

Article I. Name, Key and Seal

The name of this chapter of the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing is the Theta Kappa Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, Incorporated located at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. It shall use the official key and seal of Sigma Theta Tau.

Article II. Purposes

The purposes of this Chapter shall be to:

1. Recognize superior achievement
2. Recognize the development of leadership qualities
3. Foster high professional standards
4. Encourage creative work
5. Strengthen commitment to the ideals and purposes of the profession

Article III. Membership

Section 1. Categories of Membership

- a. Regular Member
- b. Honorary Member

Section 2. Qualifications for Membership

- a. Theta Kappa Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau does not discriminate. Candidates are qualified for membership so long as they meet eligibility requirements.
- b. Student candidates shall have demonstrated superior academic achievement, academic integrity, and professional leadership potential.
- c. Regular Member
 - 1) Students in Basic Program
 - a. Definition - Basic program is defined as a baccalaureate or equivalent nursing degree program that leads to the first professional nursing degree.
 - b. Academic Achievement - Students in basic programs shall be eligible for membership if they have achieved excellence according to the standards provided by the Society.
 - c. Rank in class - Basic students who are elected shall rank not lower than the highest 35 percent of their class in scholarship. (guidelines available)
 - d. Curriculum - Students shall have completed at least one-half of the required nursing curriculum.
 - e. Exceptions - Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the chapter's governance committee following the guidelines adopted by the International Board of Directors. (guidelines available)
 - 2) Students in Graduate Programs
 - a. Definition - Graduate program is defined as an accredited program of graduate study in nursing including master, post-master, doctoral and post-doctoral.
 - b. Academic Achievement - Students in graduate programs shall be eligible for membership if they have achieved excellence according to the standards approved by the Society.
 - c. Curriculum - Students shall have completed a minimum of one-quarter of the required graduate curriculum.
 - d. Exceptions - Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the chapter's governance committee following the guidelines adopted by the International Board of Directors. (guidelines available)

3) Nurse Leader

A nurse leader, who is a registered nurse, legally recognized to practice in his/her state, with a minimum of a baccalaureate degree or the equivalent in any field, and who has demonstrated achievement in nursing, shall be eligible for membership. (guidelines available)

d. Honorary Member

An honorary member is any person who is not eligible for regular membership in Sigma Theta Tau International, but who has gained national and/or international recognition in the field of nursing or in any field contributing to nursing.

Section 3. Selection of Members

a. Regular Members:

1) Student member candidates are required to be enrolled in University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, where the Theta Kappa chapter is located, to be considered for membership in that chapter.

2) The nurse leader candidate may be selected for membership in any chapter.

b. Honorary Members:

1) Honorary membership is awarded only by the Board of Directors of Sigma Theta Tau International.

2) Any active member through a chapter or the Board of Directors may nominate persons for honorary membership.

3) Each member of the Board of Directors shall have one vote for each nominee based on established criteria. A favorable vote of three-fourths of the Board of Directors shall be necessary for election to honorary membership.

Section 4. Membership Status

Members may be designated as honorary, active or inactive. Members may also formally request to discontinue. Active members pay annual chapter and international fees. Honorary members are designated as active without payment of fees. Inactive members have not paid annual chapter and international fees, but shall become active at any time by paying current renewal fees.

Section 5. Rights and Responsibilities of Active Members

a. Regular Members

1) Active regular members shall make a commitment to the purposes of the Society.

2) Active regular members shall receive:

a) official society publications

b) priority for education programs and

c) priority for research funding.

3) Active regular members are eligible:

a) to vote as outlined in the Sigma Theta Tau International Bylaws and Chapter bylaws and

b) to hold elective and appointive office.

4) Active regular members may hold membership in more than one chapter by remitting multiple chapter fees and the Society fee annually.

5) Active regular members may transfer from one chapter to another.

b. Honorary Members

1) Honorary members shall:

a) be inducted and awarded the official key in locations and timed decided upon by the international board of directors;

- b) receive the society's publications
- c) be responsible for promoting and supporting the purposes of Sigma Theta Tau International.

Section 6. Revocation of Membership

Membership in the Society and chapter may be revoked at any time by a chapter to which the member belongs for just cause and after due process. Revocation of membership shall be determined at a meeting of the chapter, at which a quorum is present by at least three-fourths vote for revocation by those present.

Article IV. Chapter

Section 1. Definition of Chapter

The Theta Kappa Chapter at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth is an organized division of nurse scholars and leaders that has met all of the requirements for establishment and has been granted a charter in accordance with the procedures required by the Society.

Section 2. Organization of a Chapter

The Theta Kappa Chapter at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth has been organized according guidelines, policies and procedures of the Society. It was chartered on April 2, 1986 and is chapter 200.

