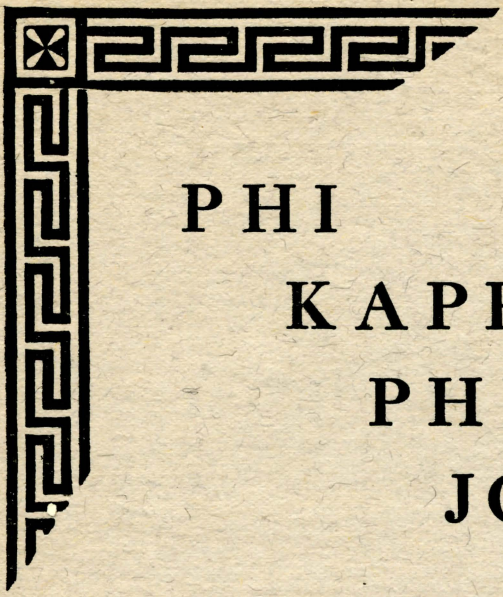


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ISSUED IN OCTOBER, DECEMBER, FEBRUARY, AND MAY
IN THE INTERESTS OF
THE HONOR SOCIETY OF PHI KAPPA PHI

DECEMBER, 1925

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PHI KAPPA PHI INSTALLATION ADDRESS¹BY A. E. DOUGLASS²

In speaking to you on this installation of a new chapter of the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, I bring first the best wishes and cordial co-operation of the national officers. I bring also the same congratulations from my own chapter in Arizona, and a very warm welcome to membership in this great honor society. I bring, furthermore, a more special and personal greeting from the Arizona chapter to your president, who was our university president for seven years, and during a large part of that time, president of our local chapter. To all this I add my personal pleasure in the privilege of this acquaintance with you individually, and contact with your spirit and your appreciation of the most worthy parts of college life.

There is a practical side to be considered in the installation of a chapter. From personal experience of eight years as secretary, I can speak of some of the matters which we have discussed and settled and others which we have discussed and which perhaps never should see complete settlement. Let me, therefore, suggest policies and procedures which have helped in our development. Without trying to bring these items into logical sequence, I would say somewhat as follows:

Register at once your full names and degrees and colleges with the secretary. That helps him in getting the certificates of members in proper shape.

The selection of alumni from past classes is best done by a committee, not attempting to work too rapidly. Your own scholarship society fulfills this duty almost perfectly, and relieves you of a great responsibility.

The voting for new members is only done by active members who are connected with the University. It has never seemed right to us, however, that members taken in early in the year should vote on the other members in their own class taken in at Commencement time.

The question of honesty and probity of the students will crop up at some time in your history. Perhaps, like us, you will appoint a committee, and secure testimony and obtain reports, but more likely you will do what we should have done, simply take the official University records as your official records.

¹ Delivered at the installation of the chapter of the University of Southern California, Saturday, June 14, 1924.

² Director of Steward Observatory, University of Arizona.

It is an advantage to have the senior averages presented by the registrar in the form of a single number for each student. This number can be obtained in different ways. Our method has been to emphasize the high grades by giving a weighted average. We give 1's a weight of 5, and 2's a weight of 3, 3's a weight of 1, and other grades a weight of zero. This process was especially used while we were changing from marks in A, B, C to grades in 1, 2, 3, and so forth. We now simply multiply the grade by the number of units in that grade, adding the sums together, and divide by the total number of units. Your mathematics professor will be delighted to do all this, or to work out some more new and more complicated formula.

The most urgent and important question which will perhaps never be solved and, I believe, should not be rigidly solved, is whether selection of members should be automatic and strictly in accordance with the grades or whether allowance in the selection should be made for other qualities than high grades. This is one of those personal and human questions whose correct solution varies between wide limits, depending on temporary conditions, fashion, or state of mind of the institution. I believe that sometimes the selection should be nearly automatic, and sometimes it should give more weight to individuality of the student. Our method of handling this has allowed for a tendency in either direction. We have listed the upper one-fourth of the class, and have limited ourselves to a maximum number of one-fifth of the class. (Lately it has been much more strictly limited.) Half of these, or the first 10 per cent, taken in order of class standing, are elected by a vote of one-fourth of persons present. The remainder are elected by three-fourths vote. This gives certain reference to scholarship, not, however, an irrevocable right, and it gives in addition an opportunity for other factors to enter.

Other qualifications, such as student activities, student leadership, the presence of low grades, and the minimum average grade are questions for thought and planning on the part of every chapter.

The minimum number of units of work done in residence at Arizona was at first thirty, and has recently been changed to forty-five, with three semesters of time. We do not take into exact account the work done in other institutions but it is reported in general at the time of the election. The question of distribution among the different colleges of a university is to be placed in the by-laws. The election of each college of its own representatives, or a list of recommendations by a committee from each college, will undoubtedly help in a selection of proper students,

but each college must bear in mind its responsibility not to elect its quota unless they deserve it.

It is urged that a substantial part of the year's elections should take place early in the senior year in order that the student body may get acquainted with the honor connected with such election. It is probable that national action will be taken on this point.

We have made our election of officers in October, so that each set of officers can finish its business and the new set take up the work of the new year.

It is worthwhile co-operating with other honor societies in bringing special lectures, and otherwise visualizing to the student body the value of study and mental discipline for which the college course is fundamentally taken.

You will be called on to vote on the admission of a new chapter. Various influences will lend their weight in such decision. Some conditions are important and some not. It does not seem that success in athletics should play a part. Membership in national college associations is a recommendation, of course. Requirements in freshman admission are taken care of by membership in such national organization. I do think, myself, that adherence to national ideals and freedom of intellectual progress are two of the most important considerations in judging of the fitness of new colleges to have a chapter.

I have, myself, gone through various phases of views on some of these matters. I felt at one time that scholarship was not a final criterion because character was so much needed. On the whole I am inclined to think that scholarship in the long run is so much a matter of self-discipline that character is involved in it. I do not believe that grades, however, are an absolute test of scholarship. Grades form an "outward and visible sign" of a mental attitude. They may come from a mere gigantic memory, and it would be well if such cases could be brought to light and dealt with specially, but they do come mostly from hard work and self-sacrifice. Sometimes there is a woeful lack of general human contact in those who get high grades. Such lack, in life, reduces vastly the value of the ability developed in college. That ability to absorb should be brought into contact with human life and experience, and should be developed in its relationship to the community. Perhaps the real work which an honor society could do in its future progress is to bind more closely these mechanical evidences of scholarship to the spiritual thing which we call right living and community service.

(The second part of this address will be published in the next number.)