



# Phi Sigma Tau International Honor Society in Philosophy Newsletter



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Issue #149

November, 2016

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**AL-ALPHA(0101)** [Spring Hill College; advisor, Victor DiFate] President: Matt Chambers. At our September meeting, Dr. Metcalf addressed the members of Phi Sigma Tau and guests on the topic of anarchy, examining the ontological and consequentialist arguments for state authority to enact and enforce laws on citizens. Dr. Metcalf answered questions and engaged in a general discussion of the topic.

**CA-PI(0516)** [Chapman University, Orange; advisor, Virginia Warren] NEW ADVISOR. Last year our chapter met for weekly discussions with professors about their areas of research as well as for general philosophical discussions.

**CT-GAMMA(0703)** [Southern Connecticut State University; advisor, Chelsea C. Harry] The chapter ended last year with a well-attended philosophy event, and we have been involved with one of the newer chapters, the one at Quinnipiac University. We inducted three new members in conjunction with an undergraduate research panel held on Halloween. After the research panel, members held a discussion of sexism.

**CT-DELTA(0704)** [Quinnipiac University; advisor, Thornton Lockwood] President: Jason Culmone, Vice-president: Muhammad Zafar, Secretary: Jack Pantziris, Treasurer: Anthony Contardo. One of our students, John Mitchell, had enough credits to graduate in English last year. Financial aid came through, allowing John to attend an additional term and complete a major in philosophy. (Hooray for the financial aid people!)

**FL-ETA(1007)** [Florida International University; advisor, Kenton Harris] President: Brian Trujillo.

**FL-THETA(1008)** [Florida Southern College; advisor, H. A. Nethery, IV] President: Ian Hildebrand, Vice-president: Assia Angelini, Secretary: Derek Jean-Baptiste, Treasurer: Anisha Koilpilliar, Publicity: Nina DesRosiers. At our first meeting, we distributed general rules and information for meetings, movie nights, and game nights. Then we had a discussion of augmented reality, what it is, whether it is intentional or not, its technology, and other related topics. At a later meeting, we discussed why we wear masks on Halloween. Members made a variety of suggestions, among them that we might want to be something we are not, that they separate us from our current actions, that they hide the true self, that society expects masks, and a number of others.

**GA-ALPHA(1101)** [University of Georgia; advisor, Richard Winfield] President: Stephen Moore, Vice-president: Ross Schumacher, Secretary/Treasurer: Nekhya Fox.

**GA-ZETA(1106)** [Georgia State University; advisor, Andrew I. Cohen] President: Paul Dumond, Vice-president: Christopher Foster, Secretary: De Yang, Treasurer: Joel Van Fossen.

**GA-ETA(1107)** [Georgia Southern University; advisor, William Eaton] NEW ADVISOR.

**GA-THETA(1108)** [Valdosta State University; advisor, Christine James] President: Dan Nix, Vice-president: Maya Mapp, Secretary: Sawyer Burkhalter, Treasurer: Erin Shaw.

**IL-MU(1412)** [Dominican University; advisor, Drew Dalton] Officers: Drew Dalton, Kelly Burns.

**IN-EPSILON(1505)** [Ball State University; advisor, David Sarah E. Vitale] President: Cameron McNeely, Vice-president: Kayla

Williams, Secretary: Benjamin Langfield, Treasurer: Iesha Alspaugh.

**IA-GAMMA(1603)** [Iowa State University; advisor, Ranpal Dosanjh] NEW ADVISOR.

**KY-ALPHA(1801)** [Bellarmine University; advisor, Steven Berg] NEW ADVISOR.

**LA-GAMMA(1903)** [Xavier University of New Orleans; advisor, Thora Bayer] Our chapter inducted four new members, the most we have had in some time. The new members were given an information packet and the latest issue of *Dialogue*. Then we discussed the plans of the new members, one of whom was scheduled for the GRE the next day.

**MD-THETA(2108)** [Notre Dame of Maryland University; advisor, Maeve O'Donovan] NEW ADVISOR.

**MA-GAMMA(2203)** [College of the Holy Cross; advisor, Christopher Dustin] President: Caroline Carr, Vice-president: David Apudula, Secretary: Ambrose DeMarco.

**MA-IOTA(2209)** [Assumption College; advisor, Samuel Stoner] President: Christina Lambert, Vice-president: Ryan Del Mastro, Secretary: Zach Sullivan, Treasurer: John Guerra.

