



RHO KAPPA

Pennsylvania Council

for

Social Studies

Student Honor Society

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RHO KAPPA

Pennsylvania Council for Social Studies Student Honor Society

Overview

This is an honor society for the recognition of achievement and excellence in the discipline of social studies at the high school level. This society is open to juniors and seniors who meet the entrance criteria. Although the statewide name of the organization is RHO KAPPA, individual chapters may be established by school districts and/or schools, which may be named after noteworthy contributors in the field of social studies. (See affiliation agreement for details.) Our name, RHO KAPPA, is taken from two words of semitic origin. RHO is derived from “resh” meaning “head” and KAPPA is derived from “kapf” which means “palm of the hand.” Both these terms symbolize our firm belief that knowledge, without service, is useless.

Criteria

Juniors must have 2.5 credits in academic social studies courses with a minimum 3.5 unweighted grade point average in those classes. For juniors to maintain membership they must continue to pursue academic social studies courses and work toward a minimum of 4 credits in these courses while maintaining the 3.5 unweighted grade point average. Students must exhibit qualities of leadership, service and citizenship in either their school or in a community group / organization. The signatures of two adult sponsors on the student application will serve as testimony to the student’s having met the leadership, service and citizenship criteria.

Seniors must have a minimum of 3.5 credits in academic social studies courses and currently be enrolled in the one course; or they may have 4 credits in social studies coursework upon graduation. All students must maintain a minimum 3.5 unweighted grade point average.

Membership

All high school students in Pennsylvania who meet the criteria stated above and whose schools are affiliated with the state chapter of RHO KAPPA sponsored by PCSS are eligible for membership. The annual membership fee for affiliated high schools is \$35. This fee will entitle the school to 30 blank student certificates and PCSS membership for one advisor.

Honorary Memorabilia

Individual chapters are encouraged to provide the following memorabilia to their participating students. All inductees should receive a certificate of membership in RHO KAPPA. As part of the annual affiliation fee of \$35, participating chapters will receive a minimum of 30 blank certificates that schools may then fill in for signature and students’ names. Additional certificates are available for purchase in the amounts and prices described below.

<u>Blank Certificates</u>		<u>Additional Rho Kappa PCSS materials</u>
1 – 25	= \$.50 ea.	<u>will become available...</u>
25 – 50	= \$.45 ea.	
50+	= \$.40 ea.	www.pcssonline.org

It is also recommended that a special note be used to indicate members of this honor society in graduation ceremony “programs” which list all students by name and significant awards or class ranking.

RHO KAPPA

Pennsylvania Council for Social Studies Student Honor Society – Affiliation Agreement

The chapter designated on this form pledges to uphold the criteria established by RHO KAPPA and to promote scholarship, leadership, service and citizenship among the student members.

PLEASE PRINT (or click with your cursor over each line and type)

School Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ FAX _____ Email _____

Contact Person Name _____

County / District _____

Month / Year of Award Ceremony (Needed for Certificates) _____

Each chapter may establish itself with a distinctive name in honor of an individual who has worked diligently to promote social studies scholarship at that school. Although not required, should the chapter wish to do this, the name of the honoree should be printed on all student certificates that are awarded. This custom will aid in the organization of RHO KAPPA statewide as well as recognizing our outstanding teachers and in the promotion of scholarship within our discipline.

Name of Chapter _____

(required)

(See price information on page three for items below.)

	Quantity	Amount
Affiliation Fee		<u>\$ 35.00</u>
(includes 30 certificates and a PCSS membership)		

Additional Certificates	_____	\$ _____
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Amount Enclosed:		\$ _____
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Please make checks payable to PCSS and mail to :
PCSS, P O Box 56, Duncansville, PA 16635

Email: rhokappa_pcss@yahoo.com

RHO KAPPA

Social Studies Honor Society Constitution

**Sponsored by the
Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies**

Article 1 Purpose

Section 1. The purpose of this organization is to promote scholarship and to recognize academic excellence in social studies among high school students.

Article 2 Name

Section 1. The name of this chapter shall be the _____
_____ Chapter of RHO KAPPA, PCSS.

Article 3 Sponsor

Section 1. The organization shall at all times have a designated faculty sponsor.

Article 4 Membership

Section 1. Each High School shall be affiliated as a designated chapter within the RHO KAPPA, Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies Student Honor Society.

Section 2. Active members are High school students who have completed five semesters of college preparatory social studies and in addition are prepared to complete eight semesters. The minimum grade point average for these courses is an unweighted 3.50 G.P.A. Individual chapters may increase but not decrease this requirement.

Section 3. Members shall demonstrate ability to work with others and to conduct independent research, and shall possess qualities of industry, initiative, and reliability.

Section 4. Members shall contribute service to the school at the direction of the principal.

Section 5. Candidates for membership shall have completed at least one semester in _____
_____ High School.

Section 6. Selection of members shall be made by the Admissions Committee (see Article 7) composed of the sponsor and the officers of the chapter.

