



Sigma Tau Gamma

Fraternity

Eternal Light Ceremony
from the Manual of Rituals



Sigma Tau Gamma Fraternity, Inc.
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www.sigtau.org
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The Seal of the Fraternity is placed here to certify that this is a true and correct edition of the Ceremonies of Sigma Tau Gamma, prepared under the direction of, and contents approved by, the House of Delegates and Board of Directors.

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The 2016 edition was approved by the House of Delegates during the 47 Grand Chapter in Orlando, Florida.

Each chapter is provided seven numbered copies, all of which shall be kept under lock and key at all times when not in use. Members are never to reveal the content of the ritual to any person other than initiated members of the Fraternity for any reason whatsoever. Copies of the Ritual must be available for inspection at any time by an authorized representative of the Board of Directors or by Headquarters Staff.

ABOUT

The 17 founding fathers created our first edition and adopted it in 1920. This Ritual Book second edition was adopted by the House of Delegates at the seventh Grand Chapter, Indianapolis, July 1935. Revised by order of the eighth Grand Conclave, Hot Springs, December 1936. Additional changes made in 1948 by D. Kenneth Winebrenner, IU Pennsylvania '31, at the request of the chapters and Board of Directors. Terminology edited in 1959 by E. Kennedy Whitesitt, Pittsburg State '24, to agree with revisions of the Constitution and Laws of December 30, 1954. Revised and amended by the House of Delegates at the twenty-fourth Grand Conclave, Lake of the Ozarks, August 1970 and the House of Delegates at the twenty-eighth Grand Conclave, Dallas, August 1978. The third edition adopted by the House of Delegates at the thirty-first Grand Conclave, Milwaukee, August 1984. Additional changes made by the Board of Directors with advice from the Ritual Task Force at the request of the House of Delegates at the thirty-fourth Grand Conclave, August 1990. This edition was presented by the Rituals Committee and adopted by the House of Delegates at the forty-seventh Grand Chapter, Orlando, June 2016.

RITUAL BOOK, 2016 EDITION

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RITUAL BOOK, 1935 EDITION

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QUESTIONS

If any part of the instructions is unclear or any aspect of the Ritual is puzzling, please contact Sigma Tau Gamma Headquarters and ask to speak with an initiated staff member or you can send a letter to any initiated staff member at headquarters. If mailed, be sure to mark CONFIDENTIAL on the envelope.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Due to the use of candles, it is vital that a fire extinguisher is nearby at all times. Keep all flames away from clothing and stoles, table clothes and other flammable materials. The use of liquid flambeaus is NOT PERMITTED.

If available, disarm door bells and prevent ringing telephones from disrupting the atmosphere of the Rituals. Turn off all cell phones and cover all the windows. Secure all doors and if needed to deter interruptions, place a sign on the door informing visitors that a ritual is in progress. Make sure all materials and equipment are properly secured at the end of the Rituals.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

New members must be accompanied by a Brother since they may not know how to handle an emergency situation under these circumstances. Be alert that a new member may become overly excited during Ritual and determine each scene. Remind each man that if there are any questions at any time, to please raise his hand and someone will assist him.

REQUIRED RITUAL EQUIPMENT

Proper conduct of the ritual requires a full set of approved equipment in good condition. The Grand Chapter now requires all chapters to have a complete set of ritual equipment in acceptable condition. Contact Sigma Tau Gamma Headquarters to inquire about a full ritual kit or replacement pieces.

Some ritual equipment is best and most economically purchased from retailers in your community. Special equipment, unique to Sigma Tau Gamma, is available through the Fraternity Headquarters. Fraternity policy is to offer ritual equipment at cost. Most equipment is made to order and must be paid for in advance by the Fraternity. Therefore, chapters must pay for ritual equipment in full when ordering.

