

**ALPHA TAU ALPHA
NATIONAL CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**

Professional Honorary Agricultural Education Organization

CONSTITUTION*

ARTICLE I

Preamble

"In order to develop a true professional spirit among agricultural educators, we band together in this professional organization."

ARTICLE II

Name

This organization shall be known as Alpha Tau Alpha - National Professional Honorary Agricultural Education Organization. Recognized units of the organization may officially use the letters "ATA" to designate the organization, its units and/or members.

*Revised, 1994, at the National Conclave. Previous revisions reported in the minutes of the 1956, '58, '59, '60, '63, '69, '70, '75, '81, '85, '86, and '88 Conclaves.

ARTICLE III

Purpose

The purpose of this organization, as implied in the Preamble, is to promote the highest standards of agricultural education and a more intimate acquaintance and closer relationship with individuals who have chosen a major in agricultural education or extension education. By studying the life, preparation, and personality of great educators, by a better understanding of various aspects of the great vocations in agriculture, and life of the people engaged therein, we aspire to become such agricultural educators as shall wisely and sufficiently lead those who have chosen the vocation of agriculture, into fuller lives of success and happiness.

We seek to find and enjoy the fellowship of individuals of high scholarship, of true teaching ideals, and of sincere desire to serve in agricultural leadership.

ARTICLE IV

Policy

We propose to encourage and support every bona fide organization or effort in any university or college looking to the improvement and the advancement of agricultural education.

ARTICLE V

Membership

SECTION I. Active Membership

Qualifications for active membership in Alpha Tau Alpha may exceed, if a chapter wishes, but shall not be less than the following:

1. Be an Agricultural Education or Extension Education major (or equivalent) or have an emphasis in this area.
2. Be enrolled in at least the sophomore year as defined by the local department.
3. Have at least a 2.5 GPA on a 4.0 scale or a 3.5 GPA on a 5.0 scale.

SECTION II. Associate Membership

Associate membership shall be limited to those persons actively engaged in agricultural education or extension education professions.

SECTION III. Honorary Membership

1. Honorary membership shall be limited to those persons engaged in agricultural leadership; to those desiring to promote the welfare of community life; and to those promoting agricultural education.
2. Nominations with the appropriate information about each nominee shall be submitted to the national secretary at least one month prior to the National Conclave. A screening committee, composed of one national officer and two student members appointed by the national president, shall investigate the nominations and make recommendations at a business session of the National Conclave. Two-thirds (2/3) of the delegates present at the Conclave showing an affirmative vote is sufficient to elect new honorary members to membership. The initiation of the new members will be held at the National Conclave the following year.

SECTION IV. National Membership

When the national initiation fee is received by the national secretary, the members of chapters automatically become members of the national body and constitute the membership of the organization.

SECTION V. Transfer of Membership

Membership may be transferred from one chapter to another at the member's request, by notifying the secretary of the chapter the member is joining and notifying the national secretary of the transfer and the roll number assigned to the member.

ARTICLE VI

Officers

SECTION I. Officers of this organization shall be president, president-elect (when applicable), first vice-president, second vice-president, and secretary-treasurer, who shall execute the duties required by these offices.

SECTION II. In case of the demise or resignation of a national officer, the Executive Committee shall appoint a qualified member to serve until the next National Conclave.

SECTION III. Election of these officers shall take place at the National Conclave of this organization, by the official delegates representing each chapter. Chapters which find it impossible to have an official delegate at the National Conclave may vote by proxy. Proxy vote shall be in the hands of the national secretary-treasurer, or some delegate, five days before the date of the meeting of the Conclave. The president shall be elected to a three-year term with the first year being president-elect. The first and second vice-presidents will serve two-year terms. The secretary-treasurer will serve a three-year term.

SECTION IV. The term of office shall begin the first month following the meeting of the National Conclave.

SECTION V. The national officers shall be chosen from university faculty in agricultural education and extension education who hold ATA membership at the national level and who are located at universities having active local ATA chapters.

SECTION VI. National officers of this organization shall not succeed themselves in office.

