The Sigma
Chapter Development Process: How to Start a Chapter

Presented by:

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Objectives

• Learn the requirements to begin the Sigma developing honor society and chapter development process
• Understand the timeline and process for applying for chapter charter status
What Is a Sigma Chapter?

• A chapter is an organized group of nurse students and nurse leaders who meet Sigma Theta Tau International’s eligibility standards
  – one school----- 90% of chapters
  – many schools
  – school(s) and practice settings
• Prior to becoming a chapter, the group is called either:
  – developing honor society
  – at-large developing honor society

NOTE: Although Sigma provides support and resources to the developing honor society, the honor society is not legally affiliated with Sigma until after the chapter charter application has been approved AND the official chartering ceremony has taken place.
Why Form an Sigma Chapter

• Student engagement opportunities

• Ongoing professional learning

• Recognition of student and nurse leader excellence

• School visibility through society publications and within academic community
Why Form an Sigma Chapter

Most Cited Reason:

Networking with a global community of nurses
Where Can a New Chapter Be Formed

- 1 school (Institute of Higher Education)
- 2 or more schools
- 1 or more schools and 1 or more practice settings
Where Have Chapters Been Formed

- More than 530 chapters
- On more than 750 college & university campuses and 3 practice settings
- In 30 countries
Who Can Form A Sigma Chapter

A group of nursing students or professional nurses who qualify for membership in Sigma

• Can be non-members while forming and operating as a developing honor society

• Need university’s permission
What Are the Requirement to Start

**Colleges and Universities**
- Accredited nursing programs
- Baccalaureate degree or higher
- Support for an Sigma chapter from the institution of higher education and the educational unit with the nursing program

**Practice Settings**
- Defined as where care is provided by registered nurse
- Employ nurses with a BSN degree (or equivalent) or higher.
- Accredited facilities
- Support for an Sigma chapter from the administration and chief nursing officials, including collaboration with the college or university
How To Form A New Chapter

Complete the tasks outlined within the six phases of development to learn, grow, apply and transition into a successful and sustainable chapter.

1. Inquiry
2. Formation of nursing honor society
3. Operation as nursing honor society
4. Application submission and review
5. Chapter Designate
6. New chapter
How To Form A New Chapter

Phase 1

Module 1.1: Inquiry

• Create an account within STTI’s new chapter development portal
• Submit a consult request form and complete preliminary information
• Consult with staff (Ask questions!)
• Understand what STTI expects of developing honor societies and chapters
• Discern whether or not a viable and sustainable chapter can be formed.
• Share chapter development information with appropriate colleagues and university officials
How To Form A New Chapter
Phase 2: Formation of an Honor Society

• Module 2.1: Board of Directors Orientation
  – Learn about and adopt the Sigma bylaws for developing honor societies
  – Attend webinars to learn about BOD roles & responsibilities and how to create basic policies and procedures
• Module 2.2: Goal Setting and Planning for Programming and Member Benefits
  – Learn about setting DHS goals and planning for programs and member benefits
  – Discuss budgeting, set membership dues, and create the first fiscal year budget
• Module 2.3: Understanding and Implementing Sigma’s Membership Eligibility Requirements
  – Understand the Sigma membership eligibility requirements and how the DHS will utilize the requirements
• Module 2.4: Preparing Communications
  – Develop a plan for communicating with prospective members and DHS members
• Module 2.5: Member Recruitment and Prospective Member Meeting
  – Promote the DHS
  – Hold an information meeting for prospective members
How to Form A New Chapter

Phase 3: Operation as an Honor Society

• Module 3.1: Planning and Holding Inductions
  – Plan and hold the first DHS induction ceremony

• Module 3.2: Conducting Programs and Member Engagement
  – Conduct a new member orientation and new member surveys
  – Evaluate programs conducted and decide what programs the DHS will hold in the next two years

• Module 3.3: Budgeting for Fiscal Years 2 and 3
  – Review FY 1 budget and evaluate programs and events that were conducted
  – Work on budget and strategic plan for FY 2 and 3

