



## *Bylaws for Phi Alpha Theta-Sigma Zeta Chapter*

### **Phi Alpha Theta Mission Statement**

“We are a professional society whose mission is to promote the study of history through the encouragement of research, good teaching, publication, and the exchange of learning and ideas among historians. We seek to bring students and teachers together for intellectual and social exchanges, which promote and assist historical research and publication by our members in a variety of ways.”

### **Article I: Organization name**

This organization shall be recognized as the Sigma Zeta chapter of Phi Alpha Theta.

### **Article II: Compliance with Phi Alpha Theta National Honor Society**

The Sigma Zeta chapter of Phi Alpha Theta will maintain compliance with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Phi Alpha Theta National Honor Society.

### **Article III: Compliance with Texas State University**

The Sigma Zeta chapter of Phi Alpha Theta will comply with all policies and procedures of Texas State University and with the guidelines established by Texas State University for student organizations.

### **Article IV: Statement of Purpose for Sigma Zeta Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta**

The goal of Sigma Zeta chapter of Phi Alpha Theta is to encourage academic excellence and professional development in the study of history at Texas State University- San Marcos.

### **Article V: Membership**

#### **Section 1: Requirements for Membership**

The Sigma Zeta Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta will abide by the requirements for membership set forth in the constitution of Phi Alpha Theta National Honor Society.

Section 2:     Dues and Fees

Fees will be assessed to incoming members and will include the cost required by the constitution of Phi Alpha Theta National Honor Society to join the National Honor Society as well as the fees for the New Member Induction Ceremony conducted by the Sigma Zeta Chapter.

Section 3:     Membership Transfers

Those members who became members of Phi Alpha Theta National Honor Society through another chapter must transfer their membership in accordance with the constitution of Phi Alpha Theta National Honor Society.

Section 4:     Recruitment of New Members

Membership recruitment drives will be held each semester. Applicants are required to provide the necessary documentation, pay dues, and meet the requirements outlined in Article VI: Sections 1 and 2 to become members.

Section 5:     Members in Good Standing of the Sigma Zeta Chapter

Only those members who are currently enrolled in Texas State University will be considered members in good standing of the Sigma Zeta Chapter. Past members, those who joined the Sigma Zeta chapter but who are no longer enrolled at Texas State University, are still considered members in good standing of the National Honor Society, but are no longer eligible to petition the board or faculty advisor, or attend the chapter's general meeting without approval of the board.

Section 6:     Removal of Members from Organization

Members who violate the organization's bylaws may be subject to removal from the organization. The board must vote on the removal of members and approve removal by a two-thirds majority.

## **Article VI: The Executive Board**

### Section 1: Composition:

The board will be comprised of five officers (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and historian), board members, and the chapter's faculty advisor. The board will be no larger than twelve voting members (including the faculty advisor in the event of a tie) and no less than the five officers.

### Section 2: Requirements:

Executive board members will be required to attend the annual new member induction, each semester's general membership meeting, a minimum of two Brown Bags each semester, and the chapter's academic history conference if one is held. Incoming boards are also strongly encouraged to select other events, which will be mandatory and/or create a system through which each event held by the chapter is attended by at least two members of the board.

### Section 3:

#### Qualifications for Officers:

All candidates for officer positions must be members in good standing of the Sigma Zeta Chapter and must remain members in good standing of the Sigma Zeta Chapter for the duration of their term. Candidates for the office of president must have successfully completed one term as an officer. Candidates for the office of vice president must have successfully completed one semester as a member of the board. Candidates for the offices of president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer must be graduate students. At least one executive officer must be involved in the public history graduate program and one executive officer must be a graduate student who is not involved in the public history program. In the event that no candidates meet these qualifications, the outgoing executive officers will meet with the chapter faculty advisor in order to select suitable candidates.

Section 4:

Terms of Office for Officers:

The term of office for officers will be one academic year to begin the day after the Induction Ceremony and to end the day of the following year's Induction Ceremony. With approval of the Board, an officer may serve additional semesters. With the vote of approval of the board the President can serve one additional semester.

