

**INSTITUTIONAL CHARTER OF
RHO ALPHA SIGMA
HONORARY SOCIETY**

This document is intended to provide a foundation for each chapter of Rho Alpha Sigma to seek institutional recognition as a student organization. Minor revisions of this document may be made in order to meet the home institution's specifications for recognition. Minor revisions do not need prior approval of the Rho Alpha Sigma Board of Directors. Chapters intending to make *major* revisions of this document must first seek permission from the National Organization. Examples of minor revisions would be the addition of chapter officers, modifications of duties, percentages required for passage of by-law changes, etc. Examples of major revisions would include instituting a minimum GPA requirement in order to be considered for membership, revision of the definition of Resident Advisor, etc.

At no time may revisions to this document run counter to any of the National Constitution amendments or by-laws.

Upon completion of revisions to this document, chapters must submit their Institutional Charter to the National office by submitting it to: advisor@rhoalphasigma.org.

Inquiries about revisions should be directed to: advisor@rhoalphasigma.org. Please allow for a one-to-two week period of consideration. The National Board of Directors will consider all requests for all major revisions.

If a chapter should make a revision to its charter that is not approved by the National Organization, the member chapter must revise their charter to come in line with the National Constitution and By-laws in order for that chapter to be in good standing.

Sincerely,

Rho Alpha Sigma
National Board of Directors

**Article I
NAME**

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be Rho Alpha Sigma Honorary Society (or otherwise identified as Rho Alpha), ____ Chapter.

Section 2. The organization is affiliated with Rho Alpha Sigma, National Honorary Society.

Article II
PURPOSE

The purposes of Rho Alpha Sigma shall be:

- Section 1. To recognize the outstanding efforts of the institution's best Resident Advisors or its equivalent.
- Section 2. To encourage excellence in performance of the RA position.
- Section 3. To promote the student affairs profession amongst the most skilled RAs.
- Section 4. To serve as an outlet of service to the institutional community.

Article III
MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1. Membership in this organization is based upon election into the honorary following stated organizational bylaws.
- Section 2. Each academic year, four (4) Resident Assistants or their equivalent or ten percent (10%) of the Resident Assistant population, whichever is greater, may be inducted.
- Section 3. Graduate candidates are eligible for induction into Rho Alpha Sigma when they work as Resident Advisors or its equivalent or are inducted due to service rendered as an undergraduate Resident Advisor for the institution at which they currently matriculate. Graduate inductees shall be identified as graduate members upon induction.
- Section 4. Upon simple majority vote of all voting members of the Rho Alpha chapter, honorary members may be elected, not to exceed in number more than one-half of the total number of new Resident Advisor or equivalent inductees. Honorary members shall be officially identified as such and shall not have a vote in chapter matters. Honorary members are exempt from requirements listed in Article III Section 6.
- Section 5. Membership in Rho Alpha Sigma shall be open to any qualified individual regardless of race, color, gender, national origin, religion, creed, sexual orientation, or disability.
- Section 6. Candidates for membership must meet the following characteristics to be considered for membership in Rho Alpha Sigma:

- a) Resident advisors (RAs) or their equivalent can be considered for induction in their second semester/quarter of service.
- b) RAs must be in good standing within their department and university (i.e. they cannot currently on performance, judicial, or academic probation).

Section 7. Voting members shall be any regularly inducted member, graduate or undergraduate, who currently matriculates at the institution for which the member worked as a Resident Advisor or its equivalent. When a member graduates and is no longer matriculating at the institution that inducted the member, the member gains alumni status and is no longer a voting member of the chapter.

Section 8. Should any member act in any fashion deemed conduct unbecoming a member of Rho Alpha Sigma, as stipulated in its Bylaws, the member may be suspended for a period designated by the chapter or expelled by the chapter.

- a) The Chairperson of the chapter shall investigate allegations of misconduct and shall bring the allegations and evidence of their validity forward to the voting members of the chapter.
- b) The individual under investigation for conduct unbecoming a Rho Alpha Sigma member has the right to hear the allegations brought forth and defend him or herself accordingly.
- c) Suspension and expulsion from the Chapter demands a three-fourths vote of all voting members of the chapter.
- d) Suspension and expulsion from the chapter will result in suspension from the national organization.
- e) Upon suspension, the member shall lose voting rights until such time that the suspension comes to an end.

Article IV **OFFICERS**

Section 1. The officer of this organization shall be the Chairperson.

Section 2. The Chairperson must be a current voting member of the chapter.

Section 3. The Chairperson shall be responsible for meeting all obligations of the office as stated in the organization's bylaws.

Section 4. If a chairperson fails to or is unable to meet all obligations of the office as stated in the organization's bylaws, the chairperson may be removed from the office by a three-fourths vote of all members of the chapter or through written resignation.

Section 5. A simple majority of all votes cast shall be necessary to constitute an election.

Section 6. Should the position of Chair become vacant, the position shall be filled by special election called by the advisor of the chapter or designee. The position may only be filled by current voting members of the chapter.

Article V **ADVISOR**

A chapter advisor must be selected by the current voting members of the Chapter. The advisor must be a residence life staff member or its equivalent. The advisor must be approved by a three-fourths vote of the voting membership.

Article VI **ELECTIONS**

Section 1. The Chairperson shall be elected at any point following the induction of new members.

Section 2. Nominations for the Chairperson position shall be taken from the voting members of the chapter.

