



## **Best Practices Guide for Chapter Initiations and Ceremonies**

### **Chi Sigma Iota International Chapter Development Committee**

Philip Clarke, Ph.D.  
Pi Alpha Chapter  
Wake Forest University  
Chair, CSI Chapter Development Committee

Revised by Devon Romero, M.A.  
CSI Leadership Intern  
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Much of the information in this Guide has been taken from [csi-net.org](http://csi-net.org).

Please check the website for updates!

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## Introduction

You are reading this guide because you are planning an initiation ceremony for your chapter. Congratulations on the achievement of your chapter and its students! The purpose of initiation ceremonies include: welcoming new members, assisting members to understand CSI's mission, vision and goals, publically recognizing the achievements of members and your chapter, promoting professional counselor identity, and continuing your chapter's commitment to excellence. Initiations are required by CSI at least annually, using the procedures established by the Executive Council of Chi Sigma Iota International.

As you already know, there are many details that need to be considered and prepared as you plan for your initiation ceremony. The purpose of this guide is to serve as a resource for you and your chapter as you ready yourselves for your annual initiation program. The lists provided in this guide are not to be seen as all-encompassing, and please remember that each chapter and region has its own culture and uniqueness that they do bring to their ceremonies. For each step of the process, we will list tips and tricks that have appeared to work well for Chi Sigma Iota chapters across the world. As you have additional ideas, please contact the [Chapter Development Committee](#) so that we can add this to future guides. Best of luck as you plan your ceremony!

The following information addresses requirements, resources, and suggestions for hosting chapter initiations and ceremonies. Information was compiled from the Chi Sigma Iota [www.csi-net.org](http://www.csi-net.org) website, chapter development committee interviews, CSI chapter annual reports, and CSI Days initiation and ceremony breakout session at the American Counseling Association Conference in 2013.

Additional materials chapters may find useful in planning initiation ceremonies include:

- CSI's PowerPoint presentation [Initiations and Ceremonies](#) found at [csi-net.org](http://csi-net.org) > Chapters > Development > Chapter Training Modules. While on the CSI web page, the chapters link provides many useful resources for building an active and vibrant chapter.
- Your Chapter Group Site at [csi-net.org](http://csi-net.org) > Chapters > Chapters Directory, where you can upload announcements, blog with chapter members, send out invitations and reminder emails, encourage members to network with each other, and upload pictures of your initiation and other chapter happenings.

## Guide to Facilitating a Chapter Initiation and Ceremony

This guide provides a set of steps chapters may find useful in planning and implementing initiations.

### Step 1: Identify Eligible Students for Membership in Chi Sigma Iota

- Chapter Faculty Advisors may obtain the GPAs of all students in the counselor education program after the equivalent of one completed semester of full-time study (9

credits). After identifying the students whose GPA's are 3.5 or higher, the list of GPA-eligible students should be compared with the active Chi Sigma Iota chapter membership list to identify eligible students who may not have joined in prior semesters because of lower GPAs or personal choices if they had been invited.

- *It is important that student grades not be shared with the CSI executive board, members, or other students, as this information is protected by privacy provisions of the federal law known as FERPA.*
- Once student credits hours completed and GPA's have been obtained, students who meet the basic eligibility requirements (9 credits, 3.5 GPA on 4.0 scale) are considered for membership. Each potential member must also, per the CSI Bylaws be “deemed promising for endorsement as a professional counselor whose ethical judgment and behavior will be exemplary” (CSI Bylaws, Article 4.1).
  - *It is assumed that the Chapter Faculty Advisor interacts with and acts on behalf of the faculty as a whole in endorsing students for membership in regard to this criterion.*

## Step 2: Invite Eligible Students for Membership

- The President of the chapter should write each eligible member to inform them of their membership eligibility and request that they apply (CSI Bylaws Article 6.1). A [sample written invitation](#) is located on the CSI Web page and also included in the appendices to this Guide.
- The chapter should maintain a list of students who have been invited to membership and check off those who have applied and been accepted. This may be done by the Chapter Faculty Advisor, Membership chair, Secretary, or other officer, as decided in advance by the officers of the chapter in consultation with the Chapter Faculty Advisor.
  - The Chapter Faculty Advisor may download the list of members who have applied and been approved and share this with the chapter at any time.
  - Chapter Faculty Advisor's should ensure that only appropriate information is shared with student leaders, such as name and email address, but not GPA.

