

# THE MISSION STATEMENT FOR SIGMA PI SIGMA (The National Physics Honor Society)

*This Mission Statement was adopted by the SPS National Council on September 30, 1995. It answers the question, "Since membership in Sigma Pi Sigma is for a lifetime, what does membership in Sigma Pi Sigma mean long after the induction ceremony is over?" This Mission Statement is now part of the induction ceremony.*

Sigma Pi Sigma exists to *honor* outstanding scholarship in physics; to *encourage* interest in physics among students at all levels; to promote an attitude of *service* of its members towards their fellow students, colleagues, and the public; and to provide a *fellowship* of persons who have excelled in physics. Sigma Pi Sigma's mission is not completed in the induction ceremony with the recognition of academic accomplishment. In the four dimensions of *Honor, Encouragement, Service, and Fellowship*, the mission of Sigma Pi Sigma takes a longer view.

## HONOR

Sigma Pi Sigma is the physics honor society. Through election to Sigma Pi Sigma, distinctive achievement and high scholarship in physics are recognized and celebrated.

## ENCOURAGEMENT

By honoring high achievement in physics and upholding high standards for election into Sigma Pi Sigma, the Society provides an incentive for all physics students to rise to excellence. The Society is a source of encouragement to all students who study physics, whatever the ultimate level of performance achieved by the individual. Such encouragement ranges from promoting physics interest and science literacy in the general public, to challenging those who are pondering their potential for earning higher degrees. Sigma Pi Sigma urges its members to demonstrate this encouragement through personal service.

## SERVICE

With the recognition of accomplishment comes a responsibility to service at all levels. Nationally, Sigma Pi Sigma members can serve by helping to work for sound national science policies. Locally, Sigma Pi Sigma members can serve in community science education projects and liaisons, and in mentoring individual students. Such personal initiative provides opportunities for all members of the local community to learn more about physics, and provides visible testimony to the high standards of Sigma Pi Sigma membership. Our colleges, universities, and our Society know that when we become alumni, because we respect the personal struggle for excellence, we will support the generations of students that follow. When the experience of Sigma Pi Sigma members is placed at the service of others at any level, then Sigma Pi Sigma touches more lives than may be counted by the number of its members.

Service toward others is an offering of fellowship. This is another mission that our honor society fulfills through its members.

## FELLOWSHIP

The criterion of Sigma Pi Sigma membership is proven excellence in physics. There are no generational boundaries. The first members were inducted in 1921, and new members are added every year. Sigma Pi Sigma members represent many generations of experience and wisdom that can be focused on the matters that unite us.

In Sigma Pi Sigma, there are no professional boundaries. One finds all professions represented in the Sigma Pi Sigma membership. There are many practicing physicists among Sigma Pi Sigma members, but excellence in physics has opened many career options to our members. Through their lives, physics has enriched the world beyond the narrow scope of the physics community. Sigma Pi Sigma reaches beyond specific disciplines, uniting a diverse group of exceptional people who have shared in the culture and traditions of physics. With the common thread of this shared background in physics running through so rich a diversity of generations and professions, Sigma Pi Sigma promotes a spirit of community among its members and encourages them to offer their collective wisdom and perspectives in the service of the larger society.

# TO INSTALL A NEW SIGMA PI SIGMA CHAPTER

1. Decide on a program for the installation. A formal ceremony, including a banquet and speaker and invited guests from the college administration, has the advantage of publicizing your Chapter and department. However, you must decide on the type of ceremony that will best suit your own needs. Please send to the National Office the program and several possible dates at least *five* weeks before the installation. Then we can arrange a mutually convenient date with the Installing Officer and have your charter prepared for presentation during the installation. Your charter will be mailed directly to you.
2. Appoint a nominating committee (consisting of Sigma Pi Sigma alumni on campus, if any, and the Chapter Advisor) to select the charter members of your Chapter. It should review the qualifications of the students—both graduate and undergraduate—to see that they meet the requirements for membership (for undergraduates, at least three semester courses or five quarter courses in physics which may be credited towards a physics major and standing in the upper third of their class, often interpreted as an overall 3.0 out of a possible 4.0). Your Chapter's requirements for membership should be in your Chapter's bylaws. (See the Sample Chapter Bylaws in this book.) The nominating committee should consider inviting alumni, faculty, college administrators and local scientists with a physics background to join. Members elect who cannot attend the installation can be received by correspondence. Also, the nominating committee should invite Sigma Pi Sigma alumni in the area to join the Chapter as transfer members.
3. Have each new member-elect fill out two copies of the Membership Information Card (MIC), one for your records and one for our records. MICs should be held for the Installing Officer. Transfer members should write the name of their original Chapter, original reception date, and original serial number in the spaces provided on the MIC.
4. Three weeks before the installation send to the National Office the *complete* names of both new and transfer members. This will allow time to prepare membership certificates and cards and to send the correct number of membership pins to the Installing Officer to bring to the Installation. Entrance fees may be sent with the names or may be given to the Installing Officer.

