



Public Rituals - Meeting Ceremonies

OVERVIEW

Ritual is not only found at major events or celebrations, but also in the weekly activities of your chapter. How we open and close our meetings as well as the business conducted inside should be consistent so that future generations of Phi Kappa Tau brothers will have structure.

While not always the case, how well run a chapter meeting is can be a major indicator of the health of the organization. If a chapter fails to meet successfully one week, the effects can ripple into the remainder of the semester. Chapter meetings use the following format to stay productive and engaging for members.

Note: This particular outline is intended for Associate Chapters who have not gone through initiation and omits pieces of the private ritual.

CEREMONY PREPARATION

The chapter meeting should be done in a space sizable enough to accommodate the entire brotherhood. This can be the chapter room for housed chapters, or somewhere on campus like an auditorium or large classroom for chapter's without access to a common space. Audio visual components should be easily accessible as well for slideshows and special presentations.

Ideally the chapter meeting is formal, coat and tie, however this is variable based on the chapter. It is wise to declare a minimum of one chapter meeting per month to be formal, and certainly whenever a guest is invited to come speak to the chapter.

Officers who are to give a report should have a clear idea of what they intend to report out to the chapter prior to the chapter meeting. A Sergeant at Arms should be appointed to admit people in and out of the room to avoid distractions as the meeting proceeds.

The President will need access to a gavel, and if not memorized, have a cheat sheet of the scripted outline for the meeting.

Have a process for where the meeting minutes are recorded and made accessible to the chapter, this can be a shared drive or emailed promptly to the brotherhood at the close of the meeting.

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SCRIPTING

When the Appointed hour for the meeting arrives the Sergeant-at-Arms takes his station at the door of the chapter room. The President enters last takes the chair and raps three times for the chapter to rise.

After the President enters the Sergeant-at-Arms closes the door and stands guard on the inside. No one is admitted until the business meeting has been declared open. Thereafter, latecomers may obtain admission by signaling with three distinct raps. As soon as the business hand permits, the President gives permission, the door is opened to those seeking admission.

PRESIDENT: Brothers, is it your desire that we proceed with the formal opening of our fraternal meeting?

CHAPTER [in unison]: Such is our desire.

The Creed of Phi Kappa Tau

Phi Kappa Tau, by admitting me to membership, has conferred upon me a mark of distinction in which I take just pride. I believe in the spirit of brotherhood for which it stands. I shall strive to attain its ideals, and by so doing to bring to it honor and credit. I shall be loyal to my college and my chapter and shall keep strong my ties to them that I may ever retain the spirit of youth. I shall be a good and loyal citizen. I shall try always to discharge the obligation to others which arises from the fact that I am a fraternity man.

The president raps twice for the chapter to be seated.

PRESIDENT: I declare this meeting of the [xx] associate chapter of Phi Kappa Tau to be now open. The officers will take their appointed stations.

The Secretary; Treasurer and Chaplain take their stations and the business of the chapter proceeds as the President may indicate.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Opening Ceremony
2. Invocation by Chaplain
3. Roll Call
4. Reading of the minutes
5. Reports of the officers.
6. Reports of Standing Committees
7. Reports of Special Committees
8. Unfinished Business
9. New Business
10. Communications
11. Proposals for Membership
12. Balloting on Candidates
13. Chapter Advisor's Report
14. Remarks for the good of the colony
15. Closing Ceremony

Use of the Gavel

Three raps [***] of the gavel directs member to stand; two raps [**] directs members to be seated; one rap [*] enjoins silence.

CLOSING THE MEETING

After the motion for adjournment has been passed the President raps three times for the chapter to rise.

PRESIDENT: What shall we remember as the mission of Phi Kappa Tau?

CHAPTER [in unison] Recite the Mission Statement.

THE MISSION OF PHI KAPPA TAU: The mission of Phi Kappa Tau is to champion a lifelong commitment to brotherhood, learning, ethical leadership and exemplary character.

PRESIDENT: I now declare this meeting of the [xx] associate chapter of Phi Kappa Tau adjourned.

The President raps once and the Sergeant-at-Arms opens the door of the Chapter room.