## Step 3: Select Date, Time, and Budget

- Consider the availability of those you plan to invite: Initiates, Family Members & Friends, Chapter Officers, Faculty, Chapter Members, Speakers, Alumni, and Professional Members, as well as the Department Chair, Dean, Chancellor, or other university administrators.
- Be mindful of students' class schedules, religious and spiritual holidays, and commuter schedules.
- The time and date of the event can be determined based in relation to the projected budget for the event. Some things to consider include:

- Perhaps a Saturday brunch is cheaper than a Saturday dinner.
- If individuals are going to cook, consider a day that they can have the time to properly prepare.
- Does the location(s) providing the meal require that the food be picked up vs. delivered?
- Determine the start and end time for the event (the event should not exceed 1 hour and 15 minutes).
- Be aware of any university policies concerning food/catering if hosting on campus.  
Specifically, if the event is on campus, chapter leaders should check to ensure if catering has to be through your university's food services, or vendors that your university has relationships with.
- To address scheduling difficulties, it may be preferable to schedule initiations:
  - Late afternoon prior to class for students and family.
  - Saturday afternoon with "just desserts" to save money and avoid typical weekly work time.
  - Host two initiations a year.
  - Pair with chapter awards ceremony.
  - Pair with installation of officers
  - Pair with the graduation ceremony within the counselor education department.
- Establish a budget early to guide the process in securing resources for the event. It is advised that the initiation ceremony budget be established at the beginning of the academic year, if possible.
  - Determine the level of formality for the event.
  - Consider expenses such as food/snacks/desserts/beverages, invitations, printing, speaker(s), programs, room rental, plates, cups, cutlery and serving utensils, decorations, gift for the speaker (preferably purchased from the CSI Store).
- Delegate tasks and establish timelines
  - The chapter may choose to elect/ appoint a membership chair and committee to plan all details of the initiation.
  - Once the date for the initiation has been set, the Chapter Faculty Advisor can use the chapter log-in to access the Member Management System in the CFAs tab of the CSI website (look for CFA MMS). The initiation date can be for

approved members can be entered by selecting “Pending Induction Date,” and the CFA will then notify CSI Headquarters of the date by selecting “Set Induction Date.” More detailed information about membership processing is available on the CSI website in the [Membership Processing Checklist](#).

#### Step 4: Select Event Location

- Consider “spaces” that contribute to the initiation purpose. Care should be taken to select a setting that is professional and elevates the importance of the occasion for all present. Some suggestions include:
  - Local restaurant with a private room
  - University function rooms (i.e., student center/union, auditorium etc.)
  - Public/ School Library meeting room
  - Home of the Chapter Faculty Advisor or Dean
  - City Building
  - Art galleries
  - Auditoriums
- Avoid spaces that may detract from the purpose, (e.g. parks & picnic areas, busy restaurants or bars)
- Rooms or facilities on the school campus may come at a significantly reduced or free rate for student and professional organizations

#### Step 5: Select Speakers and Other Program Considerations

##### Speakers

- Speakers should be CSI members (Professional Counselors, CSI International Officers & Committee Chairs, Chapter Faculty Advisors, or CSI Academy of Leaders).
- It is desirable to have a guest speaker offer a 15-20 minute inspirational speech at the ceremony. Chi Sigma Iota International may provide financial support to the chapters for initiation speakers when they are requested through and approved by CSI well in advance of the initiation. Reasonable expenses would include travel, accommodations, and meals. For more information and the application form, see CSI’s [Presenter Policies](#).
- Chapters may talk with speakers to determine their interest in hosting a workshop or program prior to the initiation ceremony. Oftentimes, CSI speakers may agree to host a workshop prior to the event to present on a topic of their interest and expertise to chapter members, or have a longer conversation than typically allowed during a keynote address. This is another fun way to connect chapter members to professional resources and knowledge from across the field.

