

Phi Sigma Iota

International Foreign Language Honor Society



Procedures for Faculty Advisors

**The mission of the Society is**

- the recognition of outstanding accomplishment in the study or teaching of a foreign language,
- an appreciation for diverse points of view, derived from the knowledge and use of a foreign language,
- the encouragement of a lifelong commitment to the study and promotion of foreign languages and cultures, and
- the pursuit of research in foreign languages and cultures.

The colors of the Society are purple and white.

**CHAPTERS**

**Chapters in Good Standing.** A chapter in good standing shall comply with the Society Bylaws, shall meet uniform criteria determined by the Executive Board, shall have filed all required reports with the Administrative Director, and shall be current in all financial obligations to the Society. The Executive Board shall apply uniform criteria to determine those chapters that are not in good standing. Only chapters in good standing shall be eligible to vote in a mail ballot or to have a delegate to the Convention.

**Chapters Not in Good Standing.**

A. A chapter shall be declared inactive by the Executive Board in the event that (1) the institution at which the chapter is located fails to meet the requirements listed in Article X, Section 1 of the Society's By-Laws or (2) the chapter requests inactive status.

B. A chapter may be placed on probation by the Executive Board if it fails to meet the criteria for a chapter in good standing for two consecutive years.

C. A chapter may be suspended for cause by the Executive Board by a super-majority vote. Sufficient cause for such suspension may be violation of the Bylaws or any lawful rule or procedure adopted by the Society. Due notice shall be given by the Executive Board to the chapter in question by registered mail, and reasonable opportunity shall be allowed for the chapter to meet the requirements or correct infractions before final action to suspend is taken.

Chapters are encouraged to have a chapter advisory council. A chapter advisory council shall consist of two or more professional members, at least one of whom shall be a member of the faculty of the institution. They shall promote the ideals of Phi Sigma Iota in their respective institutions and communities, encourage excellence within the teaching faculty, and stimulate students interested in pursuing a foreign language curriculum. They shall help and supervise the activities of the Chapters, arrange the display of the charter in the building, encourage students to participate in the Society's contests, and submit annual financial and chapter activity reports to the Administrative Director.

Chapter dues shall be determined by the chapter.

A chapter must have at least three elected officers representing the functions of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Editor. The elected officers comprise the Chapter Executive Committee. Any elected officer of the Chapter may be removed for just cause. Sufficient cause for such removal may be violation of the Chapter Bylaws or Society Constitution or any lawful rule, practice, or procedure adopted by the Chapter or other conduct deemed to be prejudicial to the best interest of the Chapter. For removal of an elected officer for cause, it shall be necessary for the Chapter Executive Committee to hold a formal hearing. A statement of the charges shall be sent by registered mail to the last recorded address of the officer, 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 officer 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 Chapter Executive Committee shall adopt such rules as may be necessary to assure due process to the officer. Upon a three-fourths affirmative vote, the Chapter Executive Committee shall recommend removal to the Society Executive Board. The Society Executive Board shall, by majority vote, approve or reject the recommendation of the Chapter Executive Committee either at the next meeting or through an electronic meeting.

The Chapter should maintain a bank account under the signatures of the Faculty Advisor and of the Secretary-Treasurer of the Chapter, unless the Chapter made provisions to use the institutions' accounting system. The funds of the Chapter should not be mingled with personal funds.

Each chapter shall determine the number of meetings to be held during the year and report the same on the Annual Chapter Activity Report. Chapters are empowered to organize the events judged appropriate by their officers in order to satisfy the ideals of Phi Sigma Iota and to reinforce in their respective communities a public image which encourages the pursuit of foreign languages curricula. Programs may include lecture, symposium, slide shows, art or collection show, concert, festival, picnic, banquet, food-tasting party with international dishes, wine or spiced tea and cheese party, etc. Valuable suggestions for meetings can further be obtained from the [Chapter News](#) page on the [Society's website](#) or as published in *The Forum*. Phi Sigma Iota members, faculty teaching at the Chapter's institution or at neighboring colleges, distinguished international personalities, foreign visitors, members of the diplomatic corps, etc., may be invited to contribute to the splendor of meetings. Regardless of the general or specific theme or language used, all meetings shall be organized and conducted (particularly when an initiation is held) with the solemnity and formality required of an honor society.

When a special activity is organized or includes the attendance of relevant personalities, the media should be notified by press release so they may report the event should they choose. The success of the Society is greatly based on public knowledge of our activities and on the awareness outside the campus of the honor received by outstanding students and faculty.

## **Election of Members**

Membership in the Society is open to qualified candidates including persons with disability, without regard to age, color, gender, national origin, race, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

The Faculty Advisor should request information from the Registrar's office of the institution to determine all possible candidates meeting eligibility criteria, according to the official academic records. Nominations of candidates for collegiate membership shall be made by the Chapter Advisory Council or a qualified faculty advisor. Nominations of professional and honorary members may be made by a chapter. The slate of candidates for membership shall be affirmed by a two-thirds vote of the chapter.