SECTION VII. Each national officer shall select a student officer from within his or her own chapter to assist with the duties and responsibilities of the office.

ARTICLE VII

Advisory Board

This Board shall consist of the national officers of this organization, namely: the president, who shall be chairman of the Advisory Board; president-elect (when applicable), first vice-president, second vice-president, secretary-treasurer, and one member representing each chapter. The member representing the chapter shall be an active student or associate member, and shall be elected by the chapter prior to the National Conclave. This person shall be the official delegate of the local chapter to the National Conclave.

ARTICLE VIII

Establishment of New Chapters

SECTION I. Before petitioning for national membership each proposed chapter must be sanctioned by the Dean or Head of the Colleges of Agriculture or Education of its respective institution.

SECTION II. Each petitioning chapter must be organized and present a formal application for admission into Alpha Tau Alpha. This application shall be submitted to the national secretary-treasurer who shall promptly bring it to the attention of the Executive Committee and the chapters.

SECTION III. Election to membership in this organization as a chapter on the national level shall be by individual ballot in the active chapters. Names of petitioning chapters shall be submitted by the national officers to the national secretary-treasurer prior to the National Conclave. The national secretary-treasurer shall send the names of these petitioning chapters together with appropriate information to the active chapters.

Two dissenting chapter votes shall prevent a petitioning chapter's election to this organization on the national level. If the chapter ballot is not returned to the national secretary-treasurer within thirty (30) days from the time it is received by the chapter, it shall constitute an affirmative ballot.

SECTION IV. If admitted as a chapter, such chapter upon request of the national body must defray one-half of the expenses of an installation officer or officers representing the national organization, the national treasury contributing the remaining half.

SECTION V. Each chapter upon installation will pay to the national treasury a charter fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00).

SECTION VI. Affiliated chapters may be organized in institutions outside the United States which have approved agricultural education or extension education departments. Approval for an affiliated chapter would be given only at a National Conclave. Affiliated chapters must be sponsored by an active ATA chapter in good standing. Charter fees will be twenty-five (25) U.S. dollars, but membership fees will be one (1) U.S. dollar per member. The charter fee is to be paid by the local chapter or its members.

ARTICLE IX

Executive Committee

SECTION I. The Executive Committee shall consist of the national officers of this organization, namely: the president, president-elect (when applicable), first vice-president, second vice-president, secretary-treasurer, plus the immediate past president, and a student representative from the ATA chapter of each national officer.

ARTICLE X

Amendments

Any proposed amendments shall be presented for consideration to the Advisory Board through the national secretary-treasurer. Amendments will be presented to the chapters for their consideration.

The active chapters shall take action upon each proposed amendment within sixty (60) days after submission to the chapter. If no vote is received from an active chapter within sixty (60) days, that vote shall be considered an affirmative vote. A two-thirds vote is necessary for approval.

Following the vote, due notice of amendments shall be sent to each chapter.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I

Meetings

SECTION I. The National Conclave shall be called by the president upon the written request of a majority of active chapters or as determined by the Executive Committee.

SECTION II. The National Conclave shall meet annually, or less frequently if requested by a majority of the chapters.

SECTION III. The Executive Committee shall meet annually.

SECTION IV. The Executive Committee shall determine the time and place of meeting for each National Conclave.

SECTION V. Each active chapter shall elect one representative who shall be the official delegate of that chapter at the National Conclave.

SECTION VI. Each active chapter shall elect an alternate who shall become the official delegate upon the inability of the first elected delegate to attend the National Conclave.

ARTICLE II

Duties of Officers

SECTION I. Duties of the President

1. The president shall
 - a. Obey and enforce the Constitution and the By-Laws of the organization.
 - b. Be held accountable by the organization as a whole.
 - c. Act as the official representative of the organization unless a representative is otherwise appointed.
 - d. Appoint one or more members from the nearest active chapter of the national organization to act as installation officers for a new chapter.
2. The president shall have power to appoint all committees.

SECTION II. Duties of the President-Elect

1. The president-elect shall be a member of the Executive Committee and the Advisory Board.
2. The president-elect shall perform such duties as assigned by the president.