- Chapters should be aware that all CSI speakers provide their services pro bono for initiations. If they agree to conduct a workshop, no fees may be charged to participants who are members of CSI.
- If the speaker agrees to provide a workshop, make sure that at least one class is excused and required to attend the workshop. In other words, make sure there is an audience in respect for the speaker's commitment to the chapter.
- Allowing time for chapter leaders to meet with the speaker to discuss leadership issues and leadership development is always helpful.

### **Program Considerations**

- Identify the order of events for the ceremony and notify all necessary speakers of the program and length of time they are permitted to speak.
- It is recommended that programs do not last more than one to 1 ¼ -1½ hours, due to scheduling for most persons/families.
- Key elements of the ceremony include:
  - Introduction and Welcome
    - The initiates are welcomed by any one or more of the following persons:
      - Chapter Faculty Advisor
      - Department Chair
      - Dean
      - Chancellor or President
      - Leaders of state or local counseling organizations
  - Introduction of Faculty
  - Recognition of Family & Friends
  - Introduction of Speaker
    - All speakers require a formal introduction. Though they may be well known to students and faculty in other roles, the introduction for a speaker should include a professional bio with information about education, work experience, publications, awards, and CSI experience. Remember that some faculty, friends, family, and university administrators may not know your speaker. A full introduction helps all present understand the caliber of leaders who serve on behalf of CSI and the counseling profession.
  - Initiation Speech
  - Initiation of Members

- Congratulatory Closing Remarks
  - Utilize alumni as guest speaker to share what Chi Sigma Iota membership has done for him/her & his/her participation.
- When calling students names, consider one or more of the following:
  - As the student walks to the platform, read a sentence or two about their program track and career goals.
  - Ask family members to speak about the development of their student, as this provides faculty with opportunity to hear about the students growth.
  - Enlist faculty to say something about the student
  - Allow students to speak about what the experience of membership means to them.
- The [membership oath](#), which is part of the Initiation Ceremony, is an essential and **required** part of becoming a member. It is helpful to print the oath in the initiation program so all are aware of the commitment that is being made by initiates as they take the oath.

### Using the CSI Trademarks

- CSI's colors are [blue and white](#) and have a specific meaning. Consider blue and white decorations for the initiation, many of which (balloons, party pack) may be purchased at the [CSI Store](#).
- CSI is the sole official acronym of Chi Sigma Iota International. Help students avoid confusing the graduate honor society devoted to excellence in professional counseling with undergraduate Greek social societies by avoiding use of abbreviations such as "chi sig."
- The CSI Logo is trademarked and chapters must receive permission for its use.
  - The [Chapter Logo Request Form](#) is available at [csi-net.org](http://csi-net.org) > Use of the CSI Logo
  - Vendors (e.g., stores where cakes are purchased) may require a letter from CSI approving use of the logo. Contact CSI Headquarters to obtain an approval letter.

## CSI Resources

For more resources, visit [csi-net.org](http://csi-net.org). Some resources that may be useful for initiation planning include:

- Chapters > Initiations >
  - [Membership flyer](#)
  - [Membership Checklist](#)
  - [Initiation of New Members](#)
  - [Installation of Officers](#)
  - [Guest Speakers](#)
  - [Info for Guest Speakers](#)
- CFAs > Member Processing >
  - [Invitation to Membership](#)
  - [Checklist for Chapters](#)
  - [Initiation Certificate Order Form](#)

## Step 6: Invitations for the Event

- Consider inviting the following:
  - Initiates
  - Members
    - Emails may be sent to all currently active members directly from the Chapter Group Site at [csi-net.org](http://csi-net.org)
  - Alumni and Professional Members
    - The Chapter Faculty Advisor may download the list of all chapter members from their [Member Management](#) link at [csi-net.org](http://csi-net.org). This includes the list of alumni members.
  - Program faculty
  - Department chair
  - Dean and other dignitaries
  - Members of state or local professional counseling organizations
  - Families and friends of the initiates
  - Speaker(s)
- Invitations may be sent in the following formats:

- Formal letters to initiates
  - Formal letters to speakers
  - E-vites to faculty
  - E-vites to family members
  - Postings on chapter social networking sites, including Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, and the Chapter Group Site
- Two invitation templates have been created for chapter use for new initiates and distinguished guests. (*Please see attachment for templates*)