Members shall meet the following minimum criteria for membership. Any chapter, at its discretion, may establish higher, more rigorous academic criteria.

**A. Active Members.** Collegiate or professional members who pay annual national dues shall be active members of the Society.

1. **Collegiate Members.** At the time of initiation, Collegiate members shall be students enrolled in undergraduate or graduate programs and pursuing a curriculum with a major/minor in:

Foreign Languages, including Classics and ESL

Comparative Literature

Foreign Language Education

Linguistics

Second Language Acquisition

Other interdisciplinary programs with a significant foreign language component.

a. **Undergraduate students** shall be enrolled in the institution represented by the chapter, have completed at least one course in a foreign language at the third-year level or its equivalent (fifth semester or seventh quarter), have completed 45 semester hours or its equivalent, have a minimum grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, and rank in the top 35% of their class.

b. **Graduate students** shall be enrolled in a graduate program in one of the aforementioned programs, have attained a high degree of competence in at least one foreign language, have completed 12 semester hours of graduate work or equivalent, and have a minimum grade point average of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale.

2. **Professional Members.** Alumni of collegiate chapters shall be professional members. Others meeting the following criteria may be elected to professional membership: have made a distinctive contribution to the profession and (a) earned one or more degrees in foreign language and ranked within the top 35% of the class as undergraduates or 3.5 as graduate students and not been previously initiated into the Society, (b) earned one or more degrees qualifying them to work in the field and rank in the top 35% as undergraduates or 3.5 as graduate students, or (c) faculty of the university, after one academic year of teaching in that institution and having

shown remarkable ability in their field as well as demonstrating support of the ideals of the Society .

**B. Honorary Members.** Honorary members shall be persons outside the field, excluding those who are employed in the field, who have made distinctive scholarly and research contributions to the study, use, or promotion of foreign languages and the ideals of the Society.

Active members shall have the right to vote, hold office, be elected as delegates to conventions, be elected or appointed to committees of the Society and the chapters to which the members belong provided other uniform criteria are met, and shall have such other privileges as the Executive Board shall determine.

Honorary members shall have all the privileges of active members except the right to vote, hold office, or serve on committees.

### **THE INITIATION INVITATION**

Plan well in advance for the initiation ceremony and allow several weeks for the receipt of the unlettered certificates by return mail and for lettering them locally.

New members pay an initial membership fee through the chapters, which includes the first three years of national dues. Annual member renewals for national dues must be sent directly to the headquarters office.

The Secretary shall prepare an "invitation packet" and send it to the candidates. The packet may contain:

- (1) An invitation letter on the Society's stationery; ([See sample letter.](#))
- (2) A separate printed page or [brochure](#) containing the insignia of the Society and information about Phi Sigma Iota and the local Chapter;

As candidates respond to the invitation, the Secretary-Treasurer deposits the checks into the Chapter's bank account. A sequential Chapter's roster number should be assigned to each member regardless of the member's classification.

**See the Suggestions for Data Management** at the end of this text.

When the deadline to answer the invitation has passed, the Secretary-Treasurer shall send the following documents to the international headquarters for prompt processing:

- (1) Member registration information. For each initiate, complete the [on-line member registration form](#), or email the [Excel spreadsheet registration](#), or send a [4x6 membership registration card](#) to the headquarters office. Please verify the completeness and accuracy of the membership data and maintain a copy for your chapter file.
- (2) An [order form](#) for as many initiation packets and unlettered certificates of membership as candidates to be initiated. **The certificates should be received in time to be lettered by the Chapter before the initiation ceremony.** An art student,

employee of the institution's printing office, or a calligrapher can do the lettering locally fast and inexpensively. [You may also use the [certificate lettering MS Word document](#) on the Advisor's Resource page. Printers can vary - try several tests before printing the actual certificates.] However, if the local Chapter can not make arrangements, pre-lettered certificates may be ordered from the international headquarters at additional cost.

(3) One check from the Chapter's bank account for the total dues, as established by the National Office, for each initiates (one check for all). **Never send a candidate's check or other personal check.** [You may now use the [on-line order](#) form to order and pay with a credit card via PayPal.]

The international headquarters will process the Chapter's materials immediately and mail the packets to the Faculty Advisor.

### **THE INITIATION CEREMONY**

The initiation ceremony may have special impact if organized, at least once a year, in conjunction with a banquet. However, a candidate who is unable to absorb the cost of the ticket for a banquet shall not be denied membership.

When the officers can estimate a tentative number of candidates, the Program Director shall begin arrangements for the banquet (if one is to be organized) and/or for the program: speaker, participants in the program, place, and time, make arrangements to have someone take photos of the event (the room, the group of initiates, an honorary member, the new officers, etc.)and news release.

