

ETA SIGMA GAMMA

Manual for New Initiates into Collegiate Chapters



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**Eta Sigma Gamma
Professional Health Education Honorary
National Office
2000 University Avenue
Muncie, IN 47306**

Forward

A professional organization is a group of people bonded together with a common mission and goals. The organization is governed by a formal constitution and by-laws, which contain all the operational procedures of the organization.

Eta Sigma Gamma is the National Health Education Honor Society that offers a unique opportunity for pre-professionals and professionals of the highest caliber to work together toward common goals. Not only do individual members derive benefit from this professional Honor Society during the collegiate years, they also have access to an extended association with professional health educators. Members receive benefits from the Honor Society in the form of lifetime professional and social acquaintances.

The purpose of this manual is to acquaint initiates with the history, governance, organization, and ideals of Eta Sigma Gamma. This manual will help initiates understand the mission and goals of the Honor Society as well as their own obligations to the organization. Since it is the responsibility of the initiates to have a thorough knowledge of their organization, they should be familiar with the materials contained in this document prior to initiation.

The Founding and History of Eta Sigma Gamma

The ideas and expressions of the founders and many professionals will always deserve an eminent place in the heritage of this National Health Education Honor Society.

Early in 1967, the conceptualization of a national professional honor society for women and men in the Health Education discipline was outlined by the founders while en route to a national conference. Later that year on August 14, Eta Sigma Gamma was officially founded at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. The founders Drs. William Bock, Warren E. Shaller, and Robert J. Synovitz, all faculty members in the Department of Physiology and Health Science at Ball State University, filed articles of Incorporation for Eta Sigma Gamma in August of 1967. The approval of this document by the Indiana Secretary of State legally established the location and national origin of the organization. Later in 1967, a group of Ball State University health education students and faculty functioned as a steering committee to accomplish tasks associated with the structural development of the National Honor Society. Student and faculty sub-committees were appointed to draw up a constitution and by-laws, an administrative guide, a pledge manual, rituals, and other pertinent documents. An additional task was applying these national ideas and materials to the local chapter structure. The Articles of Incorporation for Alpha Chapter were filed at the same time as those for the national organization. Completion of these tasks set the stage for the initiation of individual members and the installation of Alpha Chapter at Ball State University, whose first initiation ceremony took place on May 12, 1968.

Eta Sigma Gamma was the first National Honor Society to be formed on the Ball State University Campus and the first National Honor Society developed for individuals in the Health Education discipline. In the spirit of Greek usage, the letters ETA, SIGMA and GAMMA were chosen by the founders to represent the Greek equivalents for the letters H, S and C, which is an acronym for health science, a name originally used for health education.

Mission and Goals

Eta Sigma Gamma was founded with the ultimate goal to provide an organization that would further the professional competence and dedication of the individual members in and for the health education discipline. The mission of Eta Sigma Gamma is to elevate the standards, ideals, competencies, and ethics of professionally trained men and women in the discipline of health education.

The goals of the Honor Society are the following:

- To support the development, implementation, and evaluation of health education programs and resources;
- To stimulate and disseminate scientific research;
- To motivate and provide health education services;
- To recognize academic achievement;
- To support health education advocacy initiatives;
- To promote professional standards and ethics; and
- To promote networking activities among health educators and related professionals.

Honorary Colors, Flower, and Insignia

The official colors of the Honor Society are green and gold. The official flower of the Honor Society is the trillium. Its three-pronged petals represent the three facets of service and advocacy, education, and research. The official insignia bears the official colors of Eta Sigma Gamma and consists of a triangle surrounded by three joined circles. The triangle is divided into four equilateral triangles. These four triangles contain the following symbols: a lamp representing learning, centered to represent the lamp of learning. The three surrounding triangles contain a microscope signifying research, an outstretched hand representing service, and an open book representing education. The significance of the latter three symbols, teaching, service and research, is recorded directly beneath each. The name of the Honor Society is recorded on the lower border of the insignia and the founding place and date are recorded on the upper border of the insignia.



Pre-Initiation

The pre-initiation period is the time for initiates to learn and practice those traits and qualities that will assist in becoming an active member. Initiates and members should conduct themselves in the following manner:

- Exhibit cordiality and friendliness in individual and group relations;
- Encourage and tolerate opinions and philosophies of others;
- Develop a sense of personal and professional responsibility, honor and honesty;
- Respect persons of a different race, gender, creed, language, sexual identify, social or economic position, and all members of the Honor Society;
- Attend all chapter meetings and support all chapter activities; and
- Cooperate with the university administration in promoting the realization of the standards of honesty, integrity, citizenship, and other campus goals.

Obligations, Rights, and Benefits of Eta Sigma Gamma Initiates and Members

A person who has agreed to join a college honorary is known as an initiate. On becoming members of Eta Sigma Gamma, people surrender none of their legal or social rights, none of their family or personal ties, and none of their moral or religious ideals or standards. While rights as an individual are not impaired, members should adapt themselves to the standards of Eta Sigma Gamma.

Pledge

As a professional member of the Health Education discipline, I hereby dedicate my abilities and talents to promoting a higher quality of life among people and communities through the ideals of Eta Sigma Gamma. As a member of this Honor Society, I dedicate myself to promoting excellence in service and advocacy, education, and research in the Health Education profession. I pledge to incorporate these ideals in my individual life and to continue this collectively through the professional Honor Society and our collegiate chapter.

I further pledge to:

- Exhibit cordiality and friendliness in individual and group relations;
- Encourage and tolerate opinions and philosophies of others;
- Maintain a sense of personal and professional responsibility, honor, and honesty;
- Respect persons of a different race, gender, religion, language, sexual identify, and social or economic position;
- Show respect for all members of the Honor Society;
- Attend all chapter meetings and support all chapter activities; and
- Cooperate with the university administration in promoting the realization of the standards of honesty, integrity, citizenship, and other campus goals.

Obligations

Initiates of Eta Sigma Gamma promise to meet the following obligations:

- To give proper attention and support to the goals of Eta Sigma Gamma;
- To work diligently to maintain the high standards of the Honor Society;
- To conduct themselves with dignity and professional courtesy at all times;
- To strive to exemplify the high ideals of Eta Sigma Gamma regarding physical, mental, social, emotional, vocational and spiritual well-being;
- To perform whatever tasks may be assigned for the good of the Honor Society;
- To respect the Code of Ethics for the Health Education discipline; and
- To fulfill individual financial obligations for the Honor Society.

Financial Obligations

An initiate and member of Eta Sigma Gamma assume certain financial obligations. These obligations must be met in full, at the proper time, in order for the Honor Society to function. Any new member coming into Eta Sigma Gamma, whether a charter member or subsequent initiate, will pay an initiation fee that includes and covers the first year's national dues, honorary jewelry, individual certificate of membership, membership card, initiation manual, and a copy of the Code of Ethics for the Health Education Profession. Each member will pay annual national dues as established by the National Board of Directors. A life membership may be acquired by paying a set fee as established by the National Board of Directors. Each collegiate chapter determines assessment of local chapter dues.

The Governance of Eta Sigma Gamma

The laws governing the Honor Society consist of the Constitution and By-Laws, various documents of the Honor Society, and interim actions and regulations of the National Board of Directors.

Life and Honorary Memberships

Members may acquire life membership by paying a fee established by the National Board of Directors. This affords the individual to all membership rights and privileges for life. Honor Society membership in a collegiate chapter may be conferred upon non-members for outstanding contributions to the Health Education profession. Three-fourths affirmative vote of the active membership of a college chapter is necessary to confirm Honorary Membership status.

Awards

Individual Awards

Honor Award. This award may be presented to individuals or organizations who have made major contributions to the profession through service, education, and/or research. It is the highest award given by Eta Sigma Gamma. Both members and non-members are eligible for this award. It is not necessarily an annual award, and can be presented by the National Honor Society (as decided by the National Board of Directors) or a collegiate chapter (as determined by the local chapter). The national award is known as the Eta Sigma Gamma Honor Award, and the local award is known as the Eta Sigma Gamma _____ Chapter Honor Award. An appropriate symbol of this award should be given to the recipient.

Distinguished Service Award. This award may be presented to a member or members in recognition of outstanding service to furthering the goals of Eta Sigma Gamma. It is not necessarily an annual award and can be presented by the National Honor Society (as decided by the Board of Directors) or a collegiate chapter (as determined by the local chapter). An appropriate symbol of this award will be given to the recipient.

Gamman of the Year. Each year student members have the opportunity to present their credentials, through an application process, for Gamman of the Year. These applications are forwarded to the Awards Committee. The committee screens all the applications and names a national Gamman of the Year. This individual receives a cash award and an appropriate certificate at the Annual Meeting.

Founders' Award. Each year undergraduate student members have the opportunity to present their credentials, through an application process, for the Founders' Award. Applications are reviewed by the Award Committee, which names a deserving recipient. This individual receives a cash award and an appropriate certificate at the Annual Meeting.

John P. McGovern, M.D. National Scholarship Award. Each year graduate student members have the opportunity to present their credentials, through an application process, for the McGovern Scholarship. Applications are reviewed by the Award Committee, which names a deserving recipient. This individual receives a cash award and an appropriate certificate at the Annual Meeting.

Scholarship Key. A collegiate chapter can present the Scholarship Key annually to any graduating member of the Honor Society who has achieved the highest cumulative grade point average above 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. Candidates for the Scholarship Key, after approval of the local Awards Committee, may be awarded the Key and an appropriate certificate in accordance with the provisions as described in the Officer's Handbook.

Chapter Awards

Chapter Activity of the Year. Chapters can submit individual activities for this award in one or all of the following categories: education, service, and research.

Chapter Award Levels. Chapters can submit documentation of chapter functions to receive awards at one of the following four levels: (a) Chapter Excellence, (b) Chapter Achievement, (c) Chapter Recognition, and (d) Chapter Honorable Mention.

Grants

Project Grants

Individual members or local collegiate chapters may apply to the National Office for funds to carry out projects in the local community. The stipends are considered seed monies to help get a project started. Several projects are funded annually by the National Office. Applications are submitted early in the academic year. Funding follows quickly to assure that the project may be completed during that same academic year.

Travel Grants

Local collegiate chapters may apply to the National Office for funds to travel to national conferences.