

Rho Kappa National Honor Society

2019 - 2020

By Laws

Rho Kappa Constitution

Article 1 Name and Purpose

Section 1:

The name of this organization shall be the Rho Kappa Social Studies Honor Society

Section 2:

The mission and the purposes of this organization shall be:

- To promote scholarship and to recognize academic excellence in social studies among high school students.
- To provide through its local chapters opportunities for exploration in the social studies in secondary school environments and community.
- To encourage interest in, understanding of, and appreciation for the social studies.

Article 2 Faculty Sponsor

Section 1:

Each local chapter of Rho Kappa shall have a designated faculty sponsor approved by the high school principal and may serve consecutive terms.

Section 2:

The chapter sponsor will be responsible for the chapter's day-to-day activities, act as a supervisor over the chapter, and perform the duties of a liaison among administration, faculty, students, and community members.

Section 3:

The chapter sponsor has responsibility for the maintenance of accurate and up-to-date files that consist of membership lists, financial transactions, chapter history, chapter activities, chapter publications and correspondence, and chapter by-laws.

Section 4:

The chapter sponsor shall regularly review each member to ensure membership in good standing as determined by the chapter's by-laws.

Section 5:

The chapter sponsor shall assist the chapter officers to understand and carry out their duties to the best of their abilities.

Section 6:

The chapter sponsor shall be a Rho Kappa honorary member.

Section 7:

The chapter sponsor shall be the main liaison between the local chapter and the national organization. This sponsor is responsible for submitting all membership lists and associated fees along with any other information requested by the Rho Kappa Advisory Council.

Article 3 Local Chapters

Section 1:

Any accredited public high school or non-public secondary school accredited or approved by a state department of education or by an accrediting agency is eligible to apply for a charter of a local chapter. Each high school shall have their own chapter unless there is not a faculty sponsor available. In such instance, one chapter may be shared as long as all other constitutional requirements are met and fulfilled.

Section 2:

Each chapter shall complete a charter application, supplied by the Rho Kappa Advisory Council and pay a chartering fee of \$150.

Section 3:

Each chapter shall pay an annual affiliation fee to the national organization of \$75.

Section 4:

Each chapter shall pay an annual induction fee of \$10 per new inductee.

Section 5:

Local chapter membership dues, if any, shall be determined by the local chapter and shall be subject to the approval of the faculty advisor and the school administrator.

Section 6:

Local chapters shall adhere to this Rho Kappa national constitution and failure to do so may result in the loss of chapter membership.

Section 7:

Each chapter shall submit its current membership list and any associated fees or dues responsibilities to the National Advisory Council by October 1 each year.

Section 8:

Any chapter that does not submit annually (1) current membership list and (2) annual national affiliation fees shall be deemed inactive. After two years of inactive status, the chapter shall forfeit its charter. The chapter may apply for reinstatement upon resubmitting reactivation papers and fees to be determined by the National Advisory Council.

Section 9:

Local councils may be named in honor of an individual who has made contributions to the social studies or local community.

Article 4 Membership

Section 1:

Membership in a local chapter is bestowed upon a student by that local chapter. A faculty selection committee assembled at the high school in which the chapter resides shall confer the memberships. The selection committee shall consist of the chapter faculty sponsor and other faculty members within the school. Membership is based upon the academic achievement in courses within the field of social studies as well as overall academic GPA.

Section 2:

Once selected, members have the responsibility to continue to demonstrate high academic standards; including maintaining high grades in their social studies courses. Failure to do so will result in removal from the organization.

Section 3:

There are three types of membership: active, alumni, and honorary. The definitions are:

- Active members are current high school students and shall remain active members while they maintain the required GPA until their graduation, at which time they will become alumni members.
- Alumni members are members who have graduated with good standing within the organization and may be invited by the high school to attend or participate in chapter events; however, they have no voice and no vote in chapter affairs.
- Honorary memberships may be awarded by consent of the faculty sponsor and the high school faculty body, to school officials, principals, teachers, community members, and former graduates whose achievement in the advancement of social studies and related fields merit such recognition. Chapters may induct up to two honorary members per year. Honorary members have no voice and no vote in chapter affairs.

Section 4:

Active members shall demonstrate an ability to work with others, to conduct research and inquiry in the field of social and studies and shall possess qualities of industry, initiative, and reliability as they pertain to academic excellence.

Section 5:

Active members shall also exhibit a genuine interest in, and enthusiasm for, social studies scholarship and topics.

Section 6:

Active members shall contribute serve to the high school or the community in which the chapter resides at the direction and discretion of the school's principal and the chapter's sponsor.

Section 7:

Any current Rho Kappa member in good standing who transfers to another high school and brings a letter of verification from their former principal or chapter sponsor to the new school shall be automatically accepted as a member into the new school's chapter.

Section 8:

Selection into Rho Kappa shall not be based, in any way, on the basis of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, or physical or mental disabilities.

Article 5 Selection of Members

Section 1:

Each candidate for membership shall be selected to a designated chapter of Rho Kappa.

