

Omicron Delta Kappa National Leadership Honor Society



Initiation Ceremony Handbook

All Circles are encouraged to make their initiation special for new members, graduating members, families and friends. Please make the appropriate arrangements for a significant campus recognition ceremony.

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RULES & REGULATIONS

1. In the initiation of new members or the installation of officers no undignified conduct whatsoever shall be permitted.
2. Any violation of the preceding provision shall be at once reported to the Executive Director of the Society, with all the facts in the case, and such violation shall be investigated by the national officers and their findings reported to the next session of the Board of Directors and National Convention.
3. Conviction upon the charge by the National Convention by a majority vote of the voting members present shall be punishable by the expulsion from membership of such individual members as are found guilty, or by revoking the charter of the Circle when the entire Circle is found guilty.
4. If the occasion is the installation of a new Circle, the officers designated in the National By-Laws (Article X, Section 12) to conduct the ceremonies shall take the part of "President" in the Ritual. Said officer may appoint other members of the Society to assist in the ceremonies, or if other members are not available, the designated officer shall take all other parts specified in the Ritual.
5. If the occasion is the installation of a new Circle, the installing officer shall present the charter to the President of a new Circle at such point in the proceedings as may be convenient. This presentation may or may not be accompanied by other remarks from the installing officer.

OFFICERS

In addition to the regular Circle officers of the Society, attendants of such number as is necessary should be appointed for the initiation by the President.

PODIUM CLOTH

Used for initiation ceremonies, the podium cloth is 18" x 40" in white satin, bordered in sky blue. "Omicron Delta Kappa" appears in black, and the Key and tassel appear in gold. Weights provide stability when draped on a podium or lectern. (Podium cloths may be ordered from National Headquarters.)

COLORS

The colors are sky blue, white, and black, and ribbons of these colors are to be worn on public occasions. At banquets and at other occasions when members have on full dress, the wearing of the official flower gives a full color display: the dress suit is black, the linen white, and the flower blue.

FLOWER

The official flower is blue. Any sky blue flower, preferably the delphinium, or larkspur may be regarded as official. The perennial delphinium is quite beautiful and gives a distinctive effect. White carnations dyed blue have proven very satisfactory. These can usually be obtained from any florist.

ARRANGEMENTS & PROCEDURES FOR INITIATION CEREMONY

A. Initiation ceremonies may be open to invited guests if the Circle so desires. Sample invitations & postcards found on the OΔK website.

B. The members of the Circle shall assemble at the appointed place, all wearing formal dress if desired. The President, other officers, attendants, and candidates may wear the black academic bachelor's gown.

C. The National By-Laws (Article III, Section 1) state that "every ... initiation of new members shall be in general accord with the Suggested Ritual of the Society." This does provide some flexibility--especially for those Circles that are concerned with the invocation and benediction portions of the ceremony.

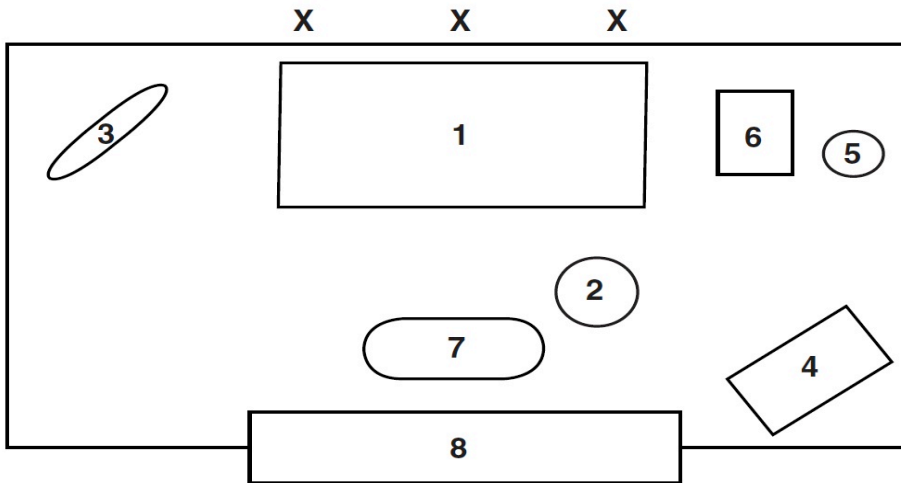
D. A large room, preferably a chapel, should be used for the initiation and the arrangement should be as attractive as possible. If the initiation is held in the day, the room should be partially darkened. In any case, there should be an altar, which may be readily improvised by using a table of suitable size. Drape this table in white by throwing a clean white tablecloth or sheet over it, allowing the edges to drop just to the floor on each end and in front. Over the table thus covered may be stretched the official flag, allowing the circles on the flag to hang halfway between the top of the table and the floor. On the back corners of the table place candlesticks containing large blue candles, which shall burn during the entire ceremony. At the back center place a five-branch candelabrum, or five candlesticks, with large blue candles to be lighted later in the ceremony. The Circle Record Book should be placed on the altar, and a low silver bowl filled with flowers may be used if desired. A large replica of the Omicron Delta Kappa Key should be suspended back of the altar.

