



## Spring 2024 Board Meeting Minutes



**Note: Motions are highlighted in yellow.**

### SIGMA TAU DELTA, FALL 2024 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**Those in attendance:** Kevin, Shannin, Lexey, Leigh, Chris, Ami, Crystal, Mae, Sophia, Heidi, Jo, Amy, Isaiah, Kassia, Zach, Michaelann, Matthew, Felicia, Leighann, Joan, Kelly, Autumn, Tiffany, Sheila, Nicole, Jessica, Namon, Katie, Chris, Matt

- Call to Order (Wi-Fi Network: Wyndham\_Meetings/ Password: Sigma24)
  - Meeting called to order by Lexey at 3:08 pm.
- Welcome & Introductions: What is everyone reading?
- Reminder of Board Meeting Guidelines: Lexey provided an explanation of the rules and why this is important as to why these rules are crucial to the meeting running efficiently.
  - Robert's Rules of Order and Special Rules: See the Roberts Rules “cheat sheet” document here. In addition, we use the following special rules:
    - Discussion of any individual item is limited to 10 minutes; if additional time is desired, a motion must be made to extend the discussion.
    - Each person should be mindful of limiting comments to one per discussion in the interest of the time limit noted above; if the matter is urgent, additional comments may be made and/or a motion to extend the discussion period.
- Modification/Approval of Spring 2024 Board Meeting Minutes
  - Motion for approval by Leigh
  - Seconded by Shannin
  - Vote: Unanimous approval
- Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items (proposed emendations to agenda)
  - Shannon moved to move Exec. Comm report to the beginning of the committee reports
    - Seconded by Leigh
    - Vote: Unanimously approved
- Old Business (reports of what has already been done). All reports are submitted in writing and are to have been read by all members before the meeting. During New Business, Board members (1) will be asked for any updates to their written reports on activities completed since the reports were submitted and (2) will themselves ask if others have any questions. Questions are welcomed from voting and non-voting board members.

#### 1. Central Office Reports & Updates

##### a. Executive Director (Matt Hlinak)

- No updates
- No questions

##### b. Director of Society Operations (Jeannine Szostak)



- No updates
  - Question: related to the EIN availability. What does that decision mean for not continuing to let chapters use this number? What should chapters do moving forward to have a bank account that is not associated with the university but also not under the adviser's name? Don't want chapter advisers to use their own names.
  - Question: What should chapters do that already have this number in use?
    - No reason to shut the account if it has been responsibly used. The society doesn't know how many are actually using this number. Chapters can change their accounts over or get a bank account under their state laws as an organization. The CO can help with this.
      - The CO will come up with directional language to help advisers know how to set up these accounts.
  - Question: Shannin will follow-up with her questions in person.
- c. NEHS Director (Chris Lockwood)
- No updates
  - Questions:
    - Technical correction to spell "Dennis" correctly.
- d. Director of Marketing and Communications (Katie Mudd)
- No updates
  - Question: (Felicia) Is gmerch allowing increased revenue?
    - The amount of revenue through direct marketing has led to an immediate increase in sales. Hoping to see even more activity now that chapters are back in session.
    - Gmerch maintains the confidentiality of members through their marketing.
  - Has Gmerch agreed to keep us updated as to how much money is being donated to the Trevor Project?
    - Gmerch doesn't do that directly. We make that donation based on the revenue that comes in and Gmerch sends a report of how much revenue was taken in and is kept track of by our accountant and is processed through the CO. At this point, one donation has been paid.
- e. Director of Technology (Namon Kent)
- No updates
  - No questions
  - Noted appreciation for the comment about the importance of communication in the report.
- f. Program Coordinator (Jessica McCole)
- No updates
  - Comment (Shannin): "Trial by fire" in having to start off the position working inside of the AwardsSpring problems. Public kudos for that work.
- g. Event Planner (Nicole Adams)
- No updates
  - Questions: (Felicia) clarification of the project management system mentioned in the report.
- h. Sigma Kappa Delta Report (Sheila Byrd)
- No updates
  - No questions



## 2. Board Members' Reports

### a. Officers

#### i. Immediate Past President (Shannin Schroeder)

- Updates: Invited to read for the Penguin internships and had a great experience with it.
- No questions.