• Module 3.4: Annual Business Meeting, Officer Elections, and Officer Transitions
  – Learn about the election process and plan for future elections. Discuss leadership transitions
  – Conduct annual business meeting

• Module 3.5: Renewals
  – Complete a renewal cycle
When Is A Group Ready to Apply

Phase 3

Minimum milestones to be met before submission

• One year or more from date of first induction
• Bylaws adopted
• Goals/strategic plan and budgets in place
• 50+ active members
• 12 months’ worth of funds available to cover operating expenses
• Adequate funds to send required delegates to first convention
• 2 or more programs/activities that fulfill purposes of Sigma each year
• At least 1 business meeting each year
• 1 or more inductions each year
• One annual renewal cycle
• Positive, welcoming member experience

Applications due:
15 February
or
15 June
How to Submit Application

Phase 4

• Electronic Portal – NEW Sept 2017
  o Structured process for completing required process and tasks
  o Frequent, regular direction from staff
  o Application is completed as you complete required tasks within electronic portal
  o Final application information is reviewed with staff and submitted when all required milestones are met

No more paper applications!!
When Can A Group Apply

Phase 4
• Module 4:1: Application Submission & Review

Meet with staff to discuss readiness to finalize & submit application

Respond to any clarification requests from reviewers

Continue to operate as a developing honor society

Schedule to meet with staff to review the “Anticipating Approval” presentation

Schedule to meet with staff for the notification of final vote results by the Sigma Board of Directors
What Reviewers Want to See

#11 Appropriate accreditation(s)

#10 Appropriate use of Sigma membership eligibility requirements and appropriate recruitment practices

# 9 Operation per bylaws requirements for a year or more

# 8 More than 50 active, dues-paying members

# 7 2 or more programs offered per year
   – Meet Sigma mission & values
   – Provide value and perceived as worthwhile by the member
   – Planned for the benefit of MEMBERS, not the School of Nursing overall
   – Variety— to meet interests and professional needs of all member types
What Reviewers Want to See

# 6 Reasonable fees, realistic revenue projections and expenditures, and adequate funds for operations and sending delegates to House of Delegates sessions at convention

# 5 Appropriate use of bylaws
   - current honor society template
   - required leadership roles in place

# 4 Letters of support (dated less than one year old)
   - University/college administration
   - School/department of nursing

# 3 Written history reflects honor society’s development

#2 Supporting documentation

#1 Evidence the honor society will be a viable & sustainable chapter
Phase 5: Chapter Designate

- Application has been approved
- Official paperwork is completed
- Chapter name is assigned
- Transitional trainings are held for chapter leaders
- Plans & details are finalized for official chartering ceremony
- Chartering officer is assigned to preside over chartering ceremony
- Official chartering ceremony occurs
How Long Will This Process Take?
Average overall timeline to become a chapter = 18 months - 3 years

• Phases 1 & 2 (Inquiry & Formation of Honor Society)
  – Preparations & planning before planning first induction (average = 6 - 12 months)

• Phase 3 (Operation as Honor Society)
  – Operating as an honor society (average = 12 - 18 months)

• Phase 4 (Application Submission and Review)
  – Application prep (average = 2 - 4 weeks)
  – Review (average = 4 months)

• Phase 5 (approved Chapter Designate)
  – chartering ceremony planning (minimum 12 weeks / average 16 – 20 weeks)

• Phase 6 (NEW CHAPTER)
Phase 6: New Chapter!!

- Transition from honor society to official chapter

- New chapter support from Sigma headquarters staff for 2 years

“All you need is the plan, the road map, and the courage to press on to your destination.”

Earl Nightingale
Questions?

• Consultation Request Form
  • Sigma Website
    • https://webportalapp.com/sp/sigma

• Email
  • developinghs@stti.org

• Phone
  • 888.634.7575 (US/Canada toll-free)
  • +1.317.634.8171 (International)