SECTION III. Duties of the First Vice-President

1. In the absence of the president, the first vice-president shall act in the official capacity of the president and the member shall take on all the duties of that office.
2. In case the president is removed from office by any means, the first vice-president shall act as the president until a new president is elected.
3. The first vice-president shall be in charge of publishing the biannual newsletter, the Alpha Tau Alphan. Copies of this newsletter shall be sent to each active ATA chapter to be distributed to its members.

SECTION IV. Duties of the Second Vice-President

1. In case of the absence of the president and the first vice-president, the second vice-president shall act in the official capacity of the president and the member shall take on all the duties of that office.
2. The second vice-president shall act as the official historian of the organization.
3. The second vice-president shall act as chair of all contest and award programs of the organization.

SECTION V. Duties of the Secretary-Treasurer

1. The secretary-treasurer shall
 - a. Act as a recorder of all business brought before the organization and shall take a complete record of each meeting.
 - b. Keep a record of the reports of each committee.
 - c. Be held responsible and accountable for all the books and records of the organization, and shall render a report at the National Conclave or at the request of the Advisory Board.
 - d. Carry on all correspondence with the local chapters which the Advisory Board deems fit.
 - e. Be bonded as shall be determined by the Advisory Board. The organization shall bear the expense of the bonding.
2. The books and records of the secretary-treasurer shall be audited as shall be determined by the Advisory Board.

SECTION VI. Duties of the Executive Committee

1. It shall be the duty and power of the Executive Committee to take immediate action in regard to conditions which may arise where it would not be expedient and possible or necessary to call a meeting of the Advisory Board. In such cases the Executive Committee shall to the best of its ability take action of which the organization as a whole would approve. In short, this Committee shall be a handy and expedient way of doing business.
2. Meeting of the Executive Committee shall be held upon notice from the president.

ARTICLE III

Insignia

SECTION I. The colors of the organization shall be orange and brown.

SECTION II. The seal of this organization shall be as copyrighted.

SECTION III. The pledge ribbon shall be a combination of orange and brown.

SECTION IV. The certificate of membership shall be standard.

SECTION V. The crest of this organization shall be as copyrighted.

SECTION VI. The key of this organization shall be as copyrighted.

ARTICLE IV

Dues

SECTION I. The national initiation fee shall be fifteen dollars (\$15.00). All of this fee shall be paid to the national treasury of Alpha Tau Alpha.

SECTION II. The secretary of each active chapter shall forward immediately upon admittance to membership, the national initiation fee for each and every initiate.

SECTION III. Each active chapter shall have the privilege of fixing local initiation fees and annual dues of its members.

ARTICLE V

Chapters

SECTION I. Names of Chapters

The name of each chapter shall be designated by the Executive Committee.

SECTION II. Duties of Chapters

1. The secretary of the chapter shall keep a complete roll of all members, assigning to each initiate a roll number.
2. Immediately following each initiation, the secretary shall forward to the national secretary-treasurer the national initiation fee, and information concerning each candidate on the official directory blank.
3. Any proposed changes in a chapter constitution must be in accordance with the National Constitution.
4. The ritual for the initiation shall be as set forth in the Official Manual.
5. Chapters shall elect to active membership only those who are preparing for professional positions in agricultural education or extension education.
6. Chapters shall elect to associate membership only those who are engaged in agricultural education professions.
7. Chapters shall elect to honorary membership only those who are members of the faculty of institutions having an ATA chapter; those engaged in agricultural leadership; those desiring to promote the welfare of community life; and those promoting agricultural education.

ARTICLE VI

National Awards and Contests

SECTION I. Program of Excellence (Established 1979)

1. Purpose
This program shall be a means of sharing activities being conducted by local collegiate agricultural education organizations throughout the United States and recognizing those chapters who have done an outstanding job of organizing and conducting activities in the following categories: Professional Development, Fundraising, Community Service, and Fellowship.