[\[Sample program.\]](#)

The Chapter's officers and any special guest should preside over the initiation ceremony. The room where the event is held may be decorated with posters of Phi Sigma Iota and of different countries, flowers, and the colors of the Society. Place settings at the banquet table may be enhanced by copies of menus with printed covers with the Society's insignia.

The Program Director should introduce the President, who should speak on the importance of being a member of Phi Sigma Iota, on the relevance the knowledge of foreign languages has in today's world, on the activities of the Chapter, and on the rank of the institution itself in the area of languages.

Follow the [initiation ceremony text](#) which describes the Society's goals and purpose.

The Secretary may call the names of the initiates. The latter may approach the presidency to receive their handbooks, pins, membership cards, and certificates. The certificates may be handed out by the President, by the Faculty Advisor, and by distinguished guests presiding over the ceremony who should congratulate the new members. It will be quite appropriate for the Secretary to comment, as he calls the names about those initiates who merit particular recognition for their achievements, projects, etc. After all certificates have been distributed, the President should ask for a general applause from the audience

to acknowledge the outstanding attainments of those persons being honored with Phi Sigma Iota membership.

If the initiation coincides with the annual election of officers, ballots with the names of candidates shall be distributed and collected at the beginning of the event. Two officers shall collect and tabulate the votes. Upon completion of the lecture or festival, the Faculty Advisor shall announce the results of the election and give possession of the offices.

Following the event, one officer shall prepare an article to be released to the news media and to the Institution's Public Relations office, enclosing one or two good photos for the newspapers.

Within three days after the initiation event, or upon receipt of the photos thereof, if photos have been taken, the Secretary shall type a report of the event to be submitted to the Faculty Advisor for approval or the Faculty Advisor may prefer to prepare the report himself. The report shall then be mailed to the international headquarters for publication in the Chapter News or *The Forum*. [You may instead complete the [on-line Chapter Activities Report form](#) on the Advisor's Resources page.]

Within three days after the initiation event the Secretary shall personally take to the Registrar's office, department of academic records, a list signed by the Faculty Advisor with the names, student number, and college within the Institution of all students who became members. The Secretary shall ask that a notation be entered on the student's academic transcript recording their elected membership to our Honor Society.

### **ADVISOR REPORTS**

Faculty Advisors should complete and send to the international headquarters an Activity Report outlining Chapter activities, programs, and initiations conducted during the academic year. You may use the [on-line Chapter Activity Report Form](#) or print a copy and send it by postal mail. **If the Chapter was inactive, please continue to submit an Activity Report.** Headquarters will continue to have the responsibility of reporting active, inactive, reactivated, and closed status of chapters to the IRS. Your Chapter Activity Report is especially helpful in compiling this information.

New IRS rules for all non-profit organizations will require an annual report to maintain tax-exempt status for all groups, no matter what the income level. **The national headquarters will file the annual report to preserve your Chapter's federal tax-exempt status.** You should keep detailed and accurate records of your Chapter's income and expenses and **file the annual [financial report](#) on the Advisors Resources page.**

### **Suggestion for data management:**

The Merge feature in MS Word offers one-time data entry that can be used to generate standardized letters, envelopes, and certificate lettering. The exact titles of menu selections named below may vary depending upon the version of your software. Complete information may be found in the MS Word "Help" menu. Printers vary and the "Feed" orientation may need to be adjusted.

Save the MS Excel file "[InitiateRegistrationFile.xls](#)" to your computer from the link on the Advisor's Resources page at [www.phisigmaiota.org](http://www.phisigmaiota.org).

Enter the information for each new member and save the file again to your computer to use in the following steps and as a record for your Chapter files.

Save to your computer the MS Word document desired (InvitationLetterSample.doc, Envelope.doc, LetterCertificate.doc, etc.) from the Advisor's Resources page. Open the document in Word. From the main menu choose View/Toolbars, make sure the "Mail Merge" option is selected.

From the main menu, choose Tools/Letters&Mailings/MailMerge. In the document options menu, select the document type desired - letters, envelopes, labels, etc.

Select the "Current" document as the starting document.

Choose "Select Recipients." Choose "Use an "Existing List" and "Browse" to the file named in Step 2 above. Make sure that "All files" is listed in the "Files of Type" drop-down list at the bottom of the window.

Select the appropriate Table Name. Make sure "First Row of data contains column headers" is checked. Click OK.

Choose the selected recipients from the list. Click OK.

Now begin to build the standardized form. Place the cursor at the point in the document where the required data should appear. From the Mail Merge Toolbar, choose "Insert Merge Field." Select the appropriate data category. Click "Insert." Continue positioning the cursor and inserting fields as necessary.

Choose "Preview" to be sure the output is correct. Return to the starting document screen to make any necessary changes.

When you are satisfied of the results, choose "Complete the Merge" and "Print." **When using this feature for certificate lettering, it is highly recommended that several test prints be conducted before printing the official certificates.** Printers vary and the "Feed" orientation may need to be adjusted.