The initiation ceremony is an important event for every Circle. To ensure that the ceremony proceeds smoothly, proper planning is required. A checklist for the initiation ceremony might include the following items:

Checklist for Initiation Ceremony

- Forward to the National Headquarters all initiation fees, membership forms, and Certificate Order Form not less than 21 days in advance.
- Prepare invitations to be sent to parents, faculty, staff, others
- Reserve an appropriate campus location for the ceremony
- Gather the following materials:
 - Table cloth or cover (if one is available)
 - OΔK podium cloth
 - Five-prong candelabra or 5 candles
 - Two candles (blue or white) for table corners
 - OΔK bronze key on stand (if available)
 - Official record book of the Circle
 - Floral arrangement (if possible)
 - Choir or academic regalia (if desired)

Suggested Initiation table arrangement:



NOTE: If a banquet follows, flowers and OΔK Podium Cloth can be used at head table; flowers could be given to a special guest, e.g. wife of guest speaker, etc.

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| 1. Speakers table lectern | 6. Certificates |
| 2. OΔK Bronze Key on stand | 7. Flowers |
| 3. Five prong candelabra | 8. OΔK Podium Cloth |
| 4. Record book (new members sign) | X = Installing officers |
| 5. Lapel Pins | |

E. In case a large room is used for the initiation, chairs should be provided for the members and arranged so as to form a semi-circle. These chairs may be effectively bound together by festoons of crepe paper in the colors of the Society, sky blue, white and black. Attendants will guard an appropriate point in the semi-circle marking the opening where the candidates enter.

F. The candidates for initiation shall assemble in some room adjacent to the initiation room. Please note that all initiates must complete national membership forms and pay the required membership fees as required by OΔK. No less than 21 days in advance of this ceremony, the Circle Faculty Secretary must submit these forms and fees to National Headquarters with their signature certifying each initiate's eligibility for membership. National Headquarters will, if all forms and fees are submitted in this manner, send membership symbols (certificates and jewelry) to the Faculty Secretary so that these can be distributed during the ceremony.

G. The attendants shall take charge of and guide the candidates, conducting the processional into the initiation room upon direction of the President. In case a chapel is used for the initiation, the processional may be led by the Circle President and another officer, followed by the members of the circle, each of whom is conducting a candidate for initiation. As the procession approaches the altar, the President and other officers take their places directly behind it. The other members of the Circle shall arrange themselves in a large semi-circle before the altar with the candidates for initiation standing in front of the attendants who escorted them into the room.

H. Music of appropriate dignity may be incorporated into the ceremony for richness of mood.

I. It is desirable to have both students and faculty participate in the ceremony.

J. Following the initiation the Circle may assemble for a business meeting, banquet, or special program.

CEREMONY FOR NEW MEMBER INITIATION

Invocation: O God, we offer gratitude for the privilege of leadership in worthy undertakings and for the ideals of Omicron Delta Kappa. Give to all who are assembled here to confer the honors of initiation upon these duly elected members a renewed vision of the meaning of Omicron Delta Kappa. Grant that the desire for clean living and thinking, for high purposes and ideals, for moral strength and integrity may ever remain close to our hearts. Grant also that we may strive without ceasing to incorporate them into our lives as students, faculty, and alumni. Instill in us, O God, the principles of faith and courage, of honest work, and of sacrifice for the tasks that lie before us. Amen.

President: As President of the (name of Circle) Circle of Omicron Delta Kappa I welcome you to this ceremony held in your behalf. We who are members of Omicron Delta Kappa have observed your habits, attitudes, and capacities, and are pleased with your success, at your steady growth as leaders in worthwhile endeavors, and at your appreciation of the ideals and purposes of the Society. We have asked you here today to make you members of our Society and to present to each of you the Laurel Crowned Circle, the symbol of achievement. Before we accept you into The Omicron Delta Kappa Society, please listen thoughtfully to these words.

(Several members may speak from appropriate places at the invitation table or from the rear of the room or balcony.)

First Voice: You should know that the Laurel Crowned Circle is not only a recognition of past exemplary conduct, but that it must also be to you a constant inspiration to finer and nobler living, so long as you shall live.

Second Voice: You should know that the Laurel Crowned Circle is not only a recognition of past loyalty to all good works, but that it must also be to you a constant inspiration to unselfish service to the Society, to (name of college or university) and to your vocation, and a life-long reminder that if greatness is to be achieved, one must serve.