2. Coordinator
The national second vice-president shall coordinate any arrangements for this award, and the program shall be hosted by the active chapter located at the institution represented by the national second vice-president.
3. Rules
 - a. The rules and guidelines for these awards are listed in Appendix 9 of the Official Manual.
 - b. Application due date shall be set by the national second vice-president.
4. Evaluation of applications
 - a. Each application shall be evaluated by a panel of four (4) delegates selected by the second vice-president at random from organizations that did not submit an application for the Program of Excellence Award.
 - b. Judging and award presentation shall take place during the National Alpha Tau Alpha Conclave.
5. Awards Recognition
 - a. Certificates shall be awarded to all participating organizations.
 - b. An outstanding organization shall be recognized with a plaque in each of the four categories of activities: Professional Development, Fundraising, Community Service, and Fellowship.
 - c. The organization that demonstrates the highest level of achievement through their program of activities in all areas shall be recognized as the Outstanding organization and presented a plaque.

SECTION II. Debate Contest (Established 1983)

1. Purpose
This contest shall be a means to provide members of collegiate agricultural education organizations an opportunity to develop and demonstrate their ability to clearly communicate and defend their ideas and positions. This contest will also provide members with an opportunity to develop and present strategies for addressing issues of concern in agricultural education through public debate.
2. Coordinator
 - a. The national second vice-president shall coordinate any arrangements for this award.
 - b. The program shall be hosted by the active chapter located at the institution represented by the national second vice-president.

3. Rules
 - a. The rules and guidelines for this contest are listed in Appendix 10 of the Official Manual.
 - b. Application due date shall be set by the national second vice-president.
 - c. The topic of debate to be resolved shall be known to all contestants before the debate.
 - d. The official debate authority will be *Argumentation: Inquiry & Advocacy*, by Ziegelmüller, Prentice-Hall, 1975.
4. Evaluation
 - a. The selection of one judge per debate contest shall be the responsibility of the hosting collegiate agricultural education organization. The qualifications of the judge(s) are that they be competent, impartial and thoroughly familiar with the scorecard before judging a contest. A judge will not be expected to judge a team from his/her state or school.
 - b. Judging and award presentation shall take place during the National Alpha Tau Alpha Conclave.
5. Awards Recognition

The first and second place teams shall receive plaques.

SECTION III. Essay Contest (Established 1985)

1. Purpose

This contest shall be a means to encourage members of collegiate agricultural education organizations to explore issues and developments in agricultural education, and to provide an opportunity to demonstrate their abilities in written expression as they address selected topics.
2. Coordinator
 - a. The national second vice-president shall coordinate any arrangements for this award.
 - b. The program shall be hosted by the active chapter located at the institution represented by the winning student of the previous year.
3. Rules
 - a. The essays shall be mailed prior to the National Conclave, with the deadline for entry to be determined by the host chapter.
 - b. The rules and guidelines for this contest are listed in Appendix 11 of the Official Manual.
 - c. The topic shall be selected by the host chapter and mailed directly to the local ATA Chapters, with judging to take place in October.

4. Evaluation
 - a. Four (4) judges, all of which must represent non-participating chapters in this contest, will be selected by the host chapter as follows:
 - Two (2) agricultural teacher educators, one of which must be a collegiate agricultural education organization advisor; and
 - Two (2) collegiate agricultural education organization members.
 - b. Judging and award presentation shall take place during the National Alpha Tau Alpha Conclave.
5. Awards Recognition

Appropriate plaques shall be awarded to first and second place contestants at the National Conclave.

ARTICLE VII

Standing Committees and Their Responsibilities

SECTION I. Standing committees shall be activated for each National Conclave at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

SECTION II. Committee Membership

1. Committee membership shall be composed of the Conclave delegates, or alternate delegates of the chapters assigned. The assigned Chair of the committee will include that chapter's advisor as Committee Advisor.
2. All committee assignments shall be made by the National Executive Committee and distributed to the local chapters prior to the National Conclave.

