



Rho Kappa
HCS Scholars Academy Chapter of the Rho Kappa Social Studies Honor Society

PURPOSE

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 the community.
- to encourage interest in, understanding of, and appreciation for the social studies

[Article 1, Section 2]

THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION AND ITS ROLE

National Organization

Section 1: The oversight of this organization shall be with an Ad Hoc committee of 6 members of the National Council for the Social Studies appointed by the NCSS president.

Section 2: The NCSS Executive Director shall be an ex-officio voting member of the Advisory Council. A staff member from External Relations and Council Communications should be present to advise but not vote.

Section 3: Each of the six appointed members shall serve a three-year term, renewable once.

Section 4: At least three of the appointed members of this body shall be full-time secondary school teachers with at least 5 years' experience whose primary teaching responsibilities are in the field of social studies.

Section 5: The National Rho Kappa Advisory Council shall be an official entity of NCSS and therefore all regulations, rules, and by-laws concerning representation and behavior pursuant to such committee will apply.

Section 6: A Chair of the Advisory Council shall be selected by the president in consultation with the group. The Chair shall serve a one-year term which can be renewable once.

Section 7: The Chair of the Advisory Council shall preside at all meetings for this body and report annually to the Board of Directors of NCSS.

Section 8: Members of the Advisory Council shall share the powers, duties, and responsibilities of the council except for those specifically stated otherwise. These obligations shall include but not be limited to: disseminating information to local chapters in their regions, encouraging and stimulating active chapters, and encouraging formation of new chapters, and serving in full capacity of the organization.

Section 9: Rho Kappa Advisory Council meeting shall be held once a year at the NCSS national conference. All other meetings or correspondence are at the discretion of the members and the Chair of this council.

National Committees

Section 1: The Rho Kappa Advisory Council may create committees as necessary as needed.

Section 2: The Chair of the Advisory Council shall appoint the members of these committees.

Section 3: The Chair shall be an ex-officio member of all committees within the Advisory Council.

Section 4: The committees shall report to the Advisory Council regarding the fulfillment of the charges given to them by the council.

[Article 2 & Article 3]

POWERS VESTED IN THE ORGANIZATION

THE PRINCIPAL (OR THE PRINCIPAL'S DESIGNEE) WILL

- Solicit one or more volunteers to serve as chapter advisor(s).
- Reserve the right to approve all activities and decisions of the chapter.
- Receive appeals in cases of non-selection of member candidates or the dismissal of members after that individual has appealed a decision, in writing, to the advisor and the content-area faculty advisory council.

THE CHAPTER ADVISOR/FACULTY SPONSOR WILL

- Consist of an instructional coach and a teacher certified in the content area. The role of the instructional coach is to coordinate between the societies and to assist with the operations of the society.

- Be a faculty member who volunteers to lead the chapter and, by their example, demonstrate enthusiasm for language arts and education.
- Be responsible for the direct, day-to-day supervision of the chapter and act as liaison among students, faculty, administration, and community.
- Maintain files on membership, chapter history, activities, financial transactions, and the chapter bylaws.
- Regularly review each member for compliance with society standards and obligations.
- Determine the method of officer selection.
- Determine the number of officers and their duties.
- Help the chapter officers understand and carry out their duties.
- Act as a voting member of the Content-Area Faculty Advisory Council.
- Serve as the major liaison between the local chapter and the National Office, submitting the membership information and fees and any other items requested by the National Advisory Council and receiving items pertaining to membership sent by the National Office.

THE CONTENT-AREA FACULTY ADVISORY COUNCIL WILL

- Consistent of one member of the administrative team and one member from each core content area (i.e., English, math, science, and social studies).
- Meet to review the procedures of the chapter, outline the selection process for new members, consider dismissals, and/or discuss other related matters.
- Develop and revise, when necessary, all chapter procedures for the selection and dismissal of members.

[Article 4 & Article 5]

LOCAL CHAPTER GUIDELINES

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 instances, 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 \$5 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 social studies or the local community.

[Article 6]

PARTNERSHIP WITH SCHOOL CLUB/ORGANIZATION

To create a welcoming environment for all students, even those who do not currently meet requirements for induction, the content-area honor society will pair with a school based club. Only inducted members can vote or hold officer positions; however, through the partnership with a school based club, students may participate in events. Students who participate in the club, but are not inducted members, are not eligible for honor cords, and they can only list the club (not the honor society) on college applications, resumes, and curriculum vitae. Inducted memberships should list the honor society. Members who have transitioned from the partnered club to being inducted should delineate membership for each. [See bylaw guidelines for additional information.](#)

THE CHAPTER OFFICERS

PRESIDENT
VICE PRESIDENT
TREASURE
SECRETARY

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.