Section 3. Region

The Theta Kappa Chapter at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth is part of Region 15.

Section 4. Powers, Duties, Responsibilities

- a) The Theta Kappa Chapter shall function under bylaws, policies and regulations that are not in conflict with the bylaws of Sigma Theta Tau International.
- b) The Theta Kappa Chapter is an independent, autonomous organization affiliated with Sigma Theta Tau International. The chapter the amount of its fees and assessments and has control of its income, expenses, contracts, accounting systems and internal reports.

Section 5. Chapter Officers

- a) Theta Kappa Chapter shall elect a chapter president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and a faculty counselor, at a minimum. Duties are outlined in chapter bylaws, Article VIII
- b) Officers shall assume their duties in the month of July of the year they were elected.

Section 6. Chapter Committees

The Theta Kappa Chapter at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth shall have, at the minimum, an elected Governance Committee and an elected Leadership Succession Committee as standing committees.

Section 7. Chapter Meetings

The Theta Kappa Chapter at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth shall have at least one business meeting each year and at least 2 educational programs supporting the purposes and goals of Sigma Theta Tau International.

Section 8. Chapter Responsibilities

The Theta Kappa Chapter at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth shall

- a) Support the purposes of Sigma Theta Tau International
- b) Observe the provision of the chapter bylaws, which comply with Sigma Theta Tau International bylaws, and comply with International policies and regulations
- c) Participate in the biennial convention House of Delegates and other business brought before the House of Delegates during the term
- d) Select and induct eligible members once annually
- e) Meet financial obligations
- f) File required reports according to established guidelines

Section 9. Suspension, Revocation, Dissolution

- a) The activities of the Theta Kappa Chapter at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth may be suspended by the Board of Directors of Sigma Theta Tau International for failure to comply with bylaws, polices or regulations.
- b) Upon recommendation of the International Board of Directors, the House of Delegates may revoke a charter of a chapter.
- c) The Theta Kappa Chapter at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth may vote to dissolve itself.
- d) Upon revocation of the charter, or dissolutions of the chapter, all cash and other assets remaining after the chapter's outstanding debts are paid should be returned to the treasury of the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, Incorporated, or any other appropriate non-profit organization approved by the chapter Board of Directors. The chapter's charter and coat-of-arms shall be returned to headquarters. All members of the chapter shall have the opportunity to transfer their membership to a chapter or their choice.

Section 10. Reactivation and Reinstatement of a Chapter

- a) The Theta Kappa Chapter at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth may be reactivated following suspension by the action of the Sigma Theta Tau International Board of Directors.
- b) The chapter may be reinstated following revocation of its charter by meeting all of the requirements of a newly organizing chapter. If approved, the chapter shall receive a new charter but retains its original name.
- c) The chapter may be reinstated following dissolution of its charter by meeting all of the requirements of a newly organizing chapter. If approved, the chapter shall receive a new charter but retains its original name.

Article V. House of Delegates

Section 1. Membership

- a) Membership of the House of Delegates shall be composed of two (2) delegates from the chapter.
- b) The term of the delegates shall be from the opening of the conventions for which the delegate is selected to serve until the opening of the next convention.

Section 2. Meetings

- a) The House of Delegates shall hold biennial conventions at a time and place determined by the Board of Directors of Sigma Theta Tau International.
- b) The International Board of Directors may call the House of Delegates into special sessions.

- c) Each member of the House of Delegates has the right to cast one (1) vote. If the chapter has only one (1) delegate attending, that delegate shall have two (2) votes.

Section 3. Powers

- a) The legislative and the judicial powers of Sigma Theta Tau International shall be vested in the House of Delegates.
- b) The House of Delegates shall be vested with the following powers in addition to any other powers granted by the International bylaws:
 - 1) Revise and amend the International bylaws
 - 2) Elect officers and other members of the Board of Directors and elected committees
 - 3) Make nominations from the floor for officers and committees
 - 4) Approve by a three-fourths vote such application for charters as are recommended to the House of Delegates by the Board of Directors
 - 5) Approve by a three-fourths vote the revocations of a charter when such action has been recommended by the Board of Directors
 - 6) Adopt such rules and regulations for the conduct of its proceedings as may be determined by a two-thirds vote of the House of Delegates at biennial convention
 - 7) Receive and act upon recommendations and matters referred to it
 - 8) Receive reports and the Board of Directors' approved biennial budget
 - 9) Levy special assessments when approved by a three-fourths vote

Section 4. Electronic Voting

- a) Chapter delegates my vote electronically on chapter charter applications
- b) The procedures and time limitations for electronic voting shall be set by the Board of Directors

Article VI. Annual Meeting of Chapter Members

The Theta Kappa Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth shall have an annual meeting for its members.

Section 1. The annual meeting of members shall be on a date, place and time set by the chapter's Board of Directors.