SECTION III. Audit/Finance Committee

1. Primary objectives of this committee shall include the following:
 - a. Review the financial transactions of the National ATA to enable development of an annual report.
 - b. Examine funding proposals for new or expanded activities of the organization.
2. Major responsibilities of this committee shall include the following:
 - a. Meet with the National ATA secretary-treasurer and discuss financial transactions for the past year.
 - b. Review the financial records of the National ATA.
 - c. Review the budget proposal for the next fiscal year of the National ATA.
 - d. Develop a statement for delegate action regarding the audit report.

- e. Consider changes in program expense policies for National Conclave delegate travel, initiation dues, shingle costs, etc.
- f. Explore alternate funding for new organizational activities.
- g. Identify funding proposals for new or expanded programs as accented at previous National Conclaves.
- h. Review financial status of the organization including operational expenses and regional financial reserve level.
- i. Propose discussion topics for subsequent committee meetings.

SECTION IV. Constitution Committee

- 1. This committee shall review the ATA Constitution and By-Laws that enable ATA to function at the national and local levels.
- 2. Major responsibilities of this committee shall include the following:
 - a. Review the ATA National Constitution and By-Laws.
 - b. Propose revisions to the Constitution and By-Laws that meet new program needs.
 - (1) Develop a rationale for proposed revisions.
 - (2) Submit revision proposals at the Conclave Business Meeting.
 - c. Propose discussion topics for subsequent committee meetings.

SECTION V. Leadership/Service Committee

- 1. Primary objectives of this committee shall include the following:
 - a. Review official duties and responsibilities of national and chapter officers to maintain the goals of ATA and maximize professional development of members.
 - b. Review national and local ATA service projects and public relations activities that maintain existing activities and expand service opportunities for national and local involvement.
- 2. Major responsibilities of this committee shall include the following:
 - a. Consider and propose any revisions for the official duties and responsibilities of national and chapter officers of ATA.
 - b. Consider and propose professional development activities for individual ATA members.
 - c. Develop suggestions to identify development of prospective chapters.
 - d. Recommend means to establish new chapters.
 - e. Explore methods to activate inactive chapters.

- f. Consider and propose means to establish and maintain contacts with ATA members in other countries.
- g. Consider and contrast the relationship between local ATA chapters and local Ag Ed organizations (clubs, societies or collegiate FFA).
- h. Review ATA pamphlets, newsletters, and manual.
- i. Review existing ATA official ceremonies.
- j. Review service projects reported by local chapters in Annual Reports or in Program of Excellence reports.
- k. Recommend new service projects to be considered for the National ATA program.
- l. Recommend new service projects to be considered by local ATA chapters.
- m. Propose methods to publicize ATA service activities.
- n. Propose discussion topics for subsequent committee meetings.

SECTION VI. Nominating Committee

- 1. This committee shall identify and introduce candidates for National ATA offices and for National Honorary Membership.
- 2. Major responsibilities of this committee shall include the following:
 - a. Identify two or more candidates for each National officer vacancy.
 - (1) Obtain written information on the qualifications of each candidate.
 - (2) Identify ATA member or delegate to introduce and nominate each officer candidate to the Conclave delegate assembly during the business meeting.
 - b. Identify candidates for National Honorary Membership.
 - (1) Obtain written information on the qualifications of each candidate.
 - (2) Identify ATA member or delegate to introduce and nominate Honorary Member candidates to the Conclave delegate assembly during the business meeting.
 - c. Propose discussion topics for subsequent meetings.

ARTICLE VIII

Amendments

Any proposed amendments to these By-Laws shall be presented for consideration to the Advisory Board through the national secretary-treasurer. Amendments will be presented for action at the National Conclave.

A quorum of the Advisory Board shall be required for action to take place. An affirmative vote of a majority of those delegates present shall constitute acceptance of the amendment.

Should there not be a quorum, the amendment shall be submitted by mail to the active chapters. The active chapters shall take action upon each proposed amendment within sixty (60) days after submission to the chapter. If no vote is received from an active chapter within sixty (60) days, that vote shall be considered an affirmative vote. A majority vote is necessary for approval.

Following the vote, due notice of amendments shall be sent to each chapter.