



## Alpha Chi Sigma Manual of Procedures Transition to the Professional Branch

Updated January 2015

### **Historical and Philosophical Background**

Alpha Chi Sigma is a national professional fraternity. As such, the fraternal experience does not end with departure from the academic scene but continues for life. As early as 1922, the Fraternity recognized the need for a professional branch to be responsible for the fraternal activities of alumni of all chapters. At that time, the Professional Branch of Alpha Chi Sigma was formed. The purpose and aims of the Professional Branch are identical to those of the Collegiate Branch and are centered around the Three Objects of the Fraternity.

To emphasize the transition from collegiate to professional status and to encourage continued participation in fraternal activities, the idea of a ceremony was proposed at the 24th Biennial Conclave in 1958. The District Counselors were given the charge of devising such a ceremony. Four years later, the District Counselors made their report. The Professional Recognition Ceremony was adopted at the 27th Biennial Conclave in 1964. The ceremony became mandatory by action at the 29th Biennial Conclave in 1968. In 1976, slight revisions were made to the ceremony by the Professional Development Committee. In 1982, the Ritual Committee presented an optional two-part ceremony, the Professional Induction Ceremony. The first part of the ceremony is a secret ritual that requires four Professional Branch members. The second part is an open ceremony that introduces the new professionals to the chapter.

### **Purpose**

There are three principal purposes behind the professional ceremonies and their related activities.

**Recognize the Transition to Professional Status** – It is important that it be impressed upon the graduating Brothers that their association with Alpha Chi Sigma does not end with graduation but that through the Professional Branch, fraternity membership is for life.

**Maintain Support of the Fraternity** – Only by increasing the number of professional members who support the Fraternity through voluntary professional contributions will it be possible for the Fraternity to grow and expand while keeping the cost of membership within the reach of eligible collegiates. The tax deductible contributions of the Professional Branch provide the bulk of the Fraternity's income.

**Advertise the Fraternity** – As part of the transition from the Collegiate Branch to the Professional Branch, the Brother is presented with a gold recognition pin. The pin consists of the Greek letters Alpha Chi Sigma whose meaning is understood by all members. In accordance with the Bylaws of the Fraternity, the gold pin is reserved for members of the Professional Branch. Wearing the recognition pin is a very effective means for a Brother to display fraternal association. The recognition pin is to be worn on a lapel or collar, while the Fraternity badge may be worn only on a shirt or vest, over the heart.

### **Professional Branch Induction Form**

The Professional Branch Induction (PBI) form should be completed by the Vice Master Alchemist and submitted to the National Office at least two weeks prior to the ceremony date. This allows the National Office to mail the proper numbers of recognition pins to the chapter. Valid forwarding addresses for the members being transferred to the Professional Branch are vital so the new professionals receive future mailings from the National Office.

### **Timing**

A Professional Induction Ceremony should be held as close as possible to the end of the collegiate term during which the participating Brothers will graduate. At the discretion of the chapter and by request of the member, a graduate student may be inducted into the Professional Branch after completing one full year in the Collegiate Branch. Although preferable that this be a separate occasion in the fraternal experience of all members, the non-secret portions of these ceremonies may be combined with another Fraternity function, such as a banquet. It may even be associated with the collegiate initiation in unusual cases of necessity but should not be held until after the completion of the collegiate initiation.

### **Participation by Professional Members**

Since the major purpose of the Professional Induction Ceremony and the Professional Recognition Ceremony is to improve the collegiate-professional relationship, it only makes sense to extend an invitation to professional members in the area to participate. The invitation should be extended as far as possible in advance of the event. Participation by professional members is more than a good idea – it is a requirement of the ceremonies. The Professional Induction Ceremony requires four professional Brothers. The Professional Recognition Ceremony requires one professional Brother.

### **Professional Recognition Ceremony**

**Setting** – No setting or props (other than the professional recognition pin) is required for this ceremony. Coat and tie and dresses are appropriate.

**Participants** – The *Master Alchemist* of the collegiate chapter.

*A Professional Member.* The professional member is preferably one not directly associated with the college or the university where the chapter is located. If the only professional members in the area are associated with the school, the Brother taking part as the professional member should not be the Chapter Advisor but someone who would command the respect of the collegiates.

*The graduating collegiates.* This includes any graduate students who have opted to join the Professional Branch after one year in the Collegiate Branch.

*Witnesses.* Attendance by chapter members should be mandatory (although it is expected that all collegiate Brothers would want to attend), and all efforts should be made to attract professionals in the area.

**The Ceremony** – The ceremony for the Professional Recognition Ceremony can be located in the Ritual binder.

**Informal Talk** – Following the formal part of the ceremony, the Master Alchemist should invite the professional Brother (or if possible another professional member who may be present) to address the group informally. A brief discussion of the benefits derived from Professional Branch membership also should be presented. All

should be urged to continue to meet their financial obligation to the Fraternity through annual professional contributions.

### **Professional Induction Ceremony**

The Professional Induction Ceremony is not distributed to collegiate chapters. If the professional members conducting the ceremony do not have access to a copy of the ceremony, they should contact the [National Office](#) to obtain a copy. If your chapter wishes to have a Professional Induction Ceremony, contact your District Counselor or the nearest professional chapter or professional group.