### **Step 7: Planning for Your Speaker (e.g., travel, hotel, food, orientation, gifts)**

- Accommodations must be made for your speaker. If the person is a local professional, etiquette is to have a conversation about what accommodations they need (i.e., gas, food etc.)
- For non-local speakers, special considerations and arrangements should be made for:
  - Someone to transport Speaker from airport/travel center to campus or hotel accommodations.
  - Appropriate food and lodging for a national/international speaker.
  - Arrangements for the speaker while set-up/break down of ceremony rooms are occurring. It is recommended that making a private office with wireless access (and access codes) is best practices, so that the speaker can complete work or stay in touch with loved ones when not working with chapter members.
- Gifts: A thank you is always appropriate. Consider CSI logo memorabilia ([csi-net.org](http://csi-net.org) > CSI Store).

### **Step 8: Apply for CSI Support for your Speaker**

- Chapters may request assistance through the Headquarters office for an initiation speaker. CSI requires that any contact with potential speakers be initiated by CSI. If the chapter initiates contact, CSI likely will not be involved in the speaker arrangements. This is due to factors such as budget, speaker expenses, etc., as well as the fact that CSI has a list of approved speakers who are members of the CSI Academy of Leaders for Excellence.
- If approved in advance, CSI will provide up to half of the travel expenses for this purpose. CSI's Academy of Leaders, Scholars, and officers volunteer their time. CSI is unable to fund all requests and reserves the right to select which chapters to fund based on factors such as budget, location, and prior requests from the chapter.

### **Step 9: Event Management (decorations, program, guidance, reception and refreshments)**

- Recall the list of delegated tasks and person(s) responsible. Review timelines and tasks to be accomplished in ample time to make adjustments if necessary.
- Be mindful of the established budget (for some chapters this may require additional fundraising to fund the ceremony or charging a fee for the event).
- Determine set up time and persons responsible (don't forget to do the same for clean-up as well).
- Follow the proper protocols and procedures (e.g., scripts) for chapter initiation, found at [csi-net.org](http://csi-net.org) and in the attachments to this Guide.
- Consider purchasing balloons and the party pack at the [CSI Store](#).

### **Step 10: Facilitate Your Event**

- Arrive early to greet initiates and families.
- Smile a lot – this is wonderful event!
- Take pictures and post them to your chapter website and/or chapter social networking sites. This is a wonderful use of the chapters group website to promote and market your chapter!
- Chapter Group Site at [csi-net.org](http://csi-net.org) > Chapters > Chapters Directory

### **Step 11: Event Follow-up**

- Thank you notes to speakers.
- Congratulations to initiates and invitation to join chapter leadership.
- Notification to university of honors graduates for convocation program listing.
- News releases to campus news office for local papers.
- Host a follow-up meeting to debrief the event and begin your recruitment of your next chapter leaders.
- Devote a section of the chapter newsletter to congratulating new initiates and chapter leaders. Great opportunity to use pictures from the event.

## Appendix 1: Sample Written Invitation to CSI Membership

Dear

Chi Sigma Iota [CHAPTER NAME] Chapter Nominee:

You have been identified as an individual who meets the criteria for membership in Chi Sigma Iota Counseling Academic and Professional Honor Society (CSI), and we are pleased to invite you join the [CHAPTER NAME] Chapter at [NAME OF UNIVERSITY] at this time. Your invitation to join our chapter distinguishes you as an outstanding counseling student; one whose accomplishments are consistent with the mission of the international organization and of the [CHAPTER NAME] Chapter. Eligibility for membership is extended only to those students in the [NAME OF UNIVERSITY] [PROGRAM NAME] who "have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or better on a scale of 4.0 and are deemed promising for endorsement as a professional counselor whose ethical judgment and behavior will be exemplary" (CSI Bylaws Article 4.1)

[https://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.csi-net.org/resource/resmgr/CSI International Bylaws/CSI International Bylaws 1 1.pdf](https://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.csi-net.org/resource/resmgr/CSI%20International%20Bylaws/CSI%20International%20Bylaws%201%201.pdf).