FORWARD

The 2016 edition of the Ritual Book of Sigma Tau Gamma represents the collective thinking, discussions and deliberations of both undergraduates and alumni. The committee was tasked with revising rituals of Sigma Tau Gamma, primarily updating the new principles passed at the forty-seventh Grand Chapter, as well as respond to societal trends, to stress the meaning of trust and support between an associate member and his new brothers, and to make the Ritual a positive and lasting experience. It is believed that greater symbolism, meaning and importance have been ascribed to the Principles and Ideals of the Fraternity in this edition.

The 2016 Committee consisted of:

Chairman – Allen Buckley, Fitchburg State '13
Vice Chairman – Dylan Rhodes, UNC - Charlotte '14
Board of Directors Liaison – Jim Johnston, Carnegie Mellon '97
Headquarters Staff Liaison – Steve Latour, Central Missouri '16, CEO
Member - John Heiman, Central Missouri '81, 32 National President
Member - Joe Feldhouse, Cleveland State '67, Society of Seventeen
Member - Michael Schermer, Illinois State '78, 28 National President
Member - Winston Parker, Michigan Tech '14
Member - Kever Lewis, Alabama '15

It is critically important for those performing this version of the Ritual to have an understanding and appreciation of past versions of the ceremony.

Previous versions were substantially different than the rituals, which were originally used by the Founders in the 1920s. There may be concern that this edition eliminates elements of the Ritual that have been used since the beginning of the Fraternity. This is simply untrue. It is more true than false that more recent ritual revisions before this effort have altered the original Ritual to a far greater extent than does this new version.

It is important to understand the nature of an organization's ritual. These ceremonies are a reflection of both the type of organization and its fundamental concepts. Even though the character of the organization or its ideas remain steadfast over time, the manner of which the organization represents itself must inherently change as do the cultural traditions and more of the larger society in which the organization must function.

Meaningful revisions in one's rituals are important and significant to sustain organizational vitality and health. These revisions should be viewed as healthy organizational development and an evolution in response to the needs of society and, of most significance, the membership.

The committee of nine noble men set the fraternity on a course to meet and uphold the ideals and principles in the 2020 Strategic Plan. This plan, set forth by the Chief Executive Officer, are stepping stones of what the future generations of noble men should look like. The changes of this 2020 plan were to ensure that the Path of Principles was a clear path and one that only an initiated brother could travel. This not only changed the reordering of the six principles, but the changing of two principles themselves. The new principles and order are to as followed:

Learning

He is committed to the pursuit of wisdom and seeks to afford the environment for learning in all his personal and professional endeavors. He knows full well the obligation he has taken and seeks to pass what he has learned to others, knowledge that will rule and mold his thoughts, acts, and deeds. He is focused and goal-oriented.

Integrity

He lives a life of personal integrity, perfecting a structure of honor and living by the highest standard that keeps our Brotherhood alive, for, without it, we could not rely on each other or advance our cause. A man with integrity is an honorable man who lives up to promises made – to others and himself. He is confident, ethical, and honest.

Excellence

He consistently strives for superior performance and does not shrink from adversity or lofty goals. He is a man who is dedicated and purposeful who carries an unblemished reputation among men. His actions serve as an example and standard bearer for others. He is curious and bold.

Leadership

He is compelled by a sacred trust and duty to develop good leaders for the world. He is a man who is humble and makes others feel like they are truly part of something special. He is the defender of good from evil. He is always prepared to lend assistance to a Brother in need. He is courageous, innovative and strategic.

Citizenship

He is an outward defender of the common man and cares about more than just himself, demonstrating an unwavering commitment to serving his fraternity, college, and country. He is charitable in the broadest sense of the word, knowing those so richly blessed have an obligation to serve those less fortunate. He is generous and kind.

Brotherhood

He loves his fraternity and seeks to enhance the worth of belonging for others. His actions are emblematic of our shield, a protector of our secrets and our life-long commitment to one another. He holds our ideals in high regard and is forever bonded within the Chain of Honor. He is respectful and dignified and proudly represents the fraternity in all his affairs. He is loyal and proud.