Updated on 9/13/2023

Section 2:

Officers will be elected in accordance with school policies governing clubs and student organizations.

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.

[Article 10]

CRITERIA FOR CHAPTER 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 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.

Updated on 9/13/2023

- Honorary members (see section on this topic)

Section 4: Active members shall demonstrate an ability to work with others, to conduct research and inquiry in the field of social 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 service 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.

REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES FOR INITIAL MEMBER SELECTION

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 and be prepared to complete at least three core courses. The minimum grade point average for these courses is an unweighted 3.00 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 and the application requirements listed in Section 5, but all other methods of selecting candidates shall be left up to the individual chapters.

Section 7:

Any members whose 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 the school's administration, faculty, students, parents, and community members.

Section 9:

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

[Article 7]

REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP

Members must attend regular meetings and participate in activities, including an officer lecture. Members must maintain a 3.0 unweighted combined GPA in all social studies courses completed and a 3.0 overall unweighted GPA. Members must be enrolled in a social studies course during the school year. These courses may be Honors, AP, or dual-enrollment (e.g., sociology, psychology, geography). Coastal Carolina University's grades are included in the unweighted GPA calculation.

Students must pay yearly dues, which will be decided by the officers, principal, and Content-Area Faculty Council. These dues will be collected to pay the yearly review fees to the national office. Any remaining fees may be used to support the honor society's mission.

DISMISSAL OF MEMBERSHIP

Updated on 9/13/2023

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 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 member 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.

Any student who does not meet GPA requirements for two consecutive semesters may be removed from membership based on the recommendation of the principal and the Content-Area Faculty Council. Any student who fails to meet the community service requirements, attend meetings, participate in events, and/or uphold the values of the society may be removed from membership based on the recommendation of the principal and the Content-Area Faculty Council. Students may be readmitted upon addressing the outstanding issues. Until readmission is granted, the dismissed students will have no voice or vote in chapter affairs.

[Article 9]

HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

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 achievements 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.

INDUCTION

The regularly scheduled induction ceremony will take place during the spring semester. Students must be present at the induction ceremony to finalize membership. If a student misses the induction ceremony, the principal and advisor may grant permission for the induction to occur at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the honor society; however, this cannot occur until elected officers for the current school year are in place. Seniors cannot be inducted as the spring ceremony is for the upcoming school year, and at that point, the students will no longer be at Scholars Academy.

[Article 6]

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. Meetings shall be scheduled in accordance with school guidelines. Meeting dates are pending administration approval and must work with other organizations and clubs to limit conflicts for members.

Section 2: The regularity of these meetings (i.e., weekly, bimonthly, monthly, etc.) shall be designated by the local chapter but shall occur no less than twice a semester. As meetings are paired with Debate Club, the monthly meetings will allow a space to discuss society business.

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 this constitution or the local chapter's bylaws, conduct meetings according to Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

[Article 13]

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.

Each chapter is responsible to host one service opportunity per semester.

[Article 12]

COMMUNITY SERVICE

All members must complete community service. Students must complete the required yearly community service hours for the HCS Scholars Academy High School and complete an additional 10 hours of community service. The 10 hours may also count towards requirements for the other honor societies. Service to the societies may count towards this requirement.

[Article 12, Section 2]

USE OF OFFICIAL INSIGNIA AND MOTTO

Section 1: Rho Kappa shall have an official emblem selected by the Board of Directors of the National Council for Social Studies. The National Advisory Council shall have the exclusive control of its use.

Section 2: All Rho Kappa insignia must be procured from the Rho Kappa National Advisory Council and members and local chapters may not reproduce or substitute any officially designated insignia.

Section 3: Only active, alumni, and honorary members are allowed to wear the official emblem.

Section 4: Any member who resigns or is removed from membership shall not be permitted or entitled to wear the emblem.

Section 5: The emblem shall bear the official name of the organization: Rho, meaning "resh" or "head" and Kappa, meaning "palm of the hand." These words together symbolize the purpose and mission of the organization which is knowledge and wisdom combined with service.

Section 6: The official colors of the emblem shall be NCSS blue and white.

[Article 13]

BYLAWS AND AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

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 scheduling 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

Changes can be recommended by students, administration, or faculty, but approval of changes will occur with a majority vote by the faculty council.

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.

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 a 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 amendments to this constitution.

[Article 15 & Article 16]

SPECIAL AWARDS

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 14]