#### ii. President (Lexey Bartlett)

- No updates
- Questions: (Shannin) The Maps Leadership, what is the take-away for bringing something back
  - Advocacy for the humanities
  - AI—All of our committees have AI as part of their charges, as it's an issue we all need to be working with and thinking about.
  - Attended a workshop on strategic planning that could be useful for our own strategic planning activities.

#### iii. Vice President (Leigh Dillard)

- Updates: Provided additional information about the Dashboard proposal.
  - Shift responsibility for minutes and archiving to the committee chairs and not the CO.
  - All committee chairs will get a link post-meeting as well as a brief video instruction on how to use it. Will also provide a Zoom instructional meeting for folks to have a hands-on experience on using this system and how to upload the documents.
  - Point is to create an accessible system where everyone has access to all documents.
- Updates: updated the bylaws and distributed that document to the Regents and applicable chairs. The clean document will be a PDF rather than an HTML document for the website.

#### iv. Secretary (Ami Comeford)

- No updates
- No questions

#### v. Officer at Large (Kevin Stemmler)

- No updates
- No questions

### b. Regents & Student Representatives

#### i. Eastern (Felicia Steele & Matthew Chinique)

- Updates: Scoring for Norton and Penguin internships has been completed and the interns have been chosen; met with Janine to formulate the MOU about what the partnership will look like.
- Questions: (Mae) Would like more information about the “institutional austerity”?
  - When individuals were asked about helping to evaluate internship applications, faculty are responding that they can't, as they have to pick up more classes. Faculty travel



budgets are cut. Student travel is being cut. Morale is a problem, as faculty are under more and more pressure on students and the administrative work of Sigma TD chapters is being put more and more on professional staff. Has ramifications for faculty being able to review applications and volunteer for work.

ii. Far Western (Michaelann Nelson & Zach Brady)

- Updates: Fleshing out ideas for a regional publication.
- No Questions

iii. High Plains (Kassia Krone & Isaiah Russell)

- Updates: Regional conference date has moved to happen before the Convention submission deadline. Haven't seen as many submissions, so that deadline might need to be moved to a bit later. Reminder to have students in any region to submit work. Sept 27th is the current deadline, but less than 10 submissions so far. May extend for a couple of days.

iv. Midwestern (Amy Gates & Jo Mahlum)

- No Updates
- Public kudos on the scholarship work over the summer. (Shannin and Lexey)

v. Southern (Heidi Williams & Sophia Jockell)

- Updates: 1) Met with SR to discussion vision and goals, including compiling a handbook that will explain service and other opportunities to share with the region. Reminder to submit to the regional conference.
- Public kudos on seeing the types of e-mails that were sent out to the region that were included in the report. (Mae)

vi. Southwestern (Dr. Sonia Mae Brown & Crystal Dilling)

- Updates: All concerns and questions were answered in an efficient and organized way, including where to find board documents and budget to prepare for the meeting.

c. Student Advisors

i. Senior (Autumn Koors Foltz)

- Updates: Student leadership newsletter (substack) is a bit stalled until working out some technical issues; probably will be re-activating current chapter location of Colorado State.

ii. Junior (Kelly Taylor)

- Updates: Change to the book club kits, but this will be further addressed in the student leadership committee discussion.

d. Alumni Representative (Tiffany Nolde)

- Updates: The bylaws need to be changed to reflect that we have not just one alumni rep but we have two.

e. Editor of Publications (Carie King)

- No Updates



- Questions should be directed to Carie directly via e-mail.

