



Sigma Chapter and Region

STYLE GUIDE

2021 EDITION

Contents

USING THE SIGMA BRAND	3
Resources on The Circle	3
Permission to use the Sigma logo	3
Print-on-Demand System	3
Social media guidelines and resources.....	3
New chapter leader webpage	4
USING THE ORGANIZATION’S NAME	4
at-large chapter	4
chapter	4
The Circle (including chapter websites)	5
Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing (Sigma).....	5
DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN CHAPTERS AND SIGMA.....	5
Events/Travel/Community Service Disclaimer	5
DATES, TIMES, AND SEASONS	6
Dates.....	6
Times	6
Seasons.....	7
ACADEMIC DEGREES AND CREDENTIALS	7
Capitalization of Titles	7
Credential Order.....	7
Additional Guidelines	7
COMMON ACADEMIC TITLES, CREDENTIALS, AND CERTIFICATIONS	8
Academic Titles.....	8
Certifications	8
Meritorious Distinctions.....	9
Religious Orders	9

USING THE SIGMA BRAND

Resources on The Circle

Brand resources are available in the All Chapter Officers Workgroup on The Circle. Log in to The Circle, navigate to the All Chapter Officers Workgroup, and click the Marketing and Communication folder. Within that folder is a subfolder called [Sigma Brand Resources](#). There is also a subfolder called [Shareable Member Graphics, Videos, and Resources](#) where chapters can find Sigma collateral to share with members.

Permission to use the Sigma logo

While all chapter officers have access to the Sigma logo and their chapter logo in JPG format in the Chapter Management System, some chapters need a vector file to print the logo on apparel, products, etc. [Complete this form](#) to receive permission to use the Sigma logo. The use of the Sigma crest can also be requested via this form.

Print-on-Demand System

To order items personalized with your chapter's logo and contact information, visit Sigma's Print-on-Demand site at SigmaChapterShop.com.

Social media guidelines and resources

Social media is an important part of chapter growth and engagement. Social media resources are available in the All Chapter Officers Workgroup on The Circle. Log in to The Circle, navigate to the All Chapter Officers Workgroup, and click the Marketing and Communication folder. Within that folder is a subfolder called [Social Media](#).

Facebook

Please follow Sigma's naming convention for chapter Facebook pages in order to maintain consistent branding across all of Sigma's chapters.

Please be sure you do not use "Sigma" or "Sigma Theta Tau International" in a misleading way. For example, do not use the name Sigma by itself in front of your chapter Greek name, to avoid confusion with other organizations. The phrase "Sigma Nursing" should always be used, followed by a hyphen.

- Example: Sigma Nursing – Beta Chapter
- Example for at-Large chapters: Sigma Nursing – Beta at-Large Chapter

Twitter

Like Facebook, we ask that you follow Sigma's naming convention for chapter Twitter accounts, below. You'll create a Twitter @name, which is your unique identifier on Twitter. This is also commonly referred to as a Twitter "handle," and is the tag that other profiles will use to tag you in tweets and responses. A Twitter handle is your account's official username that follows the @ symbol and has a 15-character limit. It also appears in your profile's URL.

You'll also input a profile name that appears just below your profile photo. People can use this profile name to search for your account, even if they don't know your unique handle. It has a 50-character limit, so it can be longer than your handle.

- Profile Name Example:
Sigma Nursing – Beta Chapter or Sigma Nursing – Beta Chapter at-Large
- Handle Examples: @Sigma_BetaCh (preferred) or @BetaCh_Sigma

Note: For at-large chapters, it is best to leave the “at-large” portion of your name out of the handle due to the unique character limits on Twitter.

Instagram

Like your other social media profiles, please follow Sigma’s naming convention for chapter Instagram accounts. You’ll create a profile name along with a username, which is similar to a Twitter handle, and is what other profiles will use to tag you in their own photos and comments.

- Name Example: Sigma Nursing – Beta Chapter or Sigma Nursing – Beta Chapter at-Large
- Username Examples: @Sigma_BetaCh (preferred) or @BetaCh_Sigma

New chapter leader webpage

Sigma created a webpage to help chapter leaders to get started in their positions. Learn more at SigmaNursing.org/ChapterLeader.

USING THE ORGANIZATION’S NAME

at-large chapter

An at-large chapter is a chapter formed by two or more institutions of higher education or practice settings. Each institution receives recognition. When referring to a chapter’s formal name, hyphens are needed, and the term “at large” should be written as follows:

Example: Iota Iota at-Large Chapter

Example: All at-large chapters must submit annual reports.

To save space in certain printed materials, the formal name would be as acceptable with the word “chapter” removed.

Example: Iota Iota at-Large

chapter

The word “chapter” is ordinarily not capitalized when it is used as a common noun and not a title. Capitalize “chapter” when used as a formal name.

First reference: The Epsilon Omicron Chapter of Sigma won the Founders Award in 2019.

General reference: The chapter currently has 103 active members.

region

The word “region” is ordinarily not capitalized when it is used as a common noun and not a title. Capitalize “region” when used as a formal name.

Example: The Sigma Europe Region chapter presidents will meet on Tuesday.

Example: The Sigma North America Region 4 held a fundraising event.

Example: The board of directors for Sigma’s Asia Region will meet next week

Example: To apply for this grant you must be a member of Sigma’s Africa Region.

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The Circle (including chapter websites)

When writing The Circle, make sure to capitalize “The.”

Chapter websites on The Circle use the following naming convention. Use the name of the chapter without the words “chapter” or “at-large”:

Example: Alpha Alpha Chapter: <https://alphaalpha.sigmanursing.org>

Example: Psi at-Large Chapter: <https://psi.sigmanursing.org>

Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing (Sigma)

When writing the name of the organization, write out the entire name on first reference, unless space does not allow. Sigma is used on subsequent references. The use of “honor society” is acceptable to avoid repeating “Sigma” in a sentence.

First reference: Simone was inducted into Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing (Sigma).

Second reference: She joined Sigma because the organization is dedicated to improving healthcare across the globe.

Using honor society: To learn more about Sigma, you can visit the honor society’s website at SigmaNursing.org.

DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN CHAPTERS AND SIGMA

Sigma chapters should state their chapter name and affiliation with Sigma when referencing chapter-sponsored events or programs. This helps to create a distinction between Sigma headquarters and individual chapters.

First reference: The Alpha Chapter of Sigma will conduct an event on Saturday, 3 November.

Second reference: The Alpha Chapter hopes this conference will help nurses interested in applying for research grants.

Events/Travel/Community Service Disclaimer

Sigma chapters participate in a variety of activities and projects. It is important to note that Sigma headquarters is not responsible for any claims that may occur during the activities. Chapters may want to include one of the following statements when they are conducting activities:

Example: The XYZ Chapter of Sigma is only acting as intermediary with regard to events, travel, or community service. Neither XYZ Chapter nor Sigma will be liable for any claims arising out of or in any way relating to such activities.

If your chapter is working with an outside group, you may want to provide a similar disclaimer:

Example: XYZ Chapter is only acting as intermediary with regard to events, travel, or community service. XYZ Chapter will not be liable for any claims arising out of or in any way relating to such activities.

In promoting any such activity, it is important to make clear the fact that the event is being conducted and promoted under the auspices of the chapter in question, and not Sigma headquarters. This “arm’s length” relationship is in keeping with the previously stated provision that says Sigma headquarters shall not be responsible for any claims arising from, or in connection with, a chapter activity, which includes events involving travel, either as a means of arriving at a particular event, or in the form of a group travel activity or tour in which travel is the main focus of the activity.

Confusion sometimes arises with regard to the fact that a chapter may have general liability coverage through a per capita fee paid to Sigma. This coverage protects the chapter (not Sigma headquarters) against liabilities that may arise from its daily operations, meetings, and other officially-sanctioned chapter events that do not involve potentially hazardous or dangerous activities. Such hazardous or dangerous activities may include, but are not limited to: walk/run events held in highly trafficked areas; athletic contests such as rock climbing, swimming, or skiing; or events involving the serving of alcoholic beverages. However, in general, for non-hazardous activities, the chapter would have some coverage with regard to premises and operations; contractual liability; independent contractor liability; personal injury; medical payments; or fire damage.

Because of this coverage, an assumption is sometimes made that a particular event can and should be categorized as a “Sigma event;” however, it is important to remember that this particular coverage extends to the chapter, not Sigma headquarters.

DATES, TIMES, AND SEASONS

Dates

Dates are written differently depending on the country. Americans express dates in the order: month-day-year. A date written as 11/5/21 can mean either November 5th or May 11th in other countries. To avoid confusion, write a date as 5 November 2021. For a date range, use a dash with spaces on either side.

Example: We will celebrate 21 April-24 May 2021.

Times

Sigma uses the colon and “00” for times at the top of the hour. There are no spaces on either side of the hyphen when listing a time range. You do not have to use “a.m.” or “p.m.” twice if the time range is within the morning/afternoon/evening hours.

Times should always be written in the following format:

1:00 p.m.

3:30 p.m.

8:00 a.m.

noon

midnight

1:00-6:00 p.m.

8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

For events, the military time should be included with the standard time.

Example: 8:00-10:00 a.m. (0800-1000)

Seasons

To avoid confusion, refrain from using seasons as a span of time. For example, autumn in Australia is 1 March- 31 May, but in the United States, it is 21 September- 22 December.