Section 5:

Duties

*President* – The president serves as the chair of all chapter meetings and board meetings. With the aid of the board, the president appoints committee chairs as needed, assigns tasks and duties of board members, creates and promotes the chapter's calendar each semester, and ensures that all functions are properly staffed. The president also serves as liaison to the faculty advisor and other faculty members and is the final reviewer for all new member applications. The President, with the Treasurer and Faculty Advisor, creates a projected budget for the academic year.

*Vice President* – The vice-president chairs chapter meetings, events and board meetings in the absence of the president; coordinates the chapter's new member recruitment process, chairs the new member induction committee, and ensures that items such as membership certificates have been secured from the Phi Alpha Theta National Honor Society; reviews all membership applications and submits them to the president for approval; verifies all membership transfers. Should the office of the president be vacated mid-term, the vice-president will assume the role of president with the approval of a majority of the executive officers and faculty advisor.

*Secretary* – The secretary maintains all non-financial chapter records, to include a log of minutes. These records include but are not limited to the chapter's general membership list; notifies applicants of the status of their application after review by the president and vice-president; maintains records of chapter activities and records minutes for all board meetings and general meetings.

*Treasurer* – The treasurer with the President and Faculty Advisor creates a projected budget for each academic year, maintains the chapter's financial records supervises the execution of the chapter budget; collects payments for all events and ensures that they are deposited in the chapter account in a timely fashion; supervises applications for funding and works to secure new funding sources

as needed; advises the president and board to ensure that the chapter is in compliance with any requirements requested by those who have agreed to provide the chapter with funds. The treasurer prepares and submits to the board regular financial reports once a month.

*Historian* – The historian promotes chapter events, maintains avenues for promotion including bulletin boards and social media outlets, and documents all chapter events or arranges for someone else to do so.

*Board Members* – Board members are selected by the chapter’s executive officers as needed. Board members perform duties as assigned by the president with the approval of the officers. The term of service for board members is one semester. Each board member is responsible for compiling all of their records and submits them to the vice president who will archive them.

Section 6:     Appointment of the Officers

One month prior to the New Member Induction Ceremony, the executive board will propose a slate of officers for the following academic year. They will make this slate public and provide two weeks for the chapter’s membership to review. During this period, members in good standing of the Sigma Zeta Chapter may address any concerns to the faculty advisor in writing. The faculty advisor will review any concerns and bring them to the attention of the board. Together, the executive board and the faculty advisor will determine what changes, if any, should be made. If at the end of two weeks the faculty advisor has not notified the executive board of any objections, the slate of officers will be approved and the new officers will be introduced during the New Member Induction Ceremony.

Section 7:     Removal of Officers and Board Members

If an officer fails to perform their duties as outlined in these bylaws or as determined by the board, a minimum of two officers may petition the advisor to investigate the member in question. If the advisor finds that the officer or board member in question has indeed failed in their duties, the advisor may bring this petition to the board. The board, excluding the officer or member in question, will review the petition. The board will then vote via secret ballot to determine if the officer or board member in question should be removed from their position.

Board Meetings

Section 8:

Board meetings are closed meetings; however, the board may invite members in good standing of the Sigma Zeta Chapter to attend. Similarly, members in good standing of the Sigma Zeta Chapter may petition the board to attend individual meetings and may participate in debate if a member of the board is willing to yield them time as needed. If the board denies a member in good standing of the Sigma Zeta Chapter the ability to petition the board, that member may appeal to the faculty advisor, who has the right to overrule the board's decision and allow the member to participate in debate. Only members of the board can vote during board meetings unless the vote is deadlocked, in which case the advisor may vote to break the deadlock. While guests may be invited to attend meetings or participate in debate, non-board members will be excused before the voting process begins.

Section 9: Occurrence of Board Meetings

Board meetings will occur at least once a month during the academic year and should be scheduled at a regular time and location as part of the calendaring process. Members must be given a minimum one-week notice if the time or location of a board meeting changes.