Section 2:

Candidates for membership must have been in attendance at the high school in which the chapter resides for the equivalent of one semester prior to being considered. If special or unique circumstances merit, the high school administration may waive the semester requirement, providing a letter of explanation to the National Advisory Council.

Section 3:

Candidates for membership must have completed two core courses in the field of social studies at the Honors, AP or Essence levels and be prepared to complete at least three core courses at the Honors, AP or Essence levels. The minimum grade point average for these courses is an unweighted 3.5 or the numerical equivalent.

Section 4:

The candidate's overall cumulative high school GPA shall be a minimum of 3.00 or the numerical equivalent. Individual chapters may choose to increase the GPA requirements for their chapter but may not decrease them.

Section 5:

Candidates achieving the minimal GPA requirements may be invited to apply for membership into Rho Kappa. The application process will require candidates to show participation in activities that demonstrate civic engagement in school or community and their desire and aspiration to be a member of the organization. Applicants must have a letter of recommendation from a current faculty member.

Section 6:

The method of selection of eligible students and their election to the organization shall be determined by the faculty sponsor, the faculty selection committee, and the chapter's high school administration. The candidates must meet the GPA, and social studies course completion requirements listed in Section 5, but all other methods of selecting candidates shall be left up to the individual chapters.

Section 7:

Any members who social studies grades drop below the chapter's minimum GPA requirement for two consecutive semesters shall be dismissed from Rho Kappa. Such members may reapply

to the organization and can be readmitted when those requirements are met but the candidate is subject to selection from the faculty selection committee again.

Section 8:

A description of the selection procedures and the local chapter criteria shall be widely available in a timely fashion to all of the school's administration, faculty, students, parents, and community members.

Section 9:

The National Rho Kappa Advisory Council shall not review the judgement of the faculty selection committee regarding the selection of individual members to the local chapters.

Article 6 Induction of New Members

Section 1:

Each local chapter may design and execute an appropriate ceremony for the induction of its new members. The procedures and proceedings for this ceremony shall be determined by the local chapter, the chapter faculty sponsor, and the high school administration. Chapters are forbidden to initiate, haze, blackball, or do anything similar, as any part of the Rho Kappa process. Any chapter found engaged in any of these shall lose its charter. "Induction" is to be used in any reference to the induction of new members. Newly inducted members shall receive their membership certificates and any other appropriate Rho Kappa materials when their membership has been affirmed.

Section 2:

The date and time of the induction ceremony is at the discretion of the local chapter, the chapter faculty advisor, and the high school administration.

Section 3:

In an event that a particular individual qualifies for membership after the date of the induction ceremony, he or she may be inducted at a regular chapter meeting provided the membership forms and fees have already been submitted to the National Advisory Council.

Article 7 Removal from Membership

Section 1:

The procedure for removal shall be determined by the faculty sponsor, the school faculty selection committee, and the school administration and shall be in compliance with the rules and regulations stated by the National Advisory Council. A written description of these procedures and the removal process shall be available to all members at the time of their induction.

Section 2:

Members who fall below the required GPA or course standards that were used as the basis of membership selection shall be **provided one written warning from the chapter sponsor**. The member shall have a reasonable amount of time to correct the deficiency prior to removal proceedings beginning.

Section 3:

In the event that a serious violation of school rules/policies or civil laws has occurred, the chapter sponsor and faculty selection committee may forgo the written warning.

Section 4:

In the case of impending removal proceedings, **the member has the right to request a formal hearing before the chapter sponsor and the faculty selection committee. This request must be made in writing** by the member in question two weeks prior to the hearing being set.

Section 5:

A removed member may be reinstated into the local chapter when the faculty sponsor and the faculty selection committee determine that the removed members qualifies for reinstatement. Such members must reapply and are subject to selection from the faculty selection committee again.

Section 6:

The chapter sponsor shall notify the National Rho Kappa Advisory Council promptly of any member dismissals and any member reinstatements.

Section 7:

The National Rho Kappa Advisory Council shall hear no appeals in the cases of membership removal and shall respect the decision of each local chapter regarding their membership.

Article 8 Chapter Officers of Local Chapter

Section 1:

The chapter officers, their corresponding duties, and their method of election shall be determined by each individual chapter with the approval of the faculty sponsor, the members of the local chapter, and the school administration.

Section 2:

New officers shall be elected each spring and shall assume office the first day of the following school year.

New officers shall be elected by way of student vote (both current and outgoing students). This shall be a secret ballot. Students seeking officer positions shall make 2-4 minute speech regarding the position they wish to pursue.

In the event of a tie (for any position) the Chapter Advisors with a Third Faculty member will elect the winner.

With regards to President and Vice President, the student with the most votes will earn the position of president and the student with the second highest number of votes will earn the Vice President position.

Section 3:

The chapter officers and the chapter sponsor shall have general supervision of the chapter affairs and business. They shall also conduct the regular business meetings, make recommendations to the chapter body, and determine and perform such other duties that are specified by the chapter bylaws. All actions and recommendations of these officers shall be subject to the review of the entire chapter membership.

