

ΣΚΩ Initiation Ceremony

History:

The initiation ceremony was written in 2001 by Kara McIntyre, founding mother. In Spring 2010, sisters of the Beta chapter felt as though the ceremonies should remain as special for incoming members as they were for them. Because of this, the initiation ceremony was rewritten by Sister Krystina Christiansen in 2011 to be updated, extended and more thorough. On February 5, 2012 sisters Katie Lorton, Gloria Sanchez, Jessica Gomez, Whitney Simmons, Tasha Wilson, Mystique Hammett and Amanda Gunn revised the Initiation Ceremony along with Krystina Christiansen to accommodate the new ideals of Sigma Kappa Omega.

Items Needed:

- Purple rose (for each new member)
- Lavalier (for each new member)
- Crest
- Wooden “S”, “I”, “G”, “M” and “A”
- Table
- Recording of “Sigma Bonds” (“The Rose” Instrumental)
- Active member pins (if available)
- Alter
- Purple Cloth
- Purple tape for star
- Five candles for each point of the star
- Book for New Members to sign
- Candles for each new member

Dress Code: Pledges in all white, no make-up, no nail polish and no jewelry with the exception of engagement rings. Actives are expected to be in purple, silver and/or black. Any sisters who do not abide by the dress code will be asked to leave the ceremony. No exceptions will be made.

Speaking parts:

Sigma 1-5

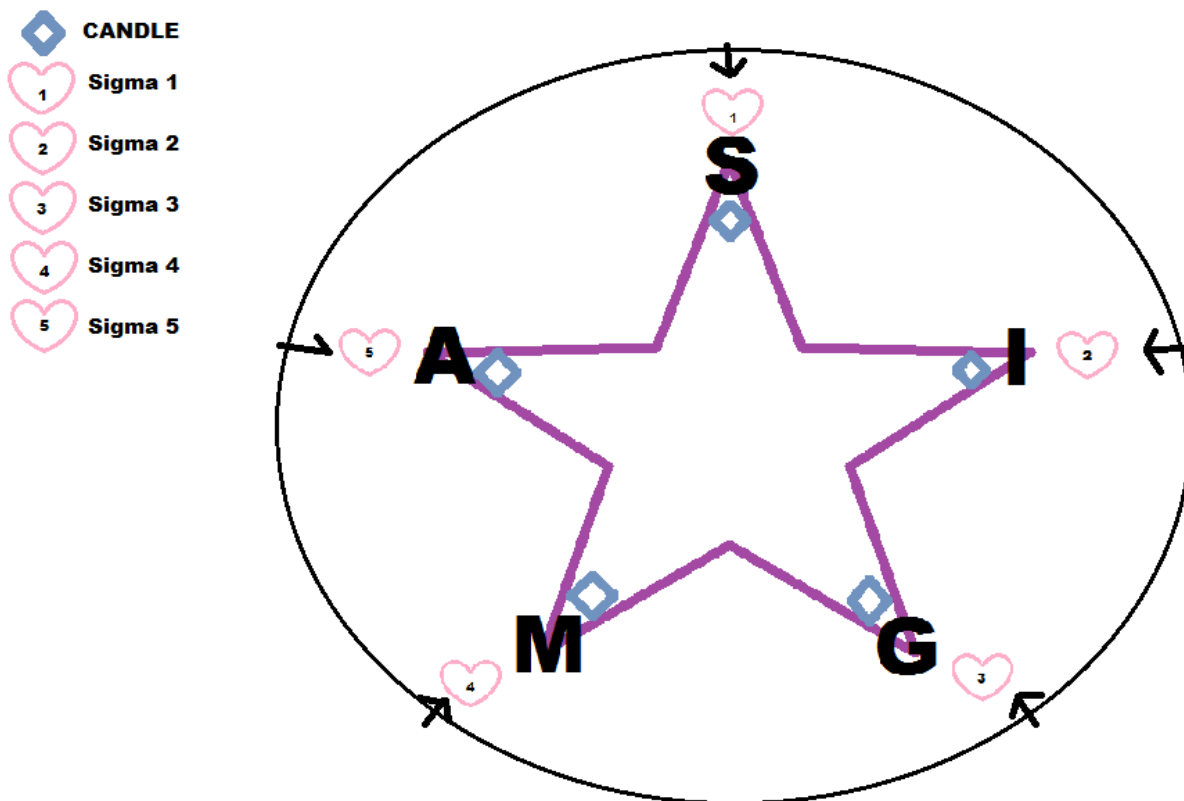
President

Pledge Educator(s)

Parliamentarian

Eldest Member

Initiation Set-Up



Set Up:

Sisterhood is to stand on the outside of the star facing in.