ACADEMIC DEGREES AND CREDENTIALS

Capitalization of Titles

In general, do not capitalize titles after a proper name.

Example: Juana Mercedes Gutiérrez-Valverde, DSN, MSN, BN, RN, is a professor at the Universidad Autonoma de Nuevo Leon (UANL).

Capitalize and spell out formal titles such as “professor,” “chancellor,” etc. when they precede a name. Lowercase elsewhere. Lowercase modifiers in titles.

Example: history Professor Oscar Handlin

Credential Order

Sigma does not place RN before other credentials. Credentials are listed in the following order: highest earned* academic degree, licensure, certification, meritorious distinctions.

Example: Mary Smith, PhD, MSN, BS, RN, FAAN, will speak today at a luncheon.

*Sigma does not include degrees in progress (PhD candidates).

When mentioning an individual’s credentials, the preferred form is to use the highest degree, or the most pertinent degrees, in a written phrase instead of with acronyms.

Example: Jane Smith has a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Indiana University, a Master of Science in Nursing from Catholic University, and a Doctor of Philosophy in Education from the University of Virginia.

Additional Guidelines

- Use an apostrophe in “bachelor’s” and “master’s” degrees.
- Credentials are not used when the term “Dr.” precedes a name.

- Periods should not be used with credentials; use only one space after the comma between the credentials.

Example: John Jones, PhD, RN

- When used after a name, credentials are set off by commas.

Example: Joe Smith, PhD, spoke today.

- Some Canadians list their degrees with a (c) after it—for example, PhD(c). To avoid confusing this person as a candidate, place (Canadian) after the credential instead.

Example: Jane Smith, PhD (Canadian), is presenting at the seminar.

Certifications indicate that an individual has a level of expertise and has passed a board examination in a specialized field. Peer experts oversee and develop the examination and credentialing process. Certifications are listed last and follow the highest academic degree.

Example: Frank Carter, MS, RN, CNE, will discuss family health at a workshop at the Metropolitan Health Clinic on Friday.

COMMON ACADEMIC TITLES, CREDENTIALS, AND CERTIFICATIONS

Academic Titles

BA	Bachelor of Arts	DSN	Doctor of Science in Nursing
BS	Bachelor of Science	DBA	Doctor of Business Administration
BSN	Bachelor of Science in Nursing	DPA	Doctor of Public Administration
BScN	Bachelor of Science in Nursing	DPhil	Doctor of Philosophy
JD	Juris Doctor	DSW	Doctor of Social Work
MA	Master of Arts	DrPH	Doctor of Public Health
MBA	Master of Business Administration	EdD	Doctor of Education
MD	Medical Doctor	ND	Doctor of Nursing
MEd	Master of Education	PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
MN	Master of Nursing	ScD	Doctor of Science
MS	Master of Science		
MSN	Master of Science in Nursing		
MScN	Master of Science in Nursing		
DNS	Doctor of Nursing Science		
DNSc	Doctor of Nursing Science		
		CNOR	Perioperative Nurse

Certifications

ACNP	Acute Care Nurse Practitioner	COHN	Occupational Health Nurse
C	Certified	CPN	Certified Pediatric Nurse
CCRN	Critical Care Nurse	CPNP	Pediatric Nurse Practitioner
CEN	Emergency Nurse	CRNA	Nurse Anesthetist
CNA	Nursing Administration	CRRN	Rehabilitation Nurse
CNAA	Nursing Administration, Advanced	CS	Clinical Specialist
CNM	Nurse Midwife		

FNP Family Nurse Practitioner

RN Registered Nurse

OCN Oncology Nurse

RGN Registered General Nurse

RNC Certifications include the following: Inpatient Obstetric Nurse, Neonatal Intensive Care Nurse, Low-Risk Neonatal Nurse, Neonatal Nurse Clinician/Practitioner, OB/GYN Nurse Practitioner

RN, C Certifications include the following: Pediatric Nurse Practitioner, Adult Nurse Practitioner, Family Nurse Practitioner, School Nurse Practitioner, Gerontological Nurse Practitioner, General Nursing Practice, Medical-Surgical Nurse, Gerontological Nurse, Psychiatric and Mental Health Nurse, Community Health Nurse, School Nurse, Maternal-Child Health Nurse, High-Risk Perinatal Nurse

Meritorious Distinctions

FAAN Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing

FRCN Fellow of the Royal College of Nursing

FRCNA Fellow of the Royal College of Nursing Australia

Religious Orders

SC Sister of Charity (Religious orders are listed before academic, meritorious and certification titles. They are also included even when other credentials are not listed.)