In order to accept this invitation, please complete the New Member Registration ([https://www.csi-net.org/general/register\\_member\\_type.asp?](https://www.csi-net.org/general/register_member_type.asp?)) on the CSI website ([www.csi-net.org](http://www.csi-net.org)). You will be required to pay the CSI membership dues online with a credit card or via PayPal. (You also may renew your CSI membership annually online using a credit card or PayPal.) Local dues of \$[INSERT CHAPTER DUES AMOUNT] may be paid separately. Dr. [CFA NAME], the [CHAPTER NAME] Chapter Faculty Advisor, will be required to approve your online application form before your application is finalized.

Please complete the application process by [DAY, DATE, TIME] to ensure that your CSI certificate and membership pin will be available to present to you at our chapter's initiation ceremony which will be held in the [SRING/FALL] 20[YEAR] semester.

We applaud your commitment to both personal and professional excellence as a counselor. We know that you will want to invite friends, family, and all who support you in this commitment to attend and celebrate at our chapter's initiation of new members. You will receive your CSI membership certificate and recognition pin at that time.

Again, welcome and enjoy this recognition. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact [CHAPTER PRESIDENT NAME], Chapter President, at [CHAPTER PRESIDENT EMAIL ADDRESS].

Sincerely,

[CHAPTER FACULTY ADVISOR], Ph.D., LPC, NCC  
Chapter Faculty Advisor

[OR CHAPTER PRESIDENT]  
(or Chapter President)

## Appendix 2: Initiate Invitation Letter

Dear Guest of Honor:

Chi Sigma Iota (CSI) Counseling Academic and Professional Honor Society International congratulates you on your recent acceptance into the Society. Membership in CSI is a distinct honor, you have met the society requirements and were deemed promising for endorsement as a professional counselor whose ethical judgment and behavior will be exemplary. As such, you are cordially invited to participate in the initiation ceremony on [DAY, DATE, TIME] to mark the beginning of your membership in the [CHAPTER NAME] Chapter of CSI.

CSI has initiated over 83,000 professionals and professionals-in-training worldwide, and currently has over 14,000 active members among 281 campus based chapters in this country and abroad. As a result, you will be recognized by and affiliated with one of the largest counseling organizations in the world with its sole mission to recognize and promote excellence in the profession of counseling.

For over 20 years CSI has provided recognition for outstanding achievement as well as outstanding service within the profession. CSI was created for counselors-in-training, counselor educators, and professional counselors like you, whose career commitment is to research and service through professional counseling.

Our mission is to promote scholarship, research, professionalism, leadership and excellence in counseling, and to recognize high attainment in the pursuit of academic and clinical excellence in the profession of counseling. Our symbols and colors were chosen to reflect our mission and values: white for virtue, blue for trustworthy, and integrity throughout.

Your invitation to join our chapter distinguishes you as an outstanding counseling student; one whose accomplishments are consistent with the mission of the international organization and of the [CHAPTER NAME] Chapter. On [DAY, DATE, TIME] your presence is requested to attend a ceremony that will be hosted in your honor along with the other new initiates at [LOCATION]. You may bring your family and friends to celebrate and mark this occasion with you. The membership committee requests an RSVP no later than [DAY, DATE, TIME]. If you have any questions please feel free to contact [CONTACT PERSON] at [CONTACT PERSON PHONE AND/OR EMAIL]. Again, congratulations on your acceptance into Chi Sigma Iota.

Sincerely,

[CHAPTER FACULTY ADVISOR], Ph.D., LPC, NCC  
Chapter Faculty Advisor

[CHAPTER PRESIDENT]  
(Chapter President)

### Appendix 3: Faculty/Administration Ceremony Invitation

Dear Distinguished Guest (Faculty/ Administration):

Chi Sigma Iota (CSI) is an international Counseling Academic and Professional Honor Society representing and recognizing counselors-in-training, counselor educators, and professional counselors. Since 1985 CSI has provided recognition for outstanding achievement as well as outstanding service within the profession. Our mission is to promote scholarship, research, professionalism, leadership and excellence in counseling, and to recognize high attainment in the pursuit of academic and clinical excellence in the profession of counseling.

On [DAY, DATE, TIME] the [CHAPTER NAME] Chapter of CSI will host an initiation ceremony at [LOCATION] for its newest members. We request your presence to honor these dedicated students who have met the minimum requirements and accepted invitation to membership. Eligibility for membership is extended only to those students who have completed at least one semester of study, "have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or better on a scale of 4.0 and are deemed promising for endorsement as a professional counselor whose ethical judgment and behavior will be exemplary" (CSI Bylaws, Article 4.1).