**MI-KAPPA(2310)** [Hillsdale College; advisor, Lee Cole] President: Sam Smartnick, Vice-president: Birch Smith, Secretary: Emily Lehman, Treasurer: Madeline Johnson. After our first meeting, we had several tasks to perform. Four members will be going through old PST papers to organize them, two members will be heading the tutoring program (to be held two evenings each week), Dr. Cole will check to see if we can use the Classics study room for tutoring, Emily is to make posters advertising the tutoring, Jared is to investigate options for promotional materials, and Maddy will add notices to the Academic Services tutoring poster. We would also like to have a meeting, probably at Dr. Cole's, that might be co-sponsored by the philosophy department and would include a talk. Finally, we considered combining our essay contest with the *Agora* so that those who place or received honorable mention would be published in a print journal. We might name this contest in honor of Dr. Turner (the former advisor--ed.).

**SD-BETA(2402)** [St. Olaf College; advisor,

Anthony Rudd] NEW ADVISOR. President: Annika Beck, Vice-president: Elise Steichen, Secretary/Treasurer: Alexander Quanbeck, Historian: Zhaoqi Hu. Our preliminary schedule includes Co-Curricular Fair Recruitment, two Student Colloquia, a Fall induction, and a Faculty Speaker for the first week in November.

**MO-IOTA(2609)** [Conception Seminary College; advisor, Shalina Stilley] President: Patrick McKenzie, Vice-president: Chad Thurman, Secretary: Seth Lorenz.

**MO-KAPPA(2610)** [Washington University; advisor, Anne Margaret Baxley] Officers: Warren Cormack, Matt Shepard.

**MO-TAU(2619)** [Northwest Missouri State University; advisor, Richard Field] President: Nick McMahan, Vice-president: Michael Eppley, Secretary/Treasurer: Kayla Hammer. Members considered whether to have discussions with the Philosophy Club about a current event. Ideas for topics included Artificial Intelligence Ethics, Medical Determinism, Global Warming, Media Ethics, Technological Determinism, and Racism.

**NJ-IOTA(3109)** [William Paterson University of New Jersey; advisor, Barbara Andrew] NEW ADVISOR.

**NY-GAMMA(3303)** [SUNY at Oneonta; advisor, Michael Koch] NEW ADVISOR. President: Brenna Crowe, Vice-president: Alexandra Eddy, Secretary: Khila-Rae Pecoraro, Treasurer: Anthony Vecere, Public Relations: Alexandra Eddy. Members considered various fund-raising ideas so that the chapter could support events and purchase new shirts. Ideas included bake sales and pancake sales. Members also considered the possibility of trips to Union College and NYU to attend philosophy conferences and were encouraged to attend chapter meetings regularly and also to attend meetings of the Philosophy Club before the regular PST meetings. Members were also encouraged to consider submitting papers to conferences.

**NY-KAPPA(3310)** [Siena College; advisor, Paul Santilli] Co-presidents: Sara Keller and Ryan Ghaderi. We plan to co-ordinate with the Philosophy Club and host a variety of activities devoted to philosophy during the school year.

**NY-MU(3312)** [Manhattanville College; advisors, Paul Kucharski] Officers: Caroline Timmings, Abbi Parenteau, Jasmine Quetell, Heather Krannich.

**NY-XI(3314)** [Geneseo College, SUNY; advisor, David Levy] President: Mohammed Hossain, Vice-president: Jessica Heppler, Treasurer: Jessica Heppler.

**NY-ALPHA ALPHA(3325)** [Iona College; advisor, Charles A. Rathkopf] NEW CHAPTER.

**NC-ALPHA(3401)** [East Carolina University; advisor, John Collins] President: Katharine Chandler

**NC-ETA(3407)** [University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; advisor, Mariska E. Leunissen] NEW ADVISOR.

**PA-EPSILON(3905)** [The Pennsylvania State University; advisor, Vincent Colapietro] NEW ADVISOR.

**PA-KAPPA(3910)** [Misericordia University; advisor, Melanie Shepherd] President: Bethany Flanders, Vice-president: Jacob Schweiger, Secretary: Nico Mazzone, Treasurer: Barry Fitzgerald.

**PA-MU(3912)** [Villanova University; advisor, Georg Theiner] NEW ADVISOR.

**PA-OMICRON(3915)** [Susquehanna University; advisor, Jeffrey Whitman] NEW CHAPTER.

**PA-TAU(3919)** [University of Scranton; advisor, Matthew Meyer] Members are discussing the possibility of attending the NYU conference on November 11 and 12. The chapter will also hold a bake sale outside Seasons, so we will need people to bake, sell, and encourage friends to come by.

**PA-PSI(3923)** [University of Pennsylvania; advisor, Susan Meyer] NEW ADVISOR.

**PA-ALPHA BETA(3926)** [Lehigh University; advisor, Robin Dillon] President: Juliana Clifton, Vice-president: Mike Lessel, Secretary: Kevin Augustyn, Treasurer: Alec McConnell. Our chapter made several suggestions during the first meeting. We recommended that we shift the focus of the club to creating more philosophical discussion both within our community and campus wide. We will begin to contact student organizations and

professors and ask for their participation in philosophical discussions and debates. We are discussing public readings of philosophical works in campus hubs, philosophy discussions with Lehigh's Live Lehigh themed communities, putting up post-it notes with philosophical questions around the campus, and creating a debate circuit for student organizations to debate politics, ethics, and other topics in an environment that is mediated by Phi Sigma Tau members.