Section 10: Voting Procedure

All decisions made by the executive board should be made democratically. Any board member may request that the board take a formal vote regarding any decision. Similarly, any member of the board may request the use of secret ballots during this voting process. All decisions must enjoy the support of fifty one percent of the board except for alterations to the chapter bylaws. A two-thirds majority of the board must approve changes made to the chapter by-laws.

Section 11: Quorum

A quorum of the executive board will consist of two-thirds of the board rounded down. Votes that require a quorum of board members are as follows: alterations to chapter bylaws, approval of the annual budget, and authorization of each semester's calendar.

Section 12: Rules for Discussion and Debate

*Discussion* - The action or process of talking about an issue that does not require a vote. Discussion is intended to be an

informative exchange of ideas to ensure that every member of the board understands the issue being discussed.

*Debate* - A formal discussion pertaining to an item on which the executive board is voting, such as the annual budget and events for each semester's calendar. Any officer may call for debate to begin on an issue at any time. The president will formally announce the beginning and conclusion of debate. Unless otherwise voted on by the executive board, debate pertaining to each issue will last no longer than 30 minutes and all members will be allowed the opportunity to speak once during the debate before any member is allowed to speak twice.

## **Article VII: Advisors**

### Section 1: The Faculty Advisor

The duties of the faculty advisor of the Sigma Zeta chapter will comply with those outlined in the Phi Alpha Theta Faculty Advisors' Manual.

### Section 2: Other Advisors

The immediate past president may serve in an informal advisory capacity as President Emeritus at the request of the majority of the board and the consent of the faculty advisor. The president emeritus may attend board meetings and participate in discussion, but may not vote or participate in debate. If the President Emeritus is a member in good standing of the Sigma Zeta Chapter, the President Emeritus enjoys all the rights and privileges that status entails.

## **Article VIII: Budget**

### Section 1: Creation of the Annual Budget

The president and treasurer will work with the faculty advisor to create a projected budget for each academic year. This budget will include all expenditures including events, operating costs, and chapter obligations. All incoming funds and membership fees will be determined as part of the budgeting process. Dues assessed to new members will be reviewed annually and will be modified to reflect the new member fees required by Phi Alpha Theta National Honor Society and any expenses incurred by the chapter during the New Member Induction Ceremony.

Section 2:     Budget Approval Process

The board must have a quorum when voting on the annual budget and a majority of fifty-one percent of the board must approve the annual budget.

Section 3:     Budget Presentation

The budget will be presented during the first general membership meeting of the academic year.

**Article IX: General Meeting and Events**

Section 1:     Creation of Calendars

Prior to the start of the fall semester the board will create a calendar of events for the fall semester and schedule dates for the New Member Induction Ceremony to be held in the spring semester. The board will create a calendar of events for the spring academic semester not later than December 1<sup>st</sup>. If the board determines to hold an annual academic history conference, the date must be set prior to end of the previous academic year in order to ensure that the chapter has enough time to publicize the conference. Required events are outlined in Article XI of these bylaws, as are recommendations for other events.

Section 2:     Calendar Presentation

Each semester's events will be presented during general membership meetings during the first month of each academic semester.

Section 2:     Calendar Approval Process

The board must have a quorum when voting on each semester's calendar and a majority of fifty-one percent of the board must approve each semester's calendar.

Section 3:     General Membership Meetings

A general membership meeting will be held during the first four weeks of each academic semester (not including Summer Session). At the general membership meeting, the president and board will introduce themselves and present the annual budget and that semester's calendar. General meetings will be open to all members

in good standing of the Sigma Zeta Chapter. General meetings will also provide members with an opportunity to volunteer for service opportunities within the organization. When are general members notified of the meeting times through the chapter's social media outlets (Facebook or similar) no less than two weeks prior to the meeting

Section 2:      Required Events

The chapter will hold at least two Brown Bag lectures each semester (not including Summer Session), as well as a New Member Induction Ceremony during the Spring Semester, in order to meet National Phi Alpha Theta requirements.

Section 3:      Other Events

It is strongly suggested that the board create a series of social and professional events to better serve the chapter's members. These events can include, but are not limited to, workshops/symposia, information sessions, movie nights, guest lectures, and a Fall Harvest Party. Boards are strongly encouraged to consider including these events and to develop new events that will appeal to chapter members. Events are considered organizational events if they are promoted by the organization through social media, posters, TRACS, or other official organizational communication channels.

**Article X: Behavioral Standards**

Section 1:      Adherence to the Law

Phi Alpha Theta Sigma Zeta chapter expects all members to obey local, state, and federal laws in order to maintain membership in the chapter. If a member is charged with a criminal offence, they may be subject to removal from the chapter according to the procedure outlined in Article V, Section 6 of the bylaws.

Section 2:      Adherence to the Texas State Student Code of Conduct

Phi Alpha Theta Sigma Zeta chapter expects all members to adhere to the Texas State University Student Code of Conduct, available on the Texas State University website. Members who violate the Student Code of Conduct may be subject to removal from the chapter according to the procedure outlined in Article V, Section 6 of the bylaws.

Section 3:     Alcohol

The organization may hold events where alcohol is provided or accessible. Members may only consume alcohol at organizational events if they are of the legal drinking age of twenty-one years old. Members may not drive to, from, or during organizational events while intoxicated above the legal Blood Alcohol Content of .08% according to State of Texas law. While Phi Alpha Theta may host events where alcohol is accessible, the organization does not encourage consuming alcohol beyond the CDC recommended amounts, available at <https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/index.htm>. Members violating these standards may be subject to removal from the chapter according to the procedure outlined in Article V, Section 6 of the bylaws.

Section 4:     Hazing

Phi Alpha Theta Sigma Zeta chapter forbids hazing by any member of the organization. Hazing is considered “any intentional, or reckless act, occurring on or off the campus of an educational institution by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are or include students at Texas State University.” Members engaging in hazing may be subject to removal from the chapter according to the procedure outlined in Article V, Section 6 of the bylaws.

Section 5:     Sexual Misconduct

Phi Alpha Theta Sigma Zeta chapter forbids sexual misconduct by members against any person. Members may not engage in any behaviors considered sexual misconduct according to Title IX and the Texas State University System Sexual Misconduct Policy, found at <http://www.txstate.edu/oea/Sexual-Misconduct--Title-IX-/TSUS-Sexual-Misconduct-Policy.html>. Members who violate this clause may be subject to removal from the chapter according to the procedure outlined in Article V, Section 6 of the bylaws.

Section 6:     Whistleblower Protection

Phi Alpha Theta Sigma Zeta chapter will not retaliate against any member reporting illegal activities or violations of the

organization's bylaws to appropriate authorities. The organization cannot guarantee protection from university actions.

## **Article XI: Bylaw Approval and Amendment**

### Section 1: Amending the Bylaws

Bylaw amendments may be presented to members in good standing of the Sigma Zeta chapter following the approval of two thirds of the board.

### Section 2: Approving and Amending the Bylaws

The executive board will publicly announce bylaw amendments and provide two weeks for the chapter's membership to review. During this period, members in good standing of the Sigma Zeta Chapter may address any concerns with the bylaws to the executive board. At the end of two weeks (336 hours), if any objections have been made, the executive board will hold a special meeting in which all members of the Sigma Zeta chapter can discuss and debate the proposed bylaw amendments. This discussion and debate should be no longer than one hour and all members will be allowed the opportunity to speak once during the debate before any member is allowed to speak twice. At the end of this period of discussion and debate, all members in good standing will be allowed to vote on the proposed bylaw amendments by secret ballot. There must be a quorum of the executive board at this meeting and amendments must be approved by two-thirds of the members present. Bylaw amendments will go into effect immediately after then are approved. Votes must be publicly counted and all members should have an opportunity to review them.

If no members in good standing present objections in writing to the executive board the bylaw amendments will take effect the day following the two week review period (336 hours).