Sigma 1 through 5 should be at their stations

Sigma 1: Sisterhood

Sigma 2: Integrity

Sigma 3: Growth

Sigma 4: Magnanimity

Sigma 5: Acceptance

New members are to be lined up outside of ritual door in alphabetic order. Leading them will be their pledge educator(s).

RITUAL:

Sigma Kappa Omega knock-exchange

Parliamentarian: “Who seeks entrance to the ceremony of Sigma Kappa Omega?”

Pledge Educator: “The guide(s) of sisterhood.”

Music starts

Door opens

Pledge Educator(s) and Parliamentarian embrace with Sigma Kappa Omega official handshake.

Each new member will walk in one after the other being led in by the pledge educator(s).

The pledge educator is to have a lit candle.

The new member candles (lit) are to be held by each big sister within the “sisterhood circle”.

New members are led to stand back to back facing the outside of the star.

Pledge educator(s) then joins the sisterhood on the outside of the star.

The big sister(s) will then hand their little sister(s) their candle and join the rest of the sisterhood in the outer circle.

Pledge Educator: “Sisters, these women, who have accepted the fellowship we offer, now present themselves for admission into our sisterhood. They are ready to receive instruction in the solemn and irrevocable pledges which they are about to take.”

President: It is fitting that you receive instruction in these pledges, so laden with responsibility and fertile in opportunity. They bring to you, life-long relations of friendship and sisterhood, with duties you will not easily avoid, and with privileges you can receive on no other terms. This Sorority will serve as your college home; those who dwell here will be your sisters, your counselors and your protectors. Their influence will help to mold your character and your future. You rightly ask much of a sisterhood to which you give yourselves without impediment or reserve. They rightly ask of you not to surrender yourselves without full realization of the meaning and finality of the pledges you are to take.

Before proceeding to such instruction, however, it will first be necessary to make certain preliminary declarations.

Pledge Educator: Do you on your honor declare that you are members of no college sorority, and are pledged to none but this? If so, answer “I do” after your name is called.

Then the Pledge Educator shall read each name, to which the candidate shall reply: I do.

Pledge Educator: Do you also on your honor declare that you entertain no sentiment toward any member of this Chapter that would prevent you from maintaining cordial and sisterly relations with her? If so, answer “I do” after your name is called.

Then the Pledge Educator shall read the names as before, to which each candidate shall reply: I do.

President: Of those who would enter our Sorority we ask two things – that they know our ideals, and that they pledge themselves to help us realize those ideals. We have instructed you in the history and the principles of our sisterhood. When our founders began to write the purposes of Sigma Kappa Omega, they did so based on the ideals of true sisterhood and true multicultural experience in which the advancement of leadership, social and academic skills are encouraged while providing an environment in which its members can mature and grow as collegiate women serving the community.

Their vision was to create an organization of collegiate women, unequivocally committed to providing a sense of true universal sisterhood that holds high standards of women and excellence in academics while still maintaining the upmost respect for the true meaning of Sigma Kappa Omega.

“New member(s), we welcome you to the initiation ceremony of Sigma Kappa Omega.

Sigma’s please step forward and light your candle to represent the now fully lit path to sisterhood.”

Sigma 1: *Light candle and say “Sisterhood”*

Sigma 2: *Light candle and say “Integrity”*

Sigma 3: *Light candle and say “Growth”*

Sigma 4: *Light candle and say “Magnanimity”*

Sigma 5: *Light candle and say “Acceptance”*

Educator: Sigma Kappa Omega is a social organization operating exclusively for collegiate women committed to promoting diversity and the ideals of life-long friendship, intellectual and spiritual fulfillment and service for the greater good.

Sigma Kappa Omega is honored to have you join, just as you are honored by our invitation. By becoming a member of our sorority, you are obligated to uphold the high standards and ideals.

President:

“Sisters in Sigma Kappa Omega, you have unanimously elected these women to membership in our Sorority (read names).