CSI has initiated over 83,000 professionals and professionals-in-training worldwide, and currently has over 14,000 active members among 281 campus based chapters in this country and abroad. As a result, these students will be recognized by and affiliated with one of the largest counseling organizations in the world with its sole mission to recognize and promote excellence in the profession of counseling. We challenge these new initiates to embody the CSI mission and continue to pursue their education and career goals with excellence. Please join us as we welcome our newest members.

Sincerely,

[CHAPTER FACULTY ADVISOR], Ph.D., LPC, NCC  
Chapter Faculty Advisor

[CHAPTER PRESIDENT]  
(Chapter President)

## Appendix 4: Administration of CSI Membership Oath

"CHI SIGMA IOTA" is the Counseling Academic and Professional Honor Society International. As such, members are committed to maintaining high standards of professional competence and service. Our goal is to serve others to the best of our ability and to encourage others to do the same as members of the counseling profession. Members of the Society have distinguished themselves through scholarship and professional excellence, which is exemplary.

This is an occasion of inviting new members into the Society who share the same commitment and goals. We welcome them and this opportunity to recognize their achievements to earn this distinction.

### **Presenter:**

Candidates' applications have been reviewed and acted on favorably by the International Office of Chi Sigma Iota and the Executive Committee of this chapter. Candidates (please step forward or stand). (As the last candidate steps forward, the Presenter continues). We are pleased to present these candidates as worthy of membership in this chapter and the International Honor Society.

### **President:**

Membership in the Society will have special meaning to each of you. The common meaning, however, will be the same. You are dedicating yourself to continued excellence in both scholarship and counseling practice. As such, you ascribe to high standards of performance in all that you do.

On this occasion, you are asked to publicly declare your commitment to striving for high standards of scholarship and clinical practice. If you will accept the rights and responsibilities of membership embodied in the Bylaws of the Society, please answer, "I WILL".

Further, you are asked if you are willing to continue encouraging excellence in the professional settings in which you work. If so, please answer, "I AM".

Finally, you are asked if you will support and encourage the members and activities of this chapter and Society through personal involvement in their professional programs. If so, please answer, "I WILL".

Congratulations and welcome to (Chapter Name) of Chi Sigma Iota Counseling Academic and Professional Honor Society International. As your name is called, please step forward to receive your membership certificate and recognition pin.

### **Presenter:**

(Calls each candidate's name and the President hands him/her their certificate and pin). It is desirable as each candidate comes forward to say a sentence or two about them, e.g., "Susie Smith is a first year student in the School Counseling Track. Her career goal is to work with elementary school students in a charter school."

## Appendix 5: Installation of Officers

The following ceremony was developed by Alpha Omicron Chapter and enhanced by their President Lori Porter (1996-97) to reflect the role descriptions of officers in the CSI Bylaws of their chapter. Little or no modifications may be necessary to adopt this ceremony as your own. If you have another format that you would suggest to others, please send it to [info@csi-net.org](mailto:info@csi-net.org).

### **President:**

Will the following members please come forward: (Incoming officers' names)

Though international in scope, the activities of Chi Sigma Iota are centered in the chapters of the Society. It is through the chapters that members are able to be active and pursue the goals of the Society to the fullest extent possible.

### **Presenter:**

As the (next year) chapter officers, you are charged with the care of the (Greek Name) Chapter.

(Name): As President, you are responsible to organize, delegate, follow-up, oversee, orchestrate, and set a tone of enthusiasm for the chapter. It is your role to motivate people, support and recognize their efforts, celebrate their successes and enable their activities.

(Name): As President-Elect, you will assist the President in performing all (his/her) duties. You will perform the duties of President in the event of the resignation or inability to serve for health or other reasons of the President. You will serve as a member of the Chapter Executive Committee. It is your role to become informed of the current affairs and activities of the chapter and to prepare for your upcoming term as President.

(Name): As Secretary, you are responsible to serve as a member of the Chapter Executive Committee. It is your responsibility to attend and keep records of the Executive Committee and chapter business meetings. You will write and handle official correspondence as directed by the President. It is your role to maintain a file of chapter activities and pass on all relevant file materials to your successor.