A second suggestion was to have two induction ceremonies this school year, one in the fall and the second in the spring. A third suggestion was to attempt to contact members who are still on campus but have not attended a recent meeting. A fourth suggestion was to invite department alumni to come back for panel discussions about what one can do with a philosophy degree and how studying philosophy has affected their lives.

**PA-ALPHA GAMMA(3927)** [Mercyhurst University; advisor, James A. Snyder] NEW ADVISOR.

**RI-GAMMA(4003)** [Rhode Island College; advisor, Matthew Duncan] President: David Casey, Secretary: Harry Koutros.

**SOUTH DAKOTA-ALPHA(4201)** [Augustana College; advisor, Stephen Minister] (The Augustana Chapter was marked inactive for last year because the induction materials were lost in the mail somewhere. The chapter should not have been marked inactive; it was operating during the school year. --ed.)

**TX-LAMBDA(4411)** [St. Mary's University; advisor, Eric Chelstrom] Officers: Gisela Reyes, Roberto Barcenas.

**TX-OMICRON(4415)** [University of Dallas; advisor, Matthew Walz] NEW ADVISOR.

**VA-GAMMA(4703)** [James Madison University; advisor, Anne M. Wiles] The James Madison chapter made a proposal to the University Student Government Association for a program grant to sponsor a spring lecture series on the theme Hermeneutics: Language and Meaning in the Liberal Arts; the proposal is being considered. Early in October, the chapter sponsored a talk by Dr. Jude Dougherty, Dean

Emeritus of the School of Philosophy at the Catholic University of America. The subject was the nature of scientific explanation. After the brief talk, Dr. Dougherty entertained questions about his talk and general questions on the nature and value of philosophy. The chapter plans two more events during the term. Possibilities are a group discussion of the Epic of Gilgamesh or discussion of the text of a lecture by Hans-Georg Gadamer on education and poetry.

(VA-NU(4713) [Emory and Henry College: advisor, Brynn Welch] NEW CHAPTER.

(VA-XI(4714) [Southern Virginia University: advisor, John Armstrong] NEW CHAPTER.

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### From the Archives: Our Key



Did you ever wonder what the symbols on the Phi Sigma Tau key meant? When the society was being organized in 1955, Dr. Dale Diefenbach (some of his correspondence with Dr. Lynn Womack about the society was copied in the last Newsletter), one of the driving forces behind the organization of Phi Sigma Tau, corresponded with several people, asking them what would be an appropriate symbol. Dr. Diefenbach and others had already agreed on the format of the key which was to be a pentagon-shaped figure with a symbol in each corner. The symbols were to represent five great streams of thought, Chinese, Indian, Islamic, Hebrew, and Greek. For the symbol of Indian thought, Dr. Diefenbach wrote Dr. Daniel Ingalls, the chairman of the department of Indic Philology at Harvard. Dr. Ingalls replied.

Dear Mr. Diefenbach:

If you are looking for a symbol to represent Indian thought, there seems to me to be no choice. The symbol almost has to be the sign for OM .... (This is the symbol in the rightmost corner of the key. --ed.)

This symbol stands at the beginning of every religious and philosophical text of Hinduism. By the superstitious it is thought to be necessary to insure the intelligibility and effectiveness of what follows.

To explain the meanings which have been ascribed [to the symbol] would take more paper than I have in my desk and more time than I can spare, for many tracts have been written on the subject. --Let a few words suffice.

Speculation on the meaning of OM begins from a consideration of the tripartite nature of the sound which it represents, for 'o' in Sanskrit is a diphthong made up of 'a' + 'u'. Thus OM = A + U + M. These phonemes are then said to represent respectively the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd lines of the gayatrì hymn to the Sun, or the Rigveda, Sámaveda + Yajurveda. So to begin with, the whole of the ritual is summed up in the symbol. But the Indians go on to identify these three parts with various metaphysical and psychological categories, the identification depending on the particular persuasions of the author. Thus, some identify them with purusa (spirit), prakito (matter) and the union of spirit and matter. Or with male, female, and the union of opposites. And there are many other systems of identification, so that almost any philosopher can use the symbol meaningfully within the terms of his own understanding. Some of the mystics say there is a fourth part of OM, which is not pronounced, for it is silence. They say that in the symbol it is the dot (because the dot is also used to represent zero) which represents this turìyam (fourth). This is the state beyond waking, dream, and deep sleep and this is truth, this is what is.

Sincerely yours

Daniel H. H. Ingalls (signed)

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## Phi Sigma Tau - Newsletter

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