

# Chartering a Chapter

To be eligible for consideration for a chapter of Alpha Chi, an institution must offer, at minimum, the baccalaureate degree and must be a member in good standing of the regional accrediting association of the territory in which it is located.

The formal charter application form (online) for a chapter must be accompanied by the institution's most recent course catalog, the charter fee (which will be returned if the application is not approved), and a letter of support from your institution's chief academic officer or other appropriate academic or administrative office. This application should be mailed to the Executive Director who will then ballot the National Council for approval by a vote of two-thirds of its members. We invite all qualified institutions to apply.

The one-time fee to charter a chapter of Alpha Chi is \$500. This fee goes to offset the cost of the official charter plaque, the Alpha Chi banner, and the expenses of the National Council member who makes the campus visit to officially inaugurate the chapter. The school may also wish to purchase some of the official ceremonial materials (table runners, candles, etc.) the new chapter will need. National lifetime dues are \$30 per student member. Chapters may add local dues.

We thank you for your interest in Alpha Chi. We hope we have answered many of the questions you may have about our society and that you now feel better acquainted with Alpha Chi. If you still have questions, you may contact Alpha Chi's executive director, Dr. Dennis Organ, or Lara Noah, the national office's director of operations.

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## Alpha Chi National College Honor Scholarship Society

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**AlphaChiHonor.org**

# Overview of Alpha Chi

Alpha Chi is an active member of the Association of College Honor Societies. ACHS, founded in 1925, is the nation's only certifying agency for college and university honor societies.

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As a general honor society, Alpha Chi inducts students from all academic fields. No students are excluded from striving for membership.

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Alpha Chi inducts only the top ten percent of juniors, seniors, and graduate students, insuring that the honor is reserved for the very best students based on a substantial part of their academic record.

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Alpha Chi is distinctive in that historically we have focused local, regional, and national programs on student members rather than on faculty and alumni.

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Annual conventions are modeled on professional meetings, with the main feature being a program of scholarly and artistic presentations by students. The regional and national organizations encourage convention attendance through a generous program of travel and lodging subsidies.

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The national organization awards more than \$60,000 annually in individual scholarships and fellowships. In addition, Alpha Chi's seven regions award more than \$10,000 in scholarships. And approximately \$15,000 annually is awarded to students through local chapter scholarship competitions.

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Alpha Chi has more than 300 chapters located in 45 states and Puerto Rico. Alpha Chi inducts about 11,000 new members a year, with the total membership now exceeding 350,000 since its founding in 1922.

# Membership Benefits

## Benefits to Member Institutions

Member institutions of Alpha Chi have the benefit of a relationship with a prestigious honor society with 85 years of experience and more than 300 chapters on college campuses nationwide.

Alpha Chi chapters focus on making scholarship effective for good. Our chapters often present scholarly workshops and forums on topics that benefit all students. Examples of programs that have been held on member institution campuses are “A Night of the Arts,” “How to Complete Your Tax Return,” “Applying to Graduate School,” “Communication Keys to Success,” and “Academic Integrity Matters.”

Many Alpha Chi chapters host Academic Olympics and Quiz Bowl events for local high school students, book readings and book fairs for elementary school children, and other academic and service projects which bring recognition to the institution and to the society. Chapters also academic showcases and discussion panels for college students. Chapters can even apply for grants to help fund academic events held on campus.

Local chapters of Alpha Chi often sponsor awards and scholarships. Examples of such awards are student research grants for continuing education, faculty achievement awards, student of the year awards, and scholarship awards.

Chapters of Alpha Chi often sponsor guest speakers to the campus or receptions honoring high-achieving underclassmen. Some chapters run tutoring programs and mentoring programs with freshmen. Other chapters organize school supply drives for local elementary children. Such activities are good publicity for both the society and the school.

## Benefits to Student Members

Alpha Chi members receive recognition as distinguished students and members of one of the largest college honor societies in the world. All inductees receive a membership certificate suitable for framing and a recognition lapel pin (both distributed by the chapter sponsor upon induction). Members may also have special recognition at graduation, such as wearing honor cords or stoles.

Through their chapters, members may compete for Alpha Chi scholarships and fellowships, including 26 awarded on the national level totaling more than \$60,000 a year. Alpha Chi’s regions and some chapters also offer additional scholarship programs.

Members receive Alpha Chi’s periodical publications: the *Recorder*, a biannual journal of scholarship of general interest, and the *Newsletter*, a biannual publication with news of local and national activities.

Members can attend annual conventions of the society, where they may give scholarly or creative presentations and participate in a range of educational and social activities. Top student presenters can win cash prizes endowed by alumni and other donors.

Members have the opportunity to continue their relationship with Alpha Chi after graduation through the Active Alumni Program which offers publications, invitations to national and regional conventions, and the chance to compete as alumni for the Joseph E. Pryor Graduate Fellowship.

# Standards Alert

## How to Judge the Credibility of an Honor Society

If an honor society has not been certified as meeting the high standards of the **Association of College Honor Societies**, examine the following criteria:

### Minimum Scholastic Criteria

- Undergraduate (Specialized and Leadership)—Rank in the upper 35% of the class. That rank converts to a 3.2 or 3.3 GPA in most cases; 3.0 is likely too low in this age of grade inflation. Honor societies that advertise a minimum 3.0 are probably more appropriately labeled as Recognition Societies (a definition that has been generally accepted since 1925).
- Undergraduate (General)—Rank in the upper 20% of the class.
- These criteria are minimum ones; many societies have higher standards.

### Governance

- Membership participation in setting authority for control of the affairs of the organization.
- Governance by officers/board members elected by the membership.
- Membership participation in approving and amending bylaws.
- Full financial disclosure.

### Campus Chapters

- Formal chartering of each campus chapter by institution and college/department petition, approved by official action of the governing body of the national organization.
- Candidate selection by the campus chapter.
- Membership invitation by an official chapter.
- Chapter representation in national governance.

**Web Site** – These items should be accessible to the general public (missing items raise credibility questions):

- National Officers and Headquarters Staff
- National Office mailing, telephone, fax, and e-mail addresses
- Criteria for membership
- Benefits of membership
- Membership fee
- Bylaws
- Chapter charter policies and procedures

### Factors That Raise Questions About Credibility

- Address limited to a post office box.
- Web site items (above) missing, especially bylaws - thus transparency is lacking
- Chief Executive Officer contact information missing
- Online application - certified honor societies issue invitations to all qualified candidates from institutional chapters
- Vague and flexible eligibility standards
- No institutional chapter structure