(Name): As Treasurer, it is your role to assist the Faculty Advisor and officers in the development and administration of the annual budget. You will maintain financial records for the chapter. Furthermore, it is your responsibility to receive and disburse chapter funds as directed by the President.

On this occasion, you are asked to publicly declare your commitment to perform these duties. If it is your intent to do so, then together say, "I Will". Thank you and congratulations!

## Appendix 6: Resources and Protocols for Chapter Initiations and Ceremonies: Responsibilities and Resources Guide

### CFA Responsibilities and Resources:

Please see: **Chapter Membership Processing and Initiation Checklist for Chapters**

[http://www.csi-net.org/?Membership\\_Checklist](http://www.csi-net.org/?Membership_Checklist)

### Summary

- Obtain GPAs of all students in program after one completed semester of study
  - Identify students who meet eligibility (i.e., one completed semester of study), 3.5 GPA on 4.0 scale, and “are deemed promising for endorsement as a professional counselor whose ethical judgment and behavior will be exemplary” (CSI Bylaws, Article 4.1).
  - Review letter from president of the chapter to invite students for membership. CSI headquarters states “invitation to membership in CSI must be presented individually in writing, preferably by traditional letter format”. A sample letter is located at: [http://www.csi-net.org/?Membership\\_Invitatio](http://www.csi-net.org/?Membership_Invitatio)
- The CFA should follow-up with the chapter President to ensure letters were sent.
- The chapter maintains a list of students who have been invited to membership and checks off those who have applied. (This may be done by the CFA, Membership chair, or Treasurer)
  - Retrieve applications, national and local dues and communicate to national the approval of applicants.
  - Receive applicant certificates and pins.
  - Assist and support chapter in planning initiation ceremony.

### Chapter Responsibility and Resources:

#### Chapter Initiation Ceremony:

- **Initiations are required.** Official membership does not begin until applicants are installed at the ceremony as new members.
- Care should be taken to select a setting that is professional and elevates the importance of the occasion for all present. Some suggestions include:
  - Local restaurant
  - Meeting room on campus (i.e., student center/union, auditorium etc.)
  - Public/ School Library meeting room
  - CFA or Dean home
  - City Building
- Establish a budget for initiation expenses (i.e., invitations, flyers, room/hall rental, food, decorations, speaker, program printing)
  - Banquets, dinners, potlucks, or light refreshments
- Delegate tasks and timeline
  - May elect/ appoint a membership chair and committee
- Identify ceremony format desired (i.e., order of program, level of formality, additional guests to be invited)
  - CSI national recommends that academic administrators (e.g., department chair, dean, chancellor)
  - CSI national also recommends that families of initiates should be invited
  - Faculty within the counseling departments
  - Supervisors of students being initiated
  - Alumni of the chapter

- Membership oath taking is an essential and **required** part of becoming a member. The format and language can be found at: [http://www.csi-net.org/?Chapter\\_Initiation](http://www.csi-net.org/?Chapter_Initiation)
- It is desirable to have a guest speaker offer a 15-20 minute inspirational speech at the ceremony. Chi Sigma Iota may provide financial support to the chapters for initiation speakers when they are requested through and approved by CSI well in advance of the initiation. Reasonable expenses would include travel, accommodations, and meals. Chapters may request assistance through the Headquarters office for an initiation speaker. ***If approved in advance***, CSI will provide up to half of the travel expenses for this purpose. CSI's Academy of Leaders, Scholars and officers volunteer their time. The CSI Speakers Policy and Procedures as well as a list of available CSI- approved Speakers can be found at: [http://www.csi-net.org/?Presenter\\_Policies](http://www.csi-net.org/?Presenter_Policies)
- Some chapters use this occasion to install new officers. The ceremony for Installation of Officers will be found at: [http://www.csi-net.org/?Chapter\\_Installation](http://www.csi-net.org/?Chapter_Installation)

**Chapter Ceremonies:**

Many chapters host ceremonies in addition the CSI initiation. Below are some ideas for additional ceremonies.

- Chapter officer installment
- Counselor and Supervisor of the Year awards
- Faculty appreciation ceremony
- Department graduation ceremony, including honor cord distribution