# RECEPTION OF NEW SIGMA PI SIGMA MEMBERS

1. The membership nominating committee, chaired by the Chapter Advisor, should verify the qualifications of prospective members, who are to be selected only on the basis of character and professional or scholastic records. Note that Sigma Pi Sigma membership is not restricted to undergraduate physics majors. The committee should also consider undergraduate non-physics majors, graduate students, faculty members, research staff members, and other qualified individuals who are in physics or closely related fields. See Article IX, Section 3, Clause 2 of the SPS Constitution for the minimum Sigma Pi Sigma membership requirements (Section B of this publication). Many chapter bylaws require at least a 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 system for physics courses and for cumulative course grades in all courses. If your chapter bylaws specify a minimum grade point average, periodically check with the Registrar's Office to be sure that the specified grade point average also requires members-elect to rank in the upper one third of their college class.
2. After election by the Sigma Pi Sigma members of the chapter, invitations should be sent to the members-elect. Formal invitations are available from the National Office should you wish to use them.
3. **Have each member-elect complete *two* copies of the Membership Information Cards (MIC)—one copy for the chapter's files and one copy to be sent to the SPS National Office—at the time of reception. Sigma Pi Sigma members transferring their membership to your chapter should write in the name of their original chapter and original reception date (give approximate date if exact date is not known) in the space provided on the MIC card. Anyone who is also new to SPS must complete the SPS membership application.**
4. At least *three* weeks *prior* to the reception, order the required number of reception items—pin (man's or woman's), membership certificate (shingle), and membership card—from the National Office. Include orders for Sigma Pi Sigma keys or other insignia items for the members-elect. Please use an Order Form for Supplies. A bill is sent for the number of sets of reception items ordered. Credit is given for returned sets so you can allow for any last minute additions to the group of members-elect when ordering reception items. Reception items can be sent express mail but the cost of postage will be charged to the chapter. Bills must be paid within 45 days.
5. **After the reception, send a Sigma Pi Sigma Reception Report, one copy of the MIC card (per inductee), SPS membership forms, and the entrance fees to the National Office. Include any unused reception items for credit. Return statement with credits marked.**
  - a. Enter the "Member Serial Number" from your chapter record book on each MIC card. All Member Serial Numbers must be accounted for, so indicate skipped (blank) Member Serial Numbers on the Sigma Pi Sigma Reception Report. Transfer members should be assigned Member Serial Numbers in the regular sequence but should be identified by a "T" following their Member Serial Number. Honorary members, elected by the National SPS Council, also should be assigned Member Serial Numbers in the regular sequence but should be identified by an "H" following their Member Serial Number.
  - b. Enter the date of the reception ceremony after "Date Received into Membership" on each MIC card.
  - c. The basic entrance fee is \$25.00. Since Sigma Pi Sigma inductees must be SPS members, new Sigma Pi Sigma members who are also new to SPS must pay \$45.00 (this includes the SPS membership fee). Please send in SPS membership forms for those new Sigma Pi Sigma members who are not current SPS members.
  - d. Complete the Sigma Pi Sigma Reception Report.
  - e. Indicate credits on your bill and return with Transmission of Funds form. Use the Sigma Pi Sigma Reception Report to order additional sets of reception items if you did not order a sufficient number before the reception.
6. Retain one copy of the MIC cards for your chapter file.



# SIGMA PI SIGMA TRANSMISSION OF FUNDS FORM FOR INSTALLATIONS/INDUCTIONS

Chapter \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Transmitting Office \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor \_\_\_\_\_ Adv. Tel. \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(School)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Address for mailing ordered items)

This form must accompany any checks or money orders sent to the SPS National Office to cover Sigma Pi Sigma fees, insignia items, office supplies, or any other matters requiring the transmission of funds. A copy of this form should be retained in the chapter's file.

Enclosed is \_\_\_\_\_ in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to cover:  
(check or money order)

Sigma Pi Sigma fees for \_\_\_\_\_ new SPS/Sigma Pi Sigma members at \$45.00 each. Sigma Pi Sigma Membership Information Cards (MICs) and SPS membership form for each must be enclosed ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Sigma Pi Sigma fees for \_\_\_\_\_ current SPS members at \$25.00 each. Sigma Pi Sigma MICs for each must be enclosed. Proof of current SPS membership must be supplied on the Sigma Pi Sigma Reception Report ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Other items \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(please specify)

**TOTAL** ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

