By-Laws of the Beta Chapter of Tennessee

Phi Beta Kappa

The University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee

I. OFFICERS
The officers of the Chapter shall be a President, Vice-President, a Secretary and a Treasurer, of whom the Secretary and Treasurer must be faculty members. They shall be elected by a majority vote of the members of the Chapter, as defined below, who are present and voting at a regular meeting in the Easter semester. They shall serve for one year beginning the following Advent semester and may be reelected.

II. MEMBERS
(a) Chapter members include:

1. The faculty and staff members of The University of the South, both active and retired, who have been elected to Phi Beta Kappa membership (either at The University or elsewhere), and

2. The student members, Alumni Members, and Honorary Members elected by this Chapter.

(b) Other members of Phi Beta Kappa in the vicinity may be invited to any meeting of the Chapter.

III. ELECTION OF MEMBERS
The Chapter may elect three classes of membership: Members in Course, Alumni Members, and Honorary Members.

(a) Members in Course
1. Members in Course in the College of Arts and Sciences are elected by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of all Chapter members who are present and voting on the basis of high scholarship, good moral character, and vital interest in the educational progress of the college.

2. The number of undergraduates elected from any class shall ordinarily not exceed ten per cent of the undergraduates expected to receive the bachelor’s degree in that class.

3. There are three annual elections to membership: during the fall, during the winter, and prior to graduation.

A maximum of one-fifth of the members elected from any class may be elected in the fall of their final year. Such prospective student members must each have completed at least twenty-four (24) college courses (earning at least ninety-six (96) credit hours) during six (6) semesters with a grade-point average of 3.85 or higher.

A maximum of two-fifths of the members elected from any class may be elected in the winter of their final year. Such prospective student members must each have completed at least twenty-eight (28) college courses (earning at least one hundred and twelve (112) credit hours) during seven (7) semesters with a grade-point average of 3.75 or higher.

There shall be eligible for election any graduating senior who by the end of the final semester shall have completed at least thirty-two (32) college courses (earning at least one hundred and twenty-eight (128) credit hours) with a grade-point average of 3.7 or higher. If the quota for the senior class be still not filled, any seniors who at the end of their final semester have completed at least thirty-two (32) college courses (earning at least one hundred and twenty-eight (128) credit hours) with a grade-point average of 3.65 may be considered on an individual basis with no presumption that they will be elected automatically.

4. Grade point averages shall be based on letter grades earned in each course. No grade of “Pass” shall be used in the calculation.

5. Course work of a prospective student member must exhibit broad engagement in the liberal arts and sciences at the college level. Such engagement is established by a) passing at least one course in mathematics, b) demonstrating proficiency in a second language by passing at least one 300- or 400-level course in a foreign language, and c) pursuing additional related coursework beyond any general education competency satisfied by Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) scores.
6. All prospective student members must have completed at least three (3) semesters at The University of the South and have completed at least twelve (12) courses there.

7. Grades earned at institutions other than The University of the South shall be evaluated differently depending on whether those grades are included in the University Registrar’s calculation of the student’s cumulative grade-point average:
   
i. If the grades earned at institutions other than The University of the South are included in the University Registrar’s calculation of the student’s cumulative grade-point average [the Dean’s list of “approved” programs], those grades will count the same as if earned on campus.
   
   ii. Other transfer grades [those earned elsewhere than the Dean’s list of “approved” programs] will be evaluated to approximate closely the scale used at The University of the South. If those grades are superior to the student’s Sewanee grade-point average, they shall not be included in the calculation of the average. If those grades are inferior, they shall be weighted by hours and calculated with the Sewanee grade-point average.

8. Only college academic courses shall count toward satisfying the above requirements. Credits earned through Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Physical Education, and other such courses shall not count.

9. Grades shall be computed by hours.

10. For a course that is repeated, or in which a re-examination is taken, the first grade, and only the first grade, shall be used.

11. A failing grade received in a course which is not repeated will be counted, providing a passing grade in this course would have been counted.

12. All discussion in the Chapter relative to the merits of prospective members shall be absolutely secret, and the members shall be reminded of this fact by the President at each election meeting.

(b) Alumni Members

Alumni Members are elected from among the most distinguished graduates of the college on the basis of good moral character, wide interest in educational and social progress, and recognized attainment in some worthy line of scholarly or scientific endeavor. Only in very exceptional cases shall an alumnus be
elected within fourteen years after graduation, the reception of Alumni members being intended to mark the fifteenth year of their graduation, or some subsequent recognized anniversary year. A nine-tenths (9/10) vote of all Chapter members who are present and voting is necessary for election to Alumni Membership.

(c) Honorary Members

Honorary Members are elected from men and women not alumni of the college on the basis of the qualifications that govern elections to Alumni Membership. A nine-tenth (9/10) vote of all Chapter members who are present and voting is necessary for election to Honorary Membership.

(d) No member elect shall be registered as a full member of this Chapter and of the Phi Beta Kappa who has not been regularly initiated into its membership, either by the Chapter itself, or by some other chapter, or by a group of Phi Beta Kappa members duly authorized to act for the Chapter in his reception.

(e) All members thus initiated shall be entered on the roll of the Chapter, and shall be registered in the national office of the Phi Beta Kappa Society on such forms as shall be provided, and the Chapter shall pay such registration fees as may be lawfully required by the National Council.

(f) Membership in Course may be withdrawn for violation of the rules, for unbecoming conduct, or for academic reasons, by vote of four-fifths (4/5) of all Chapter members at a regularly scheduled meeting.

IV. DUES

The initiation dues of Members in Course, as well as those of Alumni and Honorary Members, shall be equivalent to an amount determined by the Officers, and shall primarily reflect the new-member fee paid by the Chapter to the Phi Beta Kappa Society. Any substantial change in the initiation dues shall be discussed in a Chapter meeting.

V. INITIATION

The ceremony of initiation shall be formal in character and shall be marked by academic dignity. It shall include the following items:

1. The presentation of candidates by the Secretary, or by his representative.

2. The signing of the Chapter Roll.

3. A pledge of allegiance.
4. An explanation of the symbols on the key, and the “Mode of shaking hands peculiar to Phi Beta Kappa.”

5. The presentation of such certificates as are required by the rules of the Chapter and of the Phi Beta Kappa Society.

6. A statement of, or an address on, the history and principles of Phi Beta Kappa, if the President so desires.

VI. MEETINGS Regular meetings shall be held thrice a year. Election of new members shall take place at a meeting called by the Officers at the beginning of the first semester, after the end of the first semester, and at the conclusion of the second semester. The initiation of new members shall take place at a meeting called by the Officers. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the resident Chapter members. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted.

The Order of Business shall conform to the rules of parliamentary procedure, and shall include the following items:

1. Report of the activities of the Undergraduate Organization.


3. Communications from the Secretary of the Phi Beta Kappa Society.

4. The payment of dues to the Phi Beta Kappa Society.

5. Considerations of actions by the National Council that require attention.


VII. AMENDMENTS These By-Laws may be amended by two-thirds (2/3) vote of all Chapter members who are present, provided that two weeks’ notice of such amendment has been given the members. All amendments are subject to the approval of the Phi Beta Kappa Senate.