

## Guidelines for Membership Eligibility

### What is a Nursing Honor Society?

An honor society is a group of nurse scholars and leaders recognized for their superior achievement, leadership qualities, high professional standards and commitment to the profession of nursing.

### Purposes of Sigma Theta Tau International

1. Recognize superior achievement and scholarship.
2. Recognize the development of leadership qualities.
3. Foster high professional standards.
4. Encourage creative work.
5. Strengthen commitment to the ideals and purposes of the profession.

### Requirements for Selecting Members

1. Chapters are required to select and induct eligible members a minimum of one time annually. (*International Bylaws Article IV. Section 8.b; Chapter Bylaws Article V. Section 3.b.*)
2. Chapters are required to follow the Sigma Theta Tau International bylaws, including the eligibility criteria (*International Bylaws Article IV. Section 8. d.*)

NOTE: For recommended practices on selecting members, see *Membership Selection – Recommended Practices*.

### Membership Eligibility

- Membership can be conferred in one of the following membership categories:
  - ✓ Student
    - Undergraduate students
    - Master's students
    - Doctoral students
  - ✓ Professional
    - Nurse leaders
- Candidates for membership at the undergraduate, graduate and doctoral levels must be enrolled in the university or institute of higher education where the chapter is located to be considered for membership in that category. A student who attends a university or institute of higher education that does not have a chapter may be considered for membership by another chapter.
- Graduates of baccalaureate and master's nursing programs may be considered under the student criteria for up to one year following graduation, provided they met the specific membership criteria. This policy refers only to students who were unaware of their eligibility and did not make application while a student.

Criteria	Bylaws Wording	Interpretation
Undergraduate Student	1. Complete at least ½ of the nursing curriculum.	Refers to courses with a nursing prefix.
	2. Students in basic programs shall be eligible for membership if they have achieved excellence according to the standards approved by the Society.	For universities/institutions of higher education that use a 4.0 grade point average (GPA) system to measure academic achievement, undergraduate students must have a GPA of at least 3.0. GPAs should be computed according to the policies of the university. For universities/institutions of higher education that do not use a 4.0 grade point average system, the honor society will need to define how excellence is determined using its school's measure of academic achievement. This definition will need to be approved by the international governance committee. Examples of equivalencies to the 3.0 GPA that have been approved are available from HQ.
	3. Rank in the upper 35 percent of the graduating class.	Class means the group anticipated to graduate within a given academic or calendar year or semester.  If the lowest grade point average in the upper 35 percent falls below 3.0, only those students with a 3.0 and above are eligible, if grade point averages are used.
Registered Nurses Continuing Their Studies to Earn a Baccalaureate Degree or the Equivalent	1. Complete at least ½ of the nursing curriculum.	Refers to courses with a nursing prefix
	2. Students in baccalaureate programs shall be eligible for membership if they have achieved excellence according to the standards approved by the society.	For universities/institutions of higher education that use a 4.0 grade point average (GPA) system to measure academic achievement, baccalaureate students must have a GPA of at least 3.0. GPAs should be computed according to the policies of the university. For universities/institutions of higher education that do not use a 4.0 grade point average system, the honor society will need to define how excellence is determined using its school's measure of

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		<p>academic achievement. This definition will need to be approved by the international governance committee. Examples of equivalencies to the 3.0 GPA that have been approved are available from HQ.</p> <p>In the case where a student has challenged courses or is a transfer student, the grade point average is required to be based on a minimum of 12 earned nursing or non-nursing credits completed at the college or university where currently enrolled.</p>
	<p>3. Rank in the upper 35 percent of the graduating class.</p>	<p>Class means the group anticipated to graduate within a given academic or calendar year or semester.</p> <p>Registered nurses can be considered as a separate group when a generic program also has a Registered Nurse track.</p> <p>If the lowest grade point average in the upper 35 percent falls below 3.0, only those students with a 3.0 and above are eligible. In the US, the standard is a 3.5 grade point average on a 4.0 grading scale.</p>
<p>Master's and Doctoral Students</p>	<p>1. Students in graduate programs shall be eligible for membership if they have achieved excellence according to the standards approved by the society.</p>	<p>For universities/institutions of higher education that use a 4.0 grade point average (GPA) system to measure academic achievement, graduate students must have a GPA of at least 3.5. GPAs should be computed according to the policies of the university. For universities/institutions of higher education that do not use a 4.0 GPA system, the honor society will need to define how excellence is determined using its school's measure of academic achievement. This definition will need to be approved by the international governance committee. Examples of equivalencies to the 3.5 GPA that</p>

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		have been approved are available from HQ.
	2. Complete at least ¼ of the program of study.	Refers to the total number of semester hours, not limited to nursing courses only.
Nurse Leader	1. Hold a minimum of a baccalaureate degree or the equivalent in any field.	Registered Nurses with a baccalaureate degree or the equivalent in nursing are eligible. Registered nurses with a baccalaureate degree in fields other than nursing are also eligible for membership.
	2. Demonstrated achievement in nursing.	Common examples of achievement are found at <a href="http://www.nursingsociety.org/membership/nl_criteria.html">http://www.nursingsociety.org/membership/nl_criteria.html</a>
	3. Be registered as a nurse, legally recognized to practice in his/her country.	

### **Academic Integrity and Leadership Potential**

Each candidate is required to meet the criteria for the respective category of membership and the expectation of academic integrity. Breaches of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism and falsifying data. Expectations of professional leadership potential are diminished where the candidate has engaged in unlawful, unethical, unprofessional conduct inconsistent with the purposes of the Society. Questions concerning the interpretation of these guidelines can be addressed by contacting the International Governance Committee via the headquarters staff. Information is also available on the Sigma Theta Tau International Web site.

### **Rescinding and Invitation and Membership Revocation**

*Rescinding an Invitation Guidelines* are available from headquarters and the Sigma Theta Tau International Web site.

*Revocation of Membership Guidelines* are also available from headquarters and the Sigma Theta Tau International Web site.