Section 4:

The chapter officers shall have the responsibility of ensuring that the chapter activities, functions, and procedures follow school policy, regulations, and guidelines.

Section 5:

The officer positions include:

➤ **President**

- Call meetings into session and facilitate monthly meetings
- Issue Warnings/Obligations to members for missed meetings
- Attend both AM and PM meetings (unless approved by chapter advisor)

- Lead any subcommittees
- Participant in the induction ceremony
- Other duties as requested by chapter advisor
- Vice President
 - Log Service Hours for each member on the Digital Form provided by Advisors
 - Attend both AM and PM meetings (unless approved by chapter advisor)
 - Lead any subcommittees
 - Participant in the induction ceremony
 - Other duties as requested by chapter advisor
- Treasurer
 - Collect Induction Fees, Annual Fees, and Honor Cord Fees
 - Document thoroughly the collection of the above listed fees (using receipt forms provided by Chapter Advisors)
 - Attend both AM and PM meetings (unless approved by chapter advisor)
 - Lead any subcommittees
 - Participant in the induction ceremony
 - Other duties as requested by chapter advisor
- Secretary/Historian:
 - Take Attendance for all meetings
 - Confirm documentation (via pictures) of Service Projects
 - Attend both AM and PM meetings (unless approved by chapter advisor)
 - Lead any subcommittees
 - Participant in the induction ceremony
 - Other duties as requested by chapter advisor

Article 9 Meetings

Section 1:

Each chapter shall hold regular meetings during the school year on days and times that are designated by the chapter officers and the chapter sponsor. These meetings shall be in accordance with the school policy and regulations for club and activities meetings.

Section 2:

The regularity of these meetings (i.e., weekly, bi monthly, monthly, etc.) shall be designated by the local chapters but shall occur no less than twice a semester.

Section 3:

Special meetings may be called by the chapter officers and the chapter sponsor as so needed.

Section 4:

Local chapters shall, in all points not expressly designated by the constitution or the local chapter's bylaws, conduct meetings according to Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

Section 5:

Rho Kappa members are expected to attend all meetings in either the AM or PM

Section 6:

Rho Kappa members are expected to be active and willing participates in subcommittees

Section 7:

Missed meetings without prior notification to chapter advisor or excused absence will result in the following:

First Offense: Verbal Warning

Second Offense: One hour of additional service due

Third Offense: \$5 fine

Fourth Offense: Expulsion from Rho Kappa

Article 10 Activities

Section 1:

Each local chapter shall determine, with the consent of the chapter membership, the chapter sponsor, and the school administration what activities are appropriate for each chapter to participate in.

Section 2:

These activities shall consist of the following criteria: They

- Should fulfill a need within the school or community or provide a service to either group
- Have the support of the faculty and the administration along with the membership body and the chapter sponsor
- Are appropriately and educationally defensible
- Are well planned and executed
- May or may not be directly related to the field of social studies but should honor the overall purpose, mission, and goals of such an organization

Section 3:

It is the responsibility of each chapter to represent the national Rho Kappa organization in a positive and suitable manner and the activities it engages in should be selected as such.

Section 4:

Each Rho Kappa member will complete a minimum of 10 hours of service.

Section 5:

Rho Kappa Service Hours may NOT be applied to meet the requirements of other honor societies, organizations, or Student Service Learning.

Article 11 Awards and Recognitions

Section 1:

Senior members who are in good standing with the organization at the time of graduation shall be given the opportunity to purchase honor cords.

Section 2:

The honor cord colors shall be the official color[s] of Rho Kappa.

Article 12 Bylaws

Section 1:

Each chapter shall write bylaws to execute the national organization's constitution and/or to further clarify the chapter's operating procedures. Bylaws for each local chapter do not need the approval of the National Advisory Council but must be consistent with and not be in conflict with the national constitution.

Section 2:

The chapter bylaws shall contain but is not limited to, the information concerning:

- Membership selection criteria
- The schedulings of meetings
- The election, duties, and responsibilities of officers
- The chapter sponsor duties and responsibilities
- Criteria and procedures for removal from an office
- Filling vacancies of officer positions
- Criteria and procedures for removal from membership
- Method and procedure for ratification of the bylaws

Section 3:

Each chapter must ensure that a copy of its bylaws is on file with the school.

Section 4:

Each local chapter shall submit to the National Advisory Council any changes made to their bylaws after initial affiliation.

Article 13 Amendments

Section 1:

This Rho Kappa constitution may be amended at any meeting of the National Advisory Council or by mail (electronic or otherwise) by majority affirmative vote of the National Advisory Council and with the approval of the NCSS Executive Director.

Section 2:

Local chapters may petition to the National Advisory Council with recommended amendment to this constitution.

Section 3:

Boonsboro High School maintains the right to amend the By Laws as deemed necessary by the chapter advisors. Discussion of Amendments will take place at a Rho Kappa Meeting.

I have read and agree to abide by the provisions herein outlined to the best of my ability. I recognize that failure to uphold my duties as a Rho Kappa Member will result in my expulsion from the society.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed Name: _____