### 3. Committee Reports

#### a. Communications Committee (Kassia Krone & Carie King)

- Carie and Kassia met together and then with the committee to go over goals.
- Meetings this week
  - How to tackle the website updates: committee will do the bulk of that work, though it is listed in different committees. Namon is constructing the site map. Once that is finished, the committee will divvy that out and look over it and then they will delegate assignments to other individuals and committees.
  - Student leaders provided input that AI isn't necessarily as valuable to our organization, as it is product based and not process based. We should define AI on our terms and what we consider to be AI use. Students do not feel comfortable opening up convention submission to AI generated content.
  - No longer going to use the Facebook Regional pages. Will be moving energy over to Instagram. Maintain the main Facebook page but will phase out the regional FB page. Also keeping Humans of Sigma TD.
- Questions: (Shannin), Do we want to go back and capture some of the positive comments and archive them as well as regional events?
  - Yes, that will and can be done.

#### b. Convention Committee (Leigh Dillard, Shannin Schroeder, & Kevin Stemmler)

- The Convention Committee moves to create a set of Convention Travel Support Grants, awarding up to \$1500 to students presenting at Convention. For the 2025 Convention support, we would like to request a new budget line for these grants in the initial amount of \$7500, equal to 5 awards up to \$1500 each.
  - Discussion: Could help up to 4 students from a chapter, since the hotel room would be covered by this amount and more students could therefore come to populate this room.
  - Would be handled by Convention and not Scholarships Committee.
  - Would not be by region but rather by lottery and open to students eligible for Pell Grants.
  - Will continue to raise money for this project with outside entities and sponsors, and those might be more specific depending on the organization.
  - What limitations could be put on to promote applications from schools that don't already fund students to go to Convention?
    - One of the checklist items will be, "Are you Pell Grant eligible and interested"?
    - This decision will be left to the individual students to make this decision and follow the directions of the checklist.
  - Vote: Unanimously approved



- Updates:
  - Got updates from student leadership (including book club kits).
  - Programming: ideas about conversations they would like to see whether those are roundtable ideas or sessions that regents or committee chairs would like to see happen.
  - Professional development sessions in two blocks. Thinking about alumni who will be presenting on professional development for anyone. Also presenting alumni FOR alumni and advisers.
  - Process of proposing and leading roundtables. What does a good conversation feel like in those roundtables. Also promoting multi-chapter roundtables.
  - Namon and Shannin have been working on the submission site to address the new travel grants and will ask folks to help test that.

c. Executive Committee (Lexey Bartlett)

- Explanation of how constitutional changes are made and ratified and the difference between bylaws that don't have to be ratified.
- Motions 1-5 were put forward as a group and will be voted on by one single vote with discussion happening on each motion individually.
  - All motions pass unanimously.
- The following motions were put forward for a board vote.
  - MOTION 1. We remind the Board that we approved a motion at the Fall 2022 Board meeting to amend Article I, Section VI. Nondiscrimination. to be in compliance with federal law. The change we will add to the ballot will read: "Sigma Tau Delta does not discriminate on the basis of disability, age, color, sex, gender identity, national origin, geographic location, citizenship status, race, ethnicity, religion, and/or sexual orientation." [Change from original text, which reads: "Section VI. Nondiscrimination. Sigma Tau Delta does not discriminate on the basis of disability, age, color, gender, national origin, race, religion, and/or sexual orientation."]  
 ■ Already approved and just needs to be sent out for ratification.
  - MOTION 2. The Executive Committee moves to revise the Constitution, Article I, Section V. Sponsorship, to read: "The Society shall sponsor Sigma Kappa Delta (SKD) for two-year colleges, the National English Honor Society (NEHS) for high schools, and the English Language Arts Honor Society (ELA) for middle grades. Collectively, Sigma Tau Delta, Sigma Kappa Delta, National English Honor Society, and English Language Arts Honor Society shall be the English Honor Societies." [Change from original text, which reads: "Section V. Sponsorship. The Society shall sponsor the National English Honor Society (NEHS) for secondary students and teachers."]  
 ■ This will not change the banking numbers and accounting that will be under the same umbrella that Sigma Tau Delta already is.
  - MOTION 3. The Executive Committee moves to revise the Constitution, Section I. Funds and Investments. A. Deposits and Withdrawals of Funds, to read: "Section I. Funds and Investments. A. Deposits and Withdