

Phi Sigma Iota is the highest academic honor in the field of foreign languages.

The Honor Society recognizes outstanding accomplishment in the study or teaching of the academic fields related to foreign language, literature, or culture. These fields include: Foreign Languages, Classics, ESL, Comparative Literature, Foreign Language Education, Linguistics, Second Language Acquisition and other interdisciplinary programs with a significant foreign language component.

New members are recruited by invitation only from established chapters of Phi Sigma Iota.

Members are required to

- Major or Minor in one of the above fields;
- Have completed 45 semester hours or its equivalent;
- Maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher;
- To have completed at least one course in a foreign language at the third-year level or equivalent;
- Rank in the upper 35% of their class.

Graduate students are eligible if enrolled in a graduate program in one of the aforementioned fields, 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.

Teachers and Researchers in any of the above fields may be eligible following at least one year of service at the chapter's institution.

Phi Sigma Iota has initiated over 50,000 members since its founding in 1917.

Phi Sigma Iota provides:

- national recognition of achievement;
- a national network of colleagues;
- participation in a learning community to broaden horizons;
- local and national leadership opportunities;
- publication opportunities in the Society's issues of *The Forum* and Chapter News;
- scholarship opportunities.

Phi Sigma Iota is a member of the Association of College Honor Societies where there are additional opportunities for grants, scholarships, and preference for Federal Jobs - Entry at GS-7 level if all other requirements are met.

New members pay a national initiation fee which includes:

- the first three years of national dues;
- certificate of membership;
- a Phi Sigma Iota "Gold Pin;"
- a wallet-size membership card.

Members are eligible

- for programs organized by the Society;
- to wear special graduation honors;
- apply for the scholarship programs;
- to submit articles for publication

Alumni Members pay an annual fee of \$20 to the international office to promote the goals of the Society, support scholarship activities, and provide for maintenance of the organization.

HISTORY

Phi Sigma Iota was founded in 1922 at Allegheny College in Meadville, PA by Dr. Henry W. Church, members of his department of languages, and advanced students who were meeting to discuss linguistic and literary matters. PSI became a national society when Beta Chapter was established at The Pennsylvania State University in April 1925 and Gamma Chapter installed at the College of Wooster less than a year later. With these three chapters as the nucleus of the national organization, the first convention was held in May 1926, at Allegheny College.

At a National Convention held in Bloomington, IL in November 1935, Phi Sigma Iota merged with Alpha Zeta Pi, a similar society west of the Mississippi organized by Dr. Etienne Renaud and his associates in the Department of Languages at the University of Denver in 1917.

In 1949, Phi Sigma Iota was voted membership into the Association of College Honor Societies, the first language society to receive that honor.

In 1978, under the Presidency of Dr. Santiago Vilas, the Society expanded to honor outstanding achievements in any foreign language including Classics, Philology, Applied Linguistics, Comparative Literature, and Bilingual Education.

In 1982, the Society became the International Foreign Language Honor Society by installing its first Chapter in a foreign country at Universidad Regiomontana, Monterrey, Mexico.

Today the Society maintains approximately 250 local chapters in the U.S., France, and Mexico.

THE INSIGNIA



The Insignia of the Society was adopted in 1935 and was created by Dr. Robert E. Dengler (1893-1973), Professor Emeritus of Greek at Pennsylvania State University. The words PHI, SIGMA, and IOTA may be understood, respectively, as Philotes (Friendship), Spoude (Zeal for languages), and Idioma (Research and Individuality).

The Key and Pin of the Society were adopted in 1935. It was also designed by Dr. Dengler and is comprised of the following elements:

- A chaplet of ivy, in honor of the birth of Horace (b.65 B.C.), the Roman poet at the height of Augustan literature who was a model for subsequent versification;
- A stem at the bottom of which the foliage “grows”;
- A five-point star standing for the five languages originally recognized by the Society;
- The Greek letters PHI SIGMA IOTA imprinted over the five-point star.

The shield or coat of arms of the Society is comprised of a summary of the colors and designs of the shields of the language areas mentioned in (3) above.

The colors of the Society are purple and white.

Phi Sigma Iota maintains a website at

<http://phisigmaiota.org>

and an International Headquarters at The Department of Modern and Classical Languages, Allegheny College, Meadville, PA. Address correspondence to:

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CURRENT NATIONAL OFFICERS

Elected October 2007

PRESIDENT

Carla E. Lucente
Duquesne University

FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

Susan L. Rosentreich
Dowling College

SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT

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Phi
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Iota

ΦΣΙ

THE INTERNATIONAL
FOREIGN LANGUAGE
HONOR SOCIETY

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