Section 3. The nominee receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected.

Article VII **MEETING AND QUORUM**

Section 1. A quorum of current voting members must meet at least once per semester.

Section 2. Special meetings, such as selection meetings, may be called by the Chairperson, advisor, or any three members of the organization.

Section 3. Fifty-one percent or more of current voting members are necessary to constitute a quorum.

Article VIII **FINANCES**

- Section 1. Funds shall be expended upon the authorization of the organization by a majority vote or, in case of an emergency, upon the approval of the Chairperson and chapter advisor.
- Section 2. All charges must have the signature of the advisor and Chairperson of the chapter.

Article IX
AMENDMENTS

- Section 1. This charter may be amended at a regular meeting by three-fourths vote of all current voting members. The proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to all voting members of the organization at least fourteen days before being voted upon. The Chairperson shall conduct a vote on the proposed amendment at the next regular meeting or special meeting following the fourteen day period.
- Section 2. Amendments to this charter become effective upon approval of the organization, Student Senate, the senior housing officer, and the national office of Rho Alpha Sigma.

Article X
RATIFICATION

The charter shall be ratified as it currently reads by a three-fourths vote of all current voting members of the organization.

INSTITUTIONAL BYLAWS OF
RHO ALPHA SIGMA
HONORARY SOCIETY

Article I
DEFINITION OF A RESIDENT ADVISOR OR EQUIVALENT

A Resident Advisor or its equivalent (community assistant, resident assistant, etc.) is any student hired by a department of residence life or its equivalent. The student's primary responsibilities include providing a live-in, community presence in a residence hall or its equivalent and whose responsibilities relate to administration, educational programming, policy enforcement, leadership and community development, and emergency/crisis response operations. Resident Advisors must serve, organizationally, under the supervision of a Hall Director or its equivalent.

Article II
FUNDS

Rho Alpha Sigma funds shall be used to cover the normal operating expenses of the organization.

Article III
DUTIES OF CHAPTER CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson shall:

- a) Preside over any and all regular chapter meetings or official activities.
- b) Preside over the application process and selection process.
- c) Be primarily responsible for coordination of the induction ceremony.
- d) Ensure the solvency of the chapter.
- e) Act as a co-signer on all financial accounts maintained by the chapter.
- f) Purchase all necessary items for induction.
- g) Delegate responsibilities to other members of the chapter as deemed necessary.
- h) Ensure that chapter business is maintained in written form for archival purposes.
- i) Preside over any amendments to the chapter charter, with knowledge and approval of the chapter advisor and national office.
- j) Represent the chapter in organizational matters by acting as the voting delegate of the chapter (or by delegating such responsibility to a current voting member).
- k) Other duties as deemed necessary for the operation of the chapter.

Article IV
SELECTION OF MEMBERS

- Section 1. Aside from the charter requirements for membership, candidates for membership shall be evaluated using the following criteria (criteria are not required for membership):
- a) Being a positive academic role model.
 - b) Having a positive impact on floor/building community.
 - c) Providing quality input into the staff team.
 - d) Providing quality programming for floor/building/campus community members.
 - e) Demonstrating excellent administrative performance.
 - f) Engaging in activities beneficial to the floor, building, staff, and/or community that goes above and beyond the RA position requirements.

- Section 2. Candidates' qualifications will be evaluated on a comparative basis.
- Section 3. All candidates will be evaluated using a blind review procedure.
- Section 4. In the first year of a chapter's existence, the selection committee shall be composed of an equal number of committee members to number of undergraduate members who will be inducted into the honorary. The first year committee will be composed of no less than one resident advisor or equivalent not being considered for induction, one hall director or equivalent, one student leader. The remainder of the selection is at the discretion of the chapter advisor.
- Section 5. In subsequent years of a chapter's existence, the selection committee shall be composed of the chapter's current undergraduate members who are in good standing.
- Section 6. A nomination process will open each year during the spring semester/quarter at the discretion of the chapter chairperson with approval of the chapter advisor. The nomination will include vital information and semesters of service and for which hall(s). The nomination process will remain open at the discretion of the chapter advisor and/or chapter chairperson but will be open no less than two weeks, at which time the evaluation committee will convene to choose the inductees for the year.
- Section 7. Nominations must be received prior to the nomination deadline.

Article V **INDUCTION**

- Section 1. Following selection into Rho Alpha Sigma, selected candidates will be inducted into the honorary following the stipulated ritual ceremony.
- Section 2. For the first year of existence, the ceremony will be conducted by the advisor of the chapter. In following years, the Chairperson of the chapter will lead the induction ceremony with the assistance of undergraduate, graduate, and honorary members of the chapter.

Article VI **MEMBER STANDING**

Members may be suspended for conduct oppositional to organizational values. The following may constitute such oppositional conduct:

- a) Termination from RA position due to violation of departmental or institutional rules or codes of conduct.
- b) Endangerment of residents through neglect of duty.
- c) Conviction of a serious misdemeanor or felony crime.

Suspended members are no longer considered in good standing and will not be allowed to vote on chapter business.

Article VII
AMENDMENTS

Section 1. By-laws may be amended by a simple majority vote of all current, undergraduate members present at regular or special meetings.

Section 2. Amendments to the by-laws may be proposed by any voting member of the Rho Alpha Sigma chapter. Such proposals must be submitted to the Chairperson and shall be presented by the Chairperson at the next regular meeting.