Our purpose as a fraternity is to be a fraternity of **Courageous and Noble Gentlemen who always endeavor forward**. Our vision is **To Build Noble Generations of Men**.

Because of these changes set forth at the forty-seventh Grand Chapter, we will set the fraternity on a greater path than it has ever been on before. Learning from our founders, using their knowledge, to create a lasting fraternity experience and one where courageous and noble gentlemen who always endeavor forward!

Written by:

Allen Buckley, Fitchburg State '13

Michael Schermer, Illinois State '78, 28 National President

Greg Ward, Alabama '13, Headquarters Staff

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Eternal Light Ceremony

Memorial Service

PURPOSE

This ritual is intended to be a public ceremony. Friends of the Fraternity and friends of the deceased may be invited to participate. It is to symbolize and commemorate the life of a brother who has passed away into the Eternal Light.

CEREMONIAL TEAM

Supreme Archon
Brothers giving Eulogies

MATERIALS NEEDED

Small table as Altar
Candles for each participant, including brothers, pledges and guests
Sig Tau table cloth on Altar
Candle for Altar

ALTAR AND ROOM COMPOSITION

The altar needs to be set up in the middle of the room, with a Sig Tau table cloth draped over the table. On the center of the cloth there should be one lighted candle.

There need be no chairs, as all participants will be standing.

All participants are to be given a candle before they enter the room.

Participants are assembled outside of the room.

Each Brother and associate are given a candle before entering the room.

The Brother in charge of the ritual (Supreme Archon) leads the group into the room and form a circle surrounding the Altar.

There may need to be two or three people deep in the circle depending on the number in attendance.

The Supreme Archon then approaches the Altar.

SUPREME ARCHON:

Today we are gathered within the Chain of Honor of Sigma Tau Gamma Fraternity. We are here to pay tribute to Brother _____, who has recently departed from this life. On the Altar we find a single candle burning. This is the Eternal Light of our Brotherhood. This light continues to burn because of the contributions and sacrifices of those Sigma Tau Gamma Brothers who have gone before us. This is the light from which Brother now shines on our Brotherhood.

I would now like to ask Brother _____ to step forward and share a few words with us concerning our departed brother.

At this time one or more Brothers will step forward and present a eulogy.

EULOGY:

After the Eulogy, the Ritualist will again return to the Altar.

RITUALIST:

Thank you, Brother _____.

The Eternal Light

Darkness is all around us.

It is the darkness and sadness and loneliness. An emptiness caused by the loss of a Brother. But there is a light in the darkness, A small flickering light, that touches each of us.

The light of the memories of our Brother now gone. The memories of his life, which brought joy to many, the memories of the great times together as Brothers, Yes, the memories of our Brother now gone. Let his light remain with us now and always.

At this point the Supreme Archon takes the eternal light from the Altar and uses it to light each Brother's or associate's candle in the circle. When all candles are lit, he returns the eternal light to the Altar.

The light has now grown brighter, as we remember our Brother's past. In fact, we notice that each of us has a light.

The darkness has all but disappeared now.

It has been overcome by the many lights in the room. You may ask, what are these lights

They are the lights of Brotherhood,

The lights that glow only within a circle of Brothers.

The lights that burn as long as the Spirit of Brotherhood continues,

And the Spirit of Brotherhood will continue as long as we can reflect upon the pleasant memories of our Brothers now gone.

SUPREME ARCHON: May the Eternal Light of our Brother _____ continue to touch our lives through our memories of him in order that we too can shine in Brotherhood by leading lives based on the Principles of Learning, Integrity, Excellence, Learning, Citizenship, Brotherhood.

Before we leave this room, let us pay tribute once more to Brother by saying "We hail thee Brother."

ALL BROTHERS: We hail thee Brother.

SUPREME ARCHON: May the Lord watch between thee and me while we are absent the one from the other.

ALL BROTHERS: So be it Almighty Father.

At this point, the Supreme Archon leads the people from the room and as each person leaves, they extinguish their candle.