Before proceeding to their initiation, however, it is fitting that we should examine once more our own hearts. In a sisterhood such as ours, a close and lasting friendship must unite all its members, creating such an intimate and permanent influence as shall mold them to a rounded type of womanhood. Our past is secure; our future depends upon our vigilance. We must jealously guard against any who may disturb the harmony of our fraternal life, against any whose presence may lower our standards or becloud our ideals.

Therefore, will the members of our chapter please rise/step forward? * I now challenge each of you in the name of Sigma Kappa Omega: Does any sister know any reason why any of these candidates should not be received into the fellowship of our Sorority?

Your silence makes it your duty to remove from your minds all prejudice or feelings, which might hinder the discharge of any sisterly obligation. I therefore charge you so to rule your thought and conduct that, in all of your future relations with these women, nothing should mar the trust and sisterly affection, which should ever exist between you. Please be seated.

“New member(s), please repeat after me.

I, of my own free will and accord,

in the presence of the sisters

of Sigma Kappa Omega

do hereby solemnly declare

that the ideals of this Sorority,

as they have been explained to me,

accord entirely with my own views.

I solemnly promise that as an active member of this Sorority,

I will faithfully adhere to those ideals

endeavoring in every way to perfect myself morally,

intellectually and socially.

Finally, I promise

to act towards others according to the high standard

of conduct required by the Sorority.

I solemnly promise

that I will be loyal to Sigma Kappa Omega

and to the _____ chapter,

abiding by their rules,

accepting my obligations to them faithfully,

and using all honorable means

to promote their interests.

I solemnly promise

that I will share with my sisters

the duties of my chapter;

that I will uphold and encourage them

in all that is honorable and right;

that I will ever extend to each sister

the right hand of sympathy;

and that at all times

and in all circumstances

I will endeavor to cultivate those sentiments

which should ever exist between sisters.

All this I solemnly promise upon my honor,

without any equivocation,

mental reservation,

or secret evasion of mind whatsoever.

If you are ready to truly accept the bond of Sigma Kappa Omega then join the sisters before you who have pledged their loyalty to the sisterhood. As a manifestation of your willingness to accept the pledges required of members of this Sorority, you will now inscribe your name within this Roll Book, containing those promises, which you are soon to make in the presence of our Sisterhood.

(NAME), please come to the table.

(NAME), if you are ready to become an active member of Sigma Kappa Omega then please sign your name.

Sign name

(Name), do you, in the presence of these witnesses, acknowledge this signature, which you have subscribed herein to the pledges just now repeated? If so, you will answer to your name, "I do."

Please take a rose to signify your active status

Remove Pearl Pin and pin member with active member pin

Receive and wear this badge in token of your membership in Sigma Kappa Omega. I extend to you the right hand of fellowship

Pledge Educator(s): Initiates of Sigma Kappa Omega, you have this day received a distinction, which is granted to few women—decoration with the insignia of our Sorority. It

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marks the confidence, which we repose in you. May the ties which it symbolizes, strengthen perpetually, and may its possession instill in you the spirit of undying loyalty to Sigma Kappa Omega.

By virtue of the authority vested in me, I now declare you members of the Sigma Kappa Omega Sorority. You may now cross over to the outside of the star where you will join your sisters in the bond of sisterhood in learning the true meaning of Sigma.

The big sisters of the circle will reach out a hand to their little and bring them into the outer circle.

Once all the new members have joined the outer circle, the president will read the following:

President:

Our letters; Sigma Kappa Omega stands for the saying; σεβασμός (Sim-ah-smosh) Κέντρο Ομορφιάς (Kef-toe Oph-ius) ως το τέλος (Os-toe Tay-yos) which when translated means, “Respect with beauty until the end of time”

Each letter represents something of importance to our sisterhood. During your Pearl and Active periods, we learn the true meaning of Sigma. During your time within the active sisterhood, you live out the meaning of Kappa. Your experience gained while an active sister is what Kappa means to you. Once you cross to Alumnae, you learn the true meaning of Omega.

Sigma 1: A sisterhood is the close bond that you share with one another. We nurture that bond so it can last forever.

Sigma 2: Developing integrity is no easy chore. Your sisters are here to help nurture your budding integrity and to foster your growing character.

Sigma 3: During this period in our lives we are learning about ourselves and about one another. Sigma promotes growth in your everyday life as well as growth among our sisterhood.

Sigma 4: Magnanimity expresses the ideals that Sigma was founded on. It’s about improving your soul and sharing your mind with those around you.

