominations will be open for a single chapter meeting. In order to run, a member needs to be nominated by another member, or she may nominate herself. Once nominations close that night, no additional nominees may be added later. Prior to voting, each nominee will have an opportunity to express her thoughts concerning being an officer. Voting will occur during the normal meeting time, and secret ballots will be used. Each active member may vote once for each position. Officers who are not running for the following year or alumnae officers will count the votes. Seventy-five percent of the actives must be present in order for quorum to be met. In order for a candidate to win the election, she must receive more than fifty percent of the votes. If no candidate receives more than fifty percent of the votes, a runoff will be held between the two candidates with the most votes. The candidate with the most votes in the runoff will win. In the case of a tie, the current officers not running for the position in question will vote to break the tie. A report will be made at the end of the business time, the acting president will promptly lead in prayer, and the meeting will be adjourned. In the event of an unfilled officer's position, acting officers will organize an election at the next meeting. In extenuating circumstances, the current officers will consult with the Alumnae Council, Regional Director, and/or Board of Directors to appoint someone to the position.

Article XII Quorum:

Seventy-five percent of the members must be present for each voting procedure. A majority of the members present must vote in the same way for a motion to pass.

Article XIII Membership Requirements:

Sorority members may be classified as pledge, active, inactive, or alumnae.

In order to be a ***pledge***, she must abide by the following standards. Any pledge who fails to meet these requirements will not be initiated unless extenuating circumstances are approved by the Alumnae Council, Regional Director and/or the Board of Directors prior to initiation.

1. She must be under the covering of or seeking a church home.
2. She must be actively involved in a Bible study. Sorority meetings do not provide adequate study of the scriptures necessary for Christian growth.
3. She must pay semester and pledge dues to Sigma Phi Lambda.
4. She must meet her meeting and special events point requirements as outlined in each semester's Membership Attendance Agreement.

Meetings:

Chapter Meetings

Pledge Meetings

Prayer Group Meetings: "Devote yourself to prayer, being watchful and thankful" Col. 4:2

Special Events:

Pledge Retreat

Chapter Retreat

Prayer Evening(s)

Service Event(s)

Initiation

In order to be an **active member** must abide by the following standards.

1. She must be under the covering of or seeking a church home.
2. She must be actively involved in a Bible study. Sorority meetings do not provide adequate study of the scriptures necessary for Christian growth.
3. She must pay semester dues to Sigma Phi Lambda.
4. She must meet her meeting and special events point requirements as outlined in each semester's Membership Attendance Agreement.

Meetings:

Chapter Meetings

Prayer Group Meetings: "Devote yourself to prayer, being watchful and thankful" Col. 4:2

Special Events:

Rush

Chapter Retreat

Prayer Evening(s)

Service Event(s)

Initiation

Any exceptions to the point requirements will be reviewed by the Alumnae Council, Regional Director, and/or Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors reserves the right to revoke the membership of any member who is disruptive to the organization.

An active member may choose to go inactive. As an inactive member, she may not attend the above listed activities; however she is welcome to resume her active status in a later semester.

Article XIV Alumnae:

An alumna is any member of Sigma Phi Lambda who is no longer attending a school with a Sigma Phi Lambda chapter. An alumna is permitted to attend any meeting or social activity. However, she is not permitted to participate in voting. The title of alumna is transferred as privilege.

Article XV Alumnae Councils:

When a chapter has sufficient number of alumnae, an Alumnae Council will be formed under the supervision of the Board of Directors. This council will consist of a maximum of three women whom are founders or past officers from that respective chapter. If all spots cannot be filled with alumnae from that chapter, the Regional Director and/or Board of Directors may appoint a founder or past officer from another chapter. If no positions can be filled, then the chapter is required to meet their obligations with the Regional Director and/or the Board of Directors until an Alumnae Council is established.

Requirements of membership for the Alumnae Council include, but are not limited to:

1. Two or more council members must reside in the state or within 200 miles of the chapter.
2. Agree to serve a one-year term.
3. Approve chapter bylaw amendments using Constitutional guidelines.
4. One or more council members visit a chapter meeting a minimum of once each semester.
5. Each council member meets with officers a minimum of once a year.

Potential Alumnae Council members are nominated by active chapter officers, Alumnae Council members, Regional Directors, and Board of Directors members. The nomination is submitted to the Regional Director. The Regional Director can approve the nomination and contact the nominee. The nominee can accept the nomination after a time of prayer. Once the nominee has accepted the opportunity to serve, a chairperson is selected by the Regional Director. The chairperson will communicate with the Regional Director at least three times a semester. Each Alumnae Council member will evaluate her service in the spring and may reapply for the position for the upcoming year.

The Alumnae Council will assist the current sorority chapter officers with issues regarding budget, calendar, and any issues where help or advice is needed. The current chapter officers continue to be the authority concerning day-to-day activities.

Article XVI Financial Policy:

Non-refundable dues will be collected each semester. These dues cannot exceed the cost of three credit hours at the local state college. Each semester, the officers must estimate a projected budget before the semester begins. The budget will then be reviewed and finalized after the number of members and pledges who will be able to pay dues is determined. 20% of the actual income will be sent to the Board of Directors at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters to cover the operating expenses of the Board and to provide financial compensation to the employees of the Board of Directors. The budget will then be based on 75% of the actual funds. The last 5% will be saved for emergency. *It is the responsibility of the treasurer to be sure the money is spent wisely.* If a member cannot pay dues, she needs only to talk to the treasurer at the beginning of the semester and payment will not be required. Chapters will also be responsible for administrative fees incurred by the Board of Directors on their behalf.

Article XVII Faculty Advisors:

A chapter of Sigma Phi Lambda must have at least one faculty advisor who will be present and active in Sigma Phi Lambda activities or as required by the University. In the event that an advisor position is vacated, the elected officers will identify, interview and select a replacement.

Article XVIII Acknowledgments:

Sigma Phi Lambda was founded with prayer, the Lord's guidance, and great love by the founders and charter members in the Spring of 1988. The five founders are Patricia Adams Hogan, Robin Maedgen, Gina Williams Goveas, Jacqueline Goveas and Eileen Howell Barlow. The eight charter members are Jeana Clary, Bonnie Collins Turner, Jennifer Ford Borger, Julie Heflin Ertl, Debbie Hoehner, Kathleen Sullivan Kimbrough, Julie Trevino Mannella and April Williams Murphy.

"For this reason since the day we heard about you we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and you may please Him in every way: Bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints and the kingdom of light."
Colossians 1:9-12

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