Third Voice: You should know that the Laurel Crowned Circle is not only a recognition of past achievement, but that it must also be to you a constant inspiration to spend the rest of your days climbing higher and yet higher, ever remembering that death comes apace and that the longest span of human life is all too short for the completion of the tasks that lie ready to our hands.

President: You have heard in these words the great unchanging principles upon which our Society is founded. If you are willing to accept the lofty ideals, the sense of devotion, and the spirit of aspiration represented in Omicron Delta Kappa, please respond, "We are."

Candidates: We are.

President: Then repeat after me:

"In the presence of our Creator/and of the Circle here assembled,/I solemnly promise/to uphold the Ideals, and Traditions,/the Constitution and By-Laws,/of The Omicron Delta Kappa Society/and to support in loyal service/its local and national officers,/and to hold in confidence/any and all the proceedings of the Society,/which it shall deem advisable."

President: You have undertaken upon yourselves the obligation of membership in THE OMICRON DELTA KAPPA SOCIETY. This means that you will ever seek to make it a real factor for good in academic and community life, not only in your college or university, but in American educational institutions at large; that you will make every effort to practice its high ideals, both in private and public life, so that the world may see in you a concrete, living symbol of the great principles of OMICRON DELTA KAPPA.

Omicron Delta Kappa was founded December 3, 1914, at Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia. In the tradition of the idealism and leadership of George Washington and Robert E. Lee, the founders stated that leadership of exceptional quality and versatility in college should be recognized, that representatives of all phases of college life should cooperate in worthwhile endeavor, and that outstanding students and faculty members should meet on a basis of common interest, understanding, and helpfulness. The motives which guided the founders sprang from the desire to bring together one body for the general good of the institution, leaders from all parts of the College or University Community. The success of The OΔK® Idea, an essential part of which is its joint student-faculty character and a determination to maintain a consistent and high standard of leadership recognition, led to the establishment of chapters, which we call Circles, at other colleges.

(At this point the President may add a brief statement about the history or traditions of the local Circle.)

It has ever been our desire and custom to try to symbolize in material form our dreams, ambitions, ideals, and sentiments. In accordance with this innate desire and feeling, Omicron Delta Kappa also has tried to express in material form, the "Key," its noble ideals, lofty aspirations, altruistic aims. This key, struck off in the form of a circle, symbolizes union forever and the equality which characterizes membership in Omicron Delta Kappa. The Greek motto for which the letters OΔK® stand is:

Ο Δαφνοκομος Κυκλος

(Ho Daph-no'-ko-mos K ük'-los) which translates as "The Laurel Crowned Circle." Our emblem, the Laurel Crowned Circle, stands for success achieved in worthy undertakings.

The shape of the Key (*The President points to a large replica of the Key*) represents the Circle, which symbolizes the all-around and inclusive nature of our organization. The five stars on the upper bar represent the five major phases of college life, for which our Society stands:

(As each of the five major phases are identified slowly and emphatically by the President, an assistant lights one candle at a time until all five are lit.)

- Scholarship
- Athletics
- Campus or Community Service, Social, Religious Activities, and Campus Government
- Journalism, Speech, and the Mass Media
- Creative and Performing Arts

The number 1914 on the lower bar indicates the year in which our Society was founded.

You have been chosen to wear this emblem of distinction because of your loyalty and devotion to (*name of college or university*) and to the things that are fine and true in life. You will now sign the Official Record Book of the (*name of Circle*) Circle.

(The President shall call each member forward by name and deliver to each one the symbols of membership in the Society.)

Benediction: Most gracious God, who has opened our eyes to all lovely objects of righteousness and truth, who has blessed us with high impulse and lofty thought, and who has led us to this our hour of great dedication, help us as we go out into the world to keep fresh in our lives the ideals which we have affirmed here today. Amen.

Installation of Officers

If the occasion requires the installation of officers, either national or local, the installing officer should be previously designated and should be, if possible, a past national or local officer. The new officers shall be required to present themselves before the installing officer, who may make appropriate remarks, and administer the following oath of office.

***Officer:* Raise your right hand and repeat after me:**

“I do solemnly covenant/that I will discharge the duties of my office/in accordance with the National Constitution and National and Local By-Laws/to the best of my knowledge and ability/bearing in mind always/the welfare of my Alma Mater/and of The Omicron Delta Kappa Society.”

As the oath is administered, the new officers should be required to hold their right hands uplifted and to repeat the oath as it is rehearsed to them by the installing officer.

Installation of New Circles

If the occasion is the installation of a new Circle, the presiding officer (called the “President” throughout the Ritual) shall be the National Vice President for Extension or some other national officer or member of the Society appointed as provided in the National By-Laws (Article X, Section 12).