Article 5 Meetings

- Section 1. The chapter shall meet a minimum of once a semester at a specified time that is agreeable to both the Admissions Committee and the school administration.
- Section 2. Meetings are open to all interested persons.
- Section 3. At regular meetings, the program shall consist of a discussion of pertinent chapter business.
- Section 4. In all matters of conduct not specifically addressed in this constitution, the chapter shall be guided by Robert's Rules of Order.

Article 6 Officers

- Section 1. The chapter officers shall be the following: president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and the historian.
- Section 2. Election of officers shall take place during the final regular spring meeting.
- Section 3. The term of office is one school year.
- Section 4. An officer may not hold the same office for more than one year.

Article 7 Duties of Officers

- Section 1. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the chapter. He or she shall preside at all business sessions, and it shall be the duty of the President to direct the activities of the organization.
- Section 2. The Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President at times when the President is absent, and shall also serve as the Program Chairman.
- Section 3. The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of all proceedings and certify the names of all new members.
- Section 4. The Treasurer shall handle all money belonging to the chapter and shall maintain an accurate record of financial transactions.
- Section 5. The Historian(s) shall keep an ongoing chronicle of this society's activities.
- Section 6. The officers shall serve with the sponsors as the Admissions Committee and Executive Committee, having authority to transact all routine business and to select new members of the chapter.

Article 8 Awards

- Section 1. (Optional) Senior members in good standing will be awarded medallions at the Senior Awards Night and shall be worn on the night of graduation.

Article 9 Constitution

- Section 1. Concurrence of two-thirds of the active members shall be required to accept this constitution.
- Section 2. Any amendments to this constitution must be presented by an active member in the form of a motion during a business meeting. It must then be placed on the table until the following meeting, at which time it will become effective provided it is passed by two-thirds majority of the active members.
- Section 3. The local chapter constitution must not violate a stipulation of the state constitution.
- Section 4. By-laws may be adopted to amplify the constitution and to take care of details.

Suggested RHO KAPPA By-Laws

1. Officer requirements
 - a. 15 hours of documented voluntary service
 - b. a recommendation by two teachers of the social studies department
 - c. application must be submitted two weeks prior to the election
2. Dues
 - a. Each active member must contribute \$_____ dues by _____ of the school year.
date
3. Meetings
 - a. The Executive Committee shall meet on the first Monday of each quarter or upon the request of the Principal or the sponsor

RHO KAPPA

Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies Student Honor Society

Student Membership Form:

Student's Name _____
(Please print)

School _____

School Ph: _____ FAX: _____

Students must have a minimum of two adult sponsors who certify the student has met the criteria of scholarship, leadership, service and citizenship. The adult sponsors may be teachers, school administrators, and / or community sponsors.

Students must meet rigorous academic criteria. Schools may wish to have students complete this form in order to determine their eligibility.

List of Social Studies Courses taken to date: DATE _____

Title of Course	Grade / GPA	Teacher
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

(First sponsor signature and date)

(Second sponsor signature and date)

**RHO KAPPA PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES
STUDENT HONOR SOCIETY**

STUDENT ACTIVITY FORM

To be considered for selection to Rho Kappa, this form must be HANDED to:

It may not be left in a mailbox nor given to another person. No late forms will be considered.

Directions: Please complete all sections. Please type or print. Do not be modest. Every bit of information can be used by the Faculty Council to assist with the selection process. Completion of this form does not guarantee selection. You may not write "See Attached." You must put all information in the spaces provided.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

_____ Name _____ Grade _____

II. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES. List all activities in which you have participated. Include non-service clubs, teams, musical groups, etc. and major accomplishments in each. **Do not include service clubs in this section—you will do that in section IV.**

Activity	9	10	11	12	Accomplishments

III. LEADERSHIP POSITIONS. List all elected or appointed leadership positions held in school, community or work activities. Only those positions in which you were directly responsible for directing or motivating others should be included. For example, elected student body, class or club officer; committee chairperson; team captain; newspaper editor; work area manager; or community leader.

Activity	9	10	11	12	Office Held

IV. SERVICE ACTIVITIES AND COMMUNITY SERVICE. List service activities and community service in which you have participated. These can be service projects done with a group whether in or out of school, or done as individual projects performing service. Generally speaking, service activities are those that are done for, or on behalf, of others (not including immediate family members) for which no compensation (monetary or other) had been given. Please list the names of an adult supervisor who can verify your participation in each activity.

Service or Community Activity	9	10	11	12	Hours/Week	Major Accomplishments	Signature of Adult Sponsor

RHO KAPPA Application for Office / Nomination Form

Year _____

Return to Sponsor by _____

Name _____

Position for which I am seeking election:

(Select one)

_____ President: Chief executive officer of the chapter; shall preside at all business sessions; direct all activities of the organization.

_____ Vice-President: perform duties of the president when the president is absent; serve as service project/ program coordinator.

_____ Secretary: keep accurate records of all proceedings; certify names of new members; be responsible for contacting all members to notify them of meeting and service dates.

_____ Treasurer: handle all money for the chapter; send out debt notices to members; keep accurate records of financial transactions.

_____ Historian: shall keep an ongoing chronicle of this society's activities and membership roles; keeper of the chapter constitution.

Why / how are you qualified for this position ?

Teacher Recommendations: Two signatures are required by current members of the Social Studies Department.

(date)

(date)

RHO KAPPA INDUCTION CEREMONY

(Sample)

(PCSS wishes to thank Ft. Myers High School - the first established RHO KAPPA CHAPTER - in Ft. Myers, FL for much of this sample ceremony)

Materials Needed: Three candles – colored white, green and gold
Music for processional and recessional marches
Certificates for all student inductees

1. Processional – officers lead candidates in
2. Pledge of Allegiance – Select an officer to lead
3. Welcome and Introductions – faculty sponsor or officer
4. Guest Speaker
5. Induction Ceremony

I. Introduction by RHO KAPPA President

Candidates, you are being presented for induction in RHO KAPPA, a society whose sole purpose is to honor excellence in the Social Studies. It is an honor to be selected for membership in the organization and I congratulate each of you for attaining this distinction. Our name, RHO KAPPA, is taken from two words of semitic origin. RHO is derived from “resh” meaning “head” and KAPPA is derived from “kapf” which means “palm of the hand.” Both these terms symbolize our firm belief that knowledge, without service (a helping hand extended in friendship to others), is useless.

Each of you meets the requirements for membership, and this includes superior work in college preparatory Social Studies classes. Your work demonstrates the qualities of industry, initiative, and reliability.

The principle purpose of RHO KAPPA is to stimulate a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of all the academic disciplines comprising the social studies curriculum. Thus, on this occasion it is appropriate to take a moment and reflect on the significance and contributions of the social studies in the development of the individual.

(First speaker approaches table and lights the white candle.)

II. First Speaker – Vice President

The white candle represents *veritas*, or truth. According to Nadine Gordimer, a South African author, “The truth isn’t always beauty, but the hunger for it is.” In Social Studies we seek the truth. The truth we seek is untarnished by prejudice or bias. It is this search that leads to greater understanding of the world and humanity’s place in it.

(Second speaker approaches table and lights the green candle from the white candle.)

III. Second speaker - Officer

The green candle stands for *scientia*, or knowledge. The great philosopher Euripides stated, "Who so neglects learning in his youth, loses the past and is dead for the future." As a member of RHO KAPPA you have the distinction of being one who seeks knowledge in your youth and you are therefore building upon your understanding of the past in order to create a future of your own and that of the world in which we live.

(Third speaker approaches the table and lights the gold candle from the white candle.)

IV. The gold candle represents *sapientia*, or wisdom. As Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "It is the province of knowledge to speak, and it is the privilege of wisdom to listen." Wisdom is the tool we use to discern what is true and how to value that truth.

6. President (or faculty sponsor) comes to the podium to address the candidates.

. . . . to the inductees:

"You have now heard briefly the major characteristics of the RHO KAPPA scholar. Those of you who agree that you will strive to fulfill these fundamental principles, please rise for your induction.

I, (state your name), do promise to search for truth, to utilize knowledge, and to seek wisdom through the pursuit of academic excellence in the Social Studies. I promise service to High School, for true scholars of the Social Studies lead by example.

I now declare you members of RHO KAPPA. As your name is called, please come to the stage. Our principal and staff will present each of you with a membership certificate. Our guests on the stage will also wish to congratulate you.

7. Awarding of certificates by school Principal and social studies staff.

8. Optional - RHO KAPPA Officer

Spoken to the school Principal:

An honor society has little meaning without service. Please accept our promise to serve at your request, whatever the needs for our high school.

Spoken to the audience, guests and candidates:

Thank you for joining us today to honor these students and we wish to extend an invitation to each of you to join us for a reception to immediately follow in the school commons area.

9. The Recessional

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Pennsylvania Council for Social Studies gratefully acknowledges the previous work done by the Florida Council of the Social Studies and the Social Studies Department at Fort Myers High School in Ft. Myers, Florida, in establishing the first High School Social Studies Honor Society for their students.

The Constitution, By-laws, induction ceremony and nomination forms were adapted from documents used by this first chapter.

The chapter was established in 1998 and named in honor of Mr. Richard Kephart, a long time social studies teacher and department chairperson at the school.

The Social Studies department literally had to invent the honor society, for none existed at that time. Searches at NCSS and NCHE revealed no such programs for honoring high school students.

As a result, Maureen Copeland and the social studies staff established the criteria and applied for a grant from the Lee County Schools Educational Foundation to obtain initial funding for the program.

The program continues to be sponsored by the social studies department at the school and has hundreds of student members.

In the spring of 2000, over 140 students met the school's very high criteria of a 3.7 weighted G.P.A. and were inducted into the society.