Section 2. The agenda of the annual meeting is the presentation of annual reports and other appropriate items.

Section 3. The annual business meeting may be held in conjunction with a scholarly program.

Section 4. Active members shall receive notice of the annual meeting through publications (newsletter), electronic mailing and or postal mailing. Members will register their intent to attend but day of registrations will be accommodated.

Article VII. Board of Directors

Section 1. Membership

The members of the Board of Directors of this chapter shall consist of the elected officers and one or more of the elected directors

Section 2. Focus

The focus of the Board of Directors is goal setting, planning, resource development, decision-making and managing the chapter legally and consistently within the bylaws.

Section 3. Administration

The property, business and corporate affairs of the chapter shall be managed by the Board of Directors. The executive and administrative powers of the chapter shall be vested in the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall supervise and manage the chapter and its committees and publications. It shall determine the chapter policies and/or any changes therein. The Board of Directors shall carry forward the chapter and Society objective and monitor the disbursements of the chapter's funds. The Board of Directors adopts such policies for the conduct of business as shall be deemed advisable.

Section 4. Functions

In addition to the Administrative functions, the Board of Directors shall:

- a) Carry forward the Society's objectives
- b) Manage the business and fiscal affairs of the chapter
- c) Monitor the income and disbursement of funds
- d) Appoint chairs of elected committees and appoint members and chairs of non-elected committees
- e) Act as a liaison between the chapter and the university
- f) Ensure appropriate eligibility process for selection of candidates for membership
- g) Ensures that the chapter fulfills the requirements to maintain good standing in the Society

Section 5. Meetings

- a) The Board of Directors of this chapter shall meet as necessary to conduct the business of the chapter between meetings of the general membership
- b) Three (3) members of the Board of Directors who are non-officers together with four (4) members of the Board of Directors who are officers shall constitute a quorum. The Board of Directors may be polled electronically to obtain a quorum.

Section 6. Removing a Board Member

A member of the Board of Directors who demonstrates behavior, as determined by the Board of Directors, that is not consistent with the mission, values or experiences of the honor society may be removed by three fourths (3/4) vote of the remaining members of the board, provided that notice of intent to take such action is given to all board members at least 30 days in advance of the regular or special meeting at which the motions to remove is introduced. Such board member shall have the right to be present and to speak on his/her behalf, but shall not be allowed to be present during deliberation nor to vote. Voting shall be by ballot, which may not be delivered electronically if a face to face meeting is not possible.

Article VIII. Officers

Section 1. Titles

The officers of this chapter are required to be regular members of Sigma Theta Tau International. The officers of this chapter shall be: president, president-elect (optional), vice president, secretary, and treasurer.

Section 2. Duties

The duties of the officers shall be as follows:

- a) The officers of the chapter shall constitute the Board of Directors of the chapter
- b) The president shall be the presiding officer and shall administer all business of the chapter as provided for by the bylaws. The President serves as chief representative of the chapter in inter-chapter activities.
- c) The president-elect (optional) shall succeed into the presidency at the end of the term of office.
- d) The vice president shall perform the duties of the president in the president's absence. In the event of the president vacating office during the term, the vice president shall succeed into the presidency until the president-elect or a newly elected president assumes office. The vice president serves on the Program Committee.
- e) The secretary shall prepare and distribute meeting minutes and correspondence. The secretary shall maintain an accurate email data base of the chapter members for electronic communication.
- f) The treasurer shall be the custodian of the funds of this chapter and may be bonded in an amount equal to three-fourths (3/4) of the worth of the chapter.
- g) Each officer shall submit a report at each Board of Directors meeting, to members at the annual business meeting and assist in preparing the Chapter Annual Report form for submission to Sigma Theta Tau International Headquarters.

Article IX. Elections

Section 1. Elections

Elections shall be held at the annual business meeting or by electronic/postal mail ballot. Those elected shall assume their duties by July 1 of the year in which they were elected.

Section 2. Positions

Elected positions shall be the five (5) officers, Governance Committee, Leadership Succession and Faculty Counselor.

Section 3. Vote

- a) A majority vote shall elect officers
- b) A plurality vote shall elect the non-officer members of the Board of Directors and elected committee members
- c) In the event of a tie, the election shall be determined by lot

Section 4. Terms

- a) The length of term for all officers shall be two (2) years, or until their successors are elected. Officer directors may serve for a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms. An exception is the president-elect who may serve a maximum of four (4) terms on the Board of Directors.
- b) Terms of office are staggered so that all officers, directors and Nominating committee members do not end their terms at the same time. President-elect (optional), secretary, one counselor and one member of the nominating committee are elected in the even numbered years and vice president, treasurer, counselor and two (2) members of the nominating committee are elected in odd-numbered years. Proviso: If a two year term for president-elect is not possible, the president-elect may hold office for one year and succeed to president for two (2) years.

- c) Members shall hold no more than one elected office at a time.
- d) A member holding an elected position who has served more than half a term in that position is considered to have served a full term

Article X. Committees

Section 1. Standing Committees

The standing committees shall be Governance Committee, Leadership Succession Committee, Eligibility Committee (Faculty Counselor), Program Committee, Research Committee and additional standing committees as appointed by the Board of Directors as deemed appropriate.

Section 2. Governance

- a) The governance committee shall provide chapter bylaw oversight and oversee bylaw compliance. The committee shall make recommendations for bylaws changes and oversee member and chapter eligibility issues.
- b) The governance committee shall consist of at least three (3) elected members including the chairperson
- c) The governance committee shall post the chapter's bylaws on the chapter website for Sigma Theta Tau.

Section 3. Leadership Succession

- a) The Leadership Succession committee shall secure the consent to serve, prepare the ballot and send it to the Board of Directors at least four (4) weeks prior to the election.
- b) The Leadership Succession committee shall consist of at least three (3) elected members including the chairperson
- c) The Leadership Succession Committee shall be ineligible for any elected office on the ballot prepared by the committee

Section 4. Eligibility Committee (Faculty Counselor)

- a) The eligibility committee shall be responsible for publicizing the opportunity for membership, accepting and reviewing membership materials and recommending eligible members to the Board of Directors and to the membership.
- b) The eligibility committee shall consist of at least three (3) elected members including the chairperson
- c) A member of the Governance Committee is an ex-officio member of the eligibility committee

Section 5. Program Committee

- a) The Program Committee shall be responsible for the programs of the chapter including the induction ceremony and two scholarly programs annually
- b) The Vice President shall chair the program Committee and the committee shall include up to three appointed members

Section 6. Research Committee

- a) The Research committee shall review proposals for Theta Kappa Research grants and make recommendations to the Board of Directors. This committee shall also serve as a liaison to other Sigma Theta Tau Chapters for research activities. Membership of this committee shall consist of a minimum of three (3) appointed doctoral, masters and/or baccalaureate prepared individuals

Section 7. Task Forces

- a) Task Forces are formed to complete an assigned task within a specified time frame
- b) Task Forces are formed by the Board of Directors or Standing Committees. They are comprised of members who bring expertise, interest and commitment to complete an assigned task
- c) The term of a special Task Force ends at the completion of the charge and the presentation of the committee's report

Article XI. Finance

Section 1. Fiscal Year

The fiscal years shall be July 1 through June 30.

Section 2. Chapter fees and Assessments

- a) An annual fee shall be collected from each chapter each fiscal year. The fee will be based on the number of regular members excluding inactive members in the chapter for the prior membership year ending June 30
- b) The House of Delegates may levy special assessments by a three-fourths vote

Section 3. Fees

- a) Membership fee: Each member shall pay an annual fee to maintain active member benefits
- b) Each new member shall pay a society induction fee and a chapter induction fee as determined by the chapter bylaws. This shall entitle the new member to active membership with all its benefits from the date of induction for one year to the member's anniversary date of induction. The current chapter induction fee is \$20.
- c) Fee schedule adjustments shall not occur more than once a biennium and shall not exceed the cumulative Consumer Price Index (CPI) percentage rate.
- d) Chapter and Society fees are collected by Sigma Theta Tau International

Section 4. Honorary Membership fee

There shall be no induction or renewal fee for an honorary member.

Section 5. Expenses

Authorized expenses shall be reimbursed by the Treasurer.

Article XII. Official Publication

The official publication of Sigma Theta Tau International is the Journal of Nursing Scholarship and a subscription is included with membership fee.

Article XIII. Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the 10th edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the chapter in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws or special rules of order of the Society.

Article XIV

Amendments to the Sigma Theta Tau International bylaws approved by the House of Delegates or editorial changes approved by the Board of Directors are also applicable to the chapter bylaws.

Section 1. Amendments with notice

These bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the membership by a three-fourths "yes" vote of members present and voting. Proposed amendments must be in the hands of the chapter secretary forty-five (45) days before the date of the meeting and shall be sent to the chapter members thirty (30) days prior to the meeting.

Section 2. Amendments without notice

These bylaws may be amended by the unanimous vote of the members present and voting at any scheduled meeting without previous notice

Section 3. Chapter bylaw posting

The chapter bylaws shall be posted on the Theta Kappa web page hosted by Sigma Theta Tau International.

Article XV. Dissolution

The process for dissolution of the Theta Kappa Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth shall be conducted in accordance with the policies and procedures for chapter dissolution established by Sigma Theta Tau International.

Updated February, 2011