Sigma 5: The final letter of Sigma stands for acceptance. The idea of acceptance is about learning to accept the people around you, learning to accept your sisters, and most of all learning to accept yourself.

The pledge educator will then bring the crest to the circle.

As the president speaks, the educator is to point to each aspect of the crest.

President: During your pledge-ship and new member period, you learned what the symbols for Sigma Kappa Omega are. Through your dedicated process, you have proven you are ready to learn what the symbols of our sorority mean to us.

Our first symbol is the star, because it can always guide your way home. Along with our second symbol; the infinity, it represents the everlasting bonds of sisterhood as the lines of a star and infinity have no beginning and no end.

We use three stars to represent the three historical founders of Sigma Kappa Omega.

Our colors are purple and silver.

Purple has been used to symbolize magic and mystery, as well as royalty. Being the combination of red and blue, the warmest and coolest colors, purple is believed to be the ideal color.

Silver represents unity and spirit. Silver is mystically considered to bring eloquence.

Our mascot is the butterfly representing everlasting change.

Our gems are the pearl; for beauty in its rarest form and opal; It aids the memory and provides faithfulness in relationships. It is the perfect gemstone to wear in trying to become your best and to be true to yourself. The “fire” in opal represents a soft inner glow.

Our flower is Sterling Rose, which is for enchantment and mystery.

Our motto is “Carpe Diem” meaning “Seize the Day”, in honor of the steps our National founders took to create this wonderful sorority.

Our tagline is “With beauty and grace” representing the flight of a butterfly as it flies through the sky with beauty and grace.

Our sorority song is “Sigma Bonds”, which is being played during tonight’s ceremony.

Tonight you are wearing white to signify purity. From now on, at all ceremonies, you will wear purple, silver and/or black to represent that you have encompassed all of the beliefs and ideals of the sorority.

Sigma 1 and 2 are to walk to the middle of the circle to demonstrate the following:

President: Our official handshake is done by interlocking your thumb and forefinger with the sister you are engaging. Clasp your palms together and wrap your remaining three fingers around your sisters’ hand.

Once fully embraced, whisper “Sigma Love” to show your loyalty to the sisterhood and its traditions.

President: Our official sign is done by connecting your thumb and forefinger, leaving your remaining three fingers spanned to make a “Σ”. The sign is to ALWAYS be put over your heart unless linking signs with another sister.

Sigma 1 and 2 join sisters on outside of circle.

President: Our official knock is two knocks in quick succession, pause, two knocks in quick succession, pause, followed by three knocks in quick succession. *Be sure to demonstrate.*

President will move behind the table and call the new members up one by one to sing the book.

President:

After each new member has signed the book they will return to the circle.

In celebration of your official membership into Sigma Kappa Omega, our eldest sister, (Name of sister or alumni that has been in Sigma Kappa Omega the longest), will read a poem to celebrate our new sisters.

Eldest Member: While I read this poem, please join hands and think about what our sisterhood means to you. This poem is entitled ‘My Sister, My Friend’.

My Sister My Friend

She knows the things I dream of,
The places that I’ve been,
She accepts the person I’ve become,
She’s a very special friend.
She’s always been there for me
No matter where I roam,
And whenever we’re together,
It’s just like being home.
For happy times shared through the years,
For the loyalty, love, and laughter and tears.

For the special things only you can do,

For all these things, I thank you!

Time and space may separate us,

But heartstrings know no end.

I'm proud to call you my sister,

Happier still to call you my friend.

Congratulations, on behalf of the sisters of Sigma Kappa Omega, I'd like to welcome you to our sisterhood.

President: And as for you who have been newly received in our fraternal circle, it is your part and duty to bear in mind that you are now one with us in principle and purpose; you are to share with us the privileges and divide with us the responsibilities of faithful service in Sigma Kappa Omega. May your zeal in its cause never flag, may your sympathy with its interests ever grow deeper, may our mutual regard increase as time shall heighten our appreciation of the noble sentiments which have made us one. May sincere friendship, development of character, multicultural enrichment, world-wide advancement of women, higher standards and community and philanthropic involvement be the motives of your lives, as they have been the motives of our union. May the bonds forged today unite us forever in sturdy resolve to attain that goal of true womanhood and aspiration toward which is the seal of our Sorority.

This concludes the Initiation Ceremony. With great pride I now present our newest Sisters in Sigma Kappa Omega.

Sisters should be in official "connect" and will then turn out to face the outside of the circle.

Applause