

**The Constitution of
Theta Delta Chi
Fraternity**

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PREFACE

The Constitution and By-Laws are now periodically updated electronically after additions, deletions, and modifications voted by Conventions and subsequently ratified by the Charges are incorporated. The most recent such changes were approved by the 158th Convention in August 2005 and ratified in November 2005.

The previous printings of the Constitution were made in 1870, 1890, 1939, 1971, and 1991. The 1939 edition of the Constitution, the composition and printing for which were done by the late Merle S. Schaff, Φ^Δ '22, in Philadelphia, carried the following PREFACE by the late William F. Love, X '03, the then Chairman of the Standing Committee on Legislation:

"The original Constitution and copies furnished the Charges (three of which are now in the Archives) were written in longhand. The first printed Constitution was published by Wm. L. Stone, Zeta '57, under the Grand Lodge consisting of P. C. Gilbert, W. C. Strowbridge and Jacques B. Juvenal in 1870.

"January the eleventh, 1888, the Grand Lodge appointed Brothers A. L. Bartlett, Lambda, '84, Seth P. Smith, Omicron Deuteron '82, and J. H. Tower, Zeta '67, a special Commission to compile the Constitution of the Fraternity, and likewise to revise and amend the same.

"The Commission for the purpose of compilation met in the office of Brother Bartlett, at No. 10 Tremont Street, Boston, and carefully searched through all the known and existing records and documents of Theta Delta Chi;

"The state of chaotic uncertainty into which the toying of repeated Conventions had thrown that once revered instrument, the Constitution, made the work of compilation and revision arduous and painstaking.

"The Constitution as found to exist and be in force, was reported to the Grand Lodge which adopted it, and whose act the Forty-second Annual Convention assembled, November twenty-first, 1888, at Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York, ratified, thereby rendering the compiled Constitution reported by the Commission, THE CONSTITUTION of and binding upon the Theta Delta Chi Fraternity.

"To the Convention of '88, the Commission, acting under the said compiled Constitution, reported a revised and amended Constitution which, by the adoption of this Convention and the subsequent ratification November twentieth, 1889, of the succeeding Convention, convened at Young's Hotel, Boston, gave our Fraternity once more a known and definite Constitution.

"In June 1938, the Sixty-seventh Grand Lodge authorized the Standing Committee on Legislation to prepare the material for the re-printing of the Constitution of the Fraternity.

"The preceding, Committee on Legislation, under the Chairmanship of Brother Robert S. Emerson, Zeta '97, had prepared a compilation of all Constitutional amendments adopted prior to, and In force and effect on January 1, 1926. This was published, furnished to all proper officers and the Charges, and brought the Constitution of 1890 to that date.

"Since January 1, 1926, but one amendment was passed. That permitted the President to designate the Assistant to the President to make charge visitations. It was passed by the Eighty-fourth Convention and duly ratified by the Charges."

The fourth printing of the Constitution was authorized by the 94th Grand Lodge, Boine T. Johnson, Jr., I^Δ '53, President. For the first time in the history of the Fraternity, the Fraternity By-Laws were bound into the same book as the Constitution.

By action of the 158th Convention (2005) and subsequent ratification by the Charges, the Constitution is open to general readers. The Constitution and By-Laws are again published separately.

WILLIAM A. MCCLUNG, Iota Deuteron '66 (Williams)
Executive Director, Theta Delta Chi Educational Foundation, Inc.
Chairman, Standing Committee on Legislation

ARTICLE I

NAME OF FRATERNITY, MOTTO, AND DUTIES OF CHARGE OFFICERS

Section 1. This Fraternity shall be denominated the "THETA DELTA CHI."

Section 2. (Deleted November 3, 2005)

Section 3. The Fraternity shall consist of one or more subdivisions, to be called *Charges*, which shall be created as hereinafter provided.

Section 4. The officers of each charge shall be the President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, and Herald, and such others as may be provided for in the By-Laws.

DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

Section 5. It shall be the duty of the President to present at all meetings of the Charge, to administer initiatory oaths, to retain the Constitution in his possession, which he must present at every meeting for reference, and to enforce a due observance of all its laws and requirements.

Section 6. It shall be the duty of the Recording Secretary to draw up and present at each succeeding meeting a report of the proceedings of the previous one, and, if accepted by the Charge, to record the same in the book of Records. He shall keep a record of the name of each member, his residence, date of initiation, offices held, and date of graduation. He shall announce the result of all ballotings, and record all writings that the Charge may deem important to preserve.

Section 7. It shall be the duty of the Corresponding Secretary to carry on all correspondence which the affairs of the Charge shall render necessary; to report such correspondence at the next regular meeting; to furnish the Recording Secretary with the originals of all official communications received and copies of all those transmitted by him; and also to hold in his possession the seal of the Charge.

Section 8. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to keep a just and true account with each member of the Charge and with any other person with whom the Charge may have any business transactions; to deliver at the expiration of his term of office a report upon the financial concerns, and of all moneys received and expended by him; to provide a suitable place of meeting; to Guard the Entrance, admitting only the *Brethren*; and to perform such other duties as may be assigned him by the Charge.

Section 9. It shall be the duty of the Herald to open and close the meetings; to usher the candidate for initiation into the hall in due form, and to keep in order the regalia of the Charge.

Section 10. It shall be the duty of every officer at the expiration of his term of office to deliver to his successor all moneys, documents, etc., held in his possession and belonging to the Charge.

ARTICLE II

ELECTION OF CHARGE OFFICERS

Section 1. The election of Charge officers shall be held as the By-Laws of each Charge may direct, provided said Charge By-Laws do not conflict with the requirements of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Fraternity.

ARTICLE III

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

Section 1. The installation of officers shall take place at the next regular meeting after their election, but in case of their absence from that meeting, their installation shall take place at the next regular meeting, and the preceding officers shall hold their offices until the installation of their successors.

Section 2. (Deleted November 3, 2005)

ARTICLE IV

CHARGE MEMBERSHIP – NEW MEMBER EDUCATION, ELIGIBILITY, ELECTION AND REGULATIONS

Section 1. The proposition of a candidate for membership need not be made at a meeting of the Charge to be considered valid; but his eligibility must be discussed by every member at least one week prior to the calling of his election.

Section 2. Election to membership shall be by affirmative vote of that portion of the active membership of each Charge as the By-Laws of that Charge may direct. Any subsequent change in the portion of the active membership required for election to membership must also be by a majority vote. (Ratified November 15, 1968)

Section 3. No person shall be initiated who is not at the time a registered student of the College to which the Charge belongs, except that a member of the college faculty may be initiated in order to conform to any faculty rules in force at that college, and except that graduate and senior members of a local group which has been established as a Charge of Theta Delta Chi who have not been able to be present for initiation by an Embassy at the establishment of the Charge may be initiated by said Charge if otherwise eligible. (Ratified January 18, 1956)

Section 4. No person shall be elected to membership in Theta Delta Chi if he is already a member of a chartered college secret fraternity or other organization which members of Theta Delta Chi are not permitted to join.

Section 5. An election to membership may be reconsidered at any time by the unanimous vote of the active members of the Charge. Any member joining another chartered college secret fraternity shall be immediately expelled, provided that all hearings and proceedings under this section shall be conducted in accordance with such provisions of the By-Laws of the Fraternity as may relate thereto.

Section 6. No name shall be brought up at Convention for election or initiation into this Fraternity, except in case of establishing a new Charge, or the reestablishment of a Charge.

ARTICLE V

(Deleted November 3, 2005)

ARTICLE VI

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. The President, immediately on his installation, shall appoint two members who, with himself, shall constitute a body to be called the Executive Committee.

Section 2. In the absence of the President, the Senior member of the Executive Committee shall preside over the meeting, and, in the absence of both President and Senior member of the Executive Committee, it shall be the duty of the Junior member of the Executive Committee to preside.

Section 3. The Executive Committee shall have power to consult, provide, and act for the good of the Fraternity in cases of emergency, when it becomes necessary to act before the calling of a meeting, provided such action does not conflict with any Article or Section of this Constitution or the By-Laws of this Fraternity.

Section 4. All information, affecting the Fraternity, must be immediately communicated to the Executive Committee by those ascertaining it; and it shall be the duty of this body to act as they shall deem best.

ARTICLE VII

(Deleted November 3, 2005)

ARTICLE VIII

FRATERNITY POLICY, CHARGE MEETINGS, EXPULSION OF MEMBERS, REPORTS, OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE, AND CHARGE FINANCES

Section 1. The policy of this Fraternity is to establish Charges only in first class Colleges or Universities.

Section 2. No Charge of this Fraternity shall exist as a class Fraternity.

Section 3. Each Charge shall render such reports to the Grand Lodge and the officers of the Grand Lodge as the Constitution, By-Laws of the Fraternity, The Grand Lodge or the President of the Grand Lodge shall require.

Section 4. Each Charge shall present at the Annual Convention such detailed report of its affairs and proceedings as may be required by the Convention or the Grand Lodge.

Section 5. (Deleted December 1, 1966)

Section 6. It shall be the duty of every Charge, upon request, to give intelligence of the character of every individual leaving its institution to the Charge in the College to which he is going.

Section 7. Any Charge may expel any one of its members by a three-fourths vote of the active members; such action being subject to an appeal to the next Annual Convention. All hearings and proceedings under this section shall be conducted in accordance with such provisions of the By- Laws of the Fraternity as may relate thereto.

Section. 8. Each Charge shall have the power to regulate its own initiation fee and term taxes, as shall best suit its convenience and circumstances; provided, however, that the initiation fee shall in no case be less than five dollars (\$5).

Section 9. Should any Charge fail to respond within thirty days to official correspondence from the Grand Lodge or its President wherein the consent of the Charge to the establishment of a new Charge or the re-establishment of a discontinued Charge, or to an amendment to the Constitution, or to the adoption or amendment of a By-Law, or to any measure is solicited, the consent of such Charge shall be considered to have been granted.

Any vote of a Charge upon a matter submitted to such official correspondence, either affirmative vote or negative vote, may be changed by such Charge at any time within the said period of thirty days, but a vote or change of vote taken by such Charge after said period of thirty days shall be of no effect.

Official correspondence soliciting the consent of the Charges to any matter to which the provisions of this section of the Constitution apply, shall not be submitted to the Charges between March 15th and September 15th of any year.

Section 10. The number and time of the regular meetings for each collegiate year shall be designated by the By-Laws of each Charge.

Section 11. Special meetings may be held when considered necessary by the Executive Committee.

Section 12. A regular meeting may be postponed for a space not exceeding one week, when deemed advisable by the Executive Committee.

Section 13. (Deleted November 3, 2005)

Section 14. (Deleted November 3, 2005)

ARTICLE IX

GRAND LODGE

Section 1. (a) The governing power of this Fraternity shall be vested in the Grand Lodge of Theta Delta Chi, Inc., which shall consist of seven members: five graduates and two undergraduates, hereafter referred to as members. All duly initiated members of Theta Delta Chi shall be non-voting members of the Grand Lodge of Theta Delta Chi, Inc. (Amended November 15, 1987, further amended October 15, 2010)

(b) The five (5) graduate members of the Grand Lodge, the President, the Graduate Treasurer, the Graduate Secretary, and two Executive Members shall be elected for a term of two (2) years. The President, the Graduate Secretary, and one of the Executive Members shall be elected in the same year, commencing in 2011, so that their terms are identical. The Graduate Treasurer and the other Executive Member shall be elected in the following year from the other graduate members so that their terms are identical. The two (2) undergraduate members of the Grand Lodge, Undergraduate Member(s) at Large, shall be elected every year at the Annual Convention. (Amended October 15, 2017)

(c) (Deleted November 3, 2005)

Section 2. (a) The graduate members of the Grand Lodge shall be designated as President, Graduate Secretary, Graduate Treasurer, and Executive Members. The undergraduate members shall be designated as Secretary and Treasurer. (Amended October 15, 2010)

(b) In the event that a member of the Grand Lodge (i) through incapacity, disability, or neglect of duty fails to execute in any material respect the duties and responsibilities of his office or (ii) commits an act of malfeasance in office, or other offense against the laws, dignity, or interest of the Fraternity or any country, state or locality, he may, on presentation of evidence, and with the opportunity to answer all charges, be removed from office by a unanimous vote of the other members. On further written petition of the removed member of the Grand Lodge, such action shall be subject to review by the next Convention, which may restore said member to the unexpired portion of his elected term. (Added October 15, 2010)

(c) In case of a vacancy or vacancies in the Grand Lodge, the Grand Lodge shall fill the same, subject to ratification by a majority vote of the majority of the Charges.

Section 3. The duties of the Grand Lodge shall be:

First: To act upon all applications for charters for new Charges, and for the restoration of charters to discontinued Charges, which it may entertain at its discretion.

Second: To investigate complaints preferred against any Charge on account of which its charter might be revoked; and to revoke such charter, if after notice and hearing the Grand Lodge finds sufficient cause for such revocation. The Grand Lodge must report, in due form, its action to the next Convention, when the Charge whose charter has been revoked may appeal to the Convention from the action of the Grand Lodge. All hearings and proceedings under this section shall be conducted in accordance with such provisions of the By-Laws of the Fraternity as may relate thereto.

Third: To correspond with the Charges in such manner and at such times as the By-Laws of the Fraternity may prescribe.

Fourth: The President shall make an official visit to each Charge annually or designate the Charge Consultant(s) who shall perform the duty in his stead. (Amended November 7, 2003)

Fifth: To attend to all general business of the Fraternity which may require attention between Annual Conventions.

Sixth: To perform such other duties as may, from time to time, be required of the Grand Lodge or any of its officers by the By-Laws of the Fraternity or by vote of Convention.

Section 4. (a) The Grand Lodge may, in its discretion, establish a new Charge or reestablish a discontinued Charge if seventy-five percent (75%) of all of the existing Charges shall have finally consented thereto, and the time within which a Charge may change its vote shall have expired. (Amended November 31, 1971, further amended November 3, 2005)

(b) The Grand Lodge of Theta Delta Chi may establish a colony whose purpose is to petition to become a Charge in due time. Members of the colony are held to standards of Charges as outlined in the By-Laws of the fraternity.

Section 5. Whenever the Grand Lodge shall have determined to establish a new Charge or re-establish a discontinued Charge in any college or university, an Embassy composed of one member of the Grand Lodge and two other members of the Fraternity appointed by the President of the Grand Lodge shall proceed to such college or university and formally elect and initiate any or all of the petitioners who are suitable for and eligible to membership, and establish the Charge in due form.

The suitability of the petitioners shall be determined by the Embassy.

The eligibility of the petitioners shall be determined by the existing eligibility requirements for membership in the active Charges as fixed by this Constitution and the By-Laws of the Fraternity, provided that graduates and seniors who are otherwise eligible may be elected and initiated by the Embassy.

After an organization has been perfected, they shall deliver to the new Charge a duly executed charter and a copy of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Fraternity, and shall instruct the officers of the new Charge in all necessary matters pertaining to the Fraternity.

Section 6. When the condition of any Charge becomes such that, in the opinion of three- fourths of the existing Charges, each Charge expressing its opinion by a majority vote, the best interests of the Fraternity would be subserved by its disorganization, the President of the Grand Lodge, after notice and hearing, shall have power to suspend the functions of such Charge and forthwith take possession of its charter and all records, the same to be presented at the next Convention with a full report of the President of the Grand Lodge, concerning his action in the matter. Said next Convention shall, by a majority vote of all delegates present, ratify the action of the President of the Grand Lodge and order said charter and

records delivered to the Archives of the Fraternity for preservation, or shall rescind the action of the President of the Grand Lodge and restore the charter and records to the Charge. All hearings and proceedings under this section shall be conducted in accordance with such provisions of the By-Laws of the Fraternity as may relate thereto. Should such Charge be re-established at a future time, a Convention, acting by a majority vote, may restore the records to the re-established Charge.

Section 7. The Grand Lodge shall have power to make rulings and decisions construing or interpreting the Constitution and By-Laws of the Fraternity in specific cases as they may arise from time to time, and such rulings and decisions shall be final and effective and without appeal until the next Convention, which Convention shall consider such rulings and decisions as have been made and either approve or reverse the same.

Section 8. The Grand Lodge shall render to the Annual Convention a detailed report of all transactions since the last Convention.

Section 9. The Grand Lodge shall have power to assess each active Charge annually for such sums as may be provided by the By-Laws.

ARTICLE X

CONVENTIONS

Section 1. There shall be an Annual Convention of the Fraternity held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the Theta Delta Chi Educational Foundation, Inc., and of the time and place notice shall be given by the Grand Lodge to each Charge six months prior to the time of the Convention.

Section 2. Arrangements for the Business Sessions of the Annual Convention, and a Memorial Service, shall be made by the Grand Lodge and its staff in conjunction with the Educational Foundation.

Section 3. Each charge shall send three delegates, consisting of one graduate and two active members, to the Annual Convention. The delegates of any Charge may fill vacancies in their delegation, but the substitutes must be members of the same Charge and the substitution ratified by the Convention. (Amended October 15, 2014)

(a) The Charge delegates shall be chosen in the same manner as officers of the Charges, except that where a house corporation or alumni association exists they may elect the alumni delegate.

(b) No member may serve as a delegate in more than one capacity; no Brother may have more than one vote as a delegate.

(c) For a period not exceeding five years from the date of its original Chartering, or of its re-Chartering if there are no living alumni of said Charge, a Charge may name an alumnus of any other Charge to serve as its Graduate Delegate. (Added October 15, 2009)

Section 4. The members of the Grand Lodge shall serve at the Convention in their respective capacities; they may be a voting delegate if chosen as such under Section 3 above.

Section 5. The Convention, by three-fourths vote of the delegates present and voting, may expel a graduate brother, who may appeal from such action to the next Convention. All hearings and proceedings under this section shall be conducted in accordance with such provisions of the By-Laws of the Fraternity as may relate thereto.

ARTICLE XI

DOCUMENTS

Section 1. The books, records, documents and personal property belonging to the Fraternity or the respective Charges shall be kept by the officers whose duties require them to have the same, except as the custody of such books, records, documents and personal property is otherwise specifically provided for in this Constitution, the By-Laws of the Fraternity or the By-Laws of the respective Charges.

Section 2. The members of each Charge shall record their names in the book in which the Book of Rituals is inscribed. (Amended November 3, 2005)

Section 3. The registry shall be made in the Book of Rituals. (Amended November 3, 2005)

ARTICLE XII

SYMBOLS

Section 1. (Deleted November 3, 2005)

Section 2. The password, signs, etc., shall be as described in the initiation

ARTICLE XIII

MISCELLANY - MEETING ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOR, BADGE, AND DEATH OF A MEMBER

Section 1. It shall be the duty of every member to attend every meeting, regular or special, and during meetings and elsewhere to treat every member with *delicacy* and *kindness*; to avoid all ungenerous remarks, so that all our consultations shall be conducted with that spirit of candor and generosity which shall lead us to entertain a sincere and abiding friendship for each other.

Section 2. The badge of this Fraternity shall consist of a shield, with the emblems of the Fraternity represented upon it. No other style of badge shall be considered constitutional.

Section 3. Upon the demise of any member of a Charge, the badge of each member of such Charge shall be draped in mourning for the space of nine days.

ARTICLE XIV

CONSTITUTION, BOOK OF RITUALS, MEMBERSHIP AND SECRECY OF MOTTO

Section 1. Amendments to this Constitution may be presented at an Annual Convention, and if adopted by a majority vote, shall be submitted by the Grand Lodge to each Charge. If three-fourths of the active Charges, each by a majority vote of its active members, ratify the amendments, the Grand Lodge shall declare the same adopted and in effect. (Amended November 11, 2004)

By-Laws or amendments thereto, not conflicting with this Constitution, may be presented at an Annual Convention, and if adopted by a majority vote, shall be submitted by the Grand Lodge to each Charge. If three-fourths of the active Charges, each by a majority vote of its active members, ratify the By-Laws or amendments so submitted, the Grand Lodge shall declare the same adopted and in effect.

Section 2. Each Charge shall have the power of making its own By-Laws, provided they do not conflict with any article or section of the Constitution or ByLaws of the Fraternity.

Section 3. (a). The Book of Rituals shall remain secret, and no member shall be allowed to hold in his possession a copy except in an official capacity, nor shall any Charge be permitted to keep in its possession more than one copy.

(b). Signatures affixed to a Charge's Constitution shall be transferred to that Charge's Book of Rituals. (Amended November 3, 2005)

Section 4. No member can, at any time, leave the Fraternity, unless he be expelled.

Section 5. The motto of this Fraternity shall not, under any circumstances, be committed to writing; and the President shall instruct all initiated members never to utter it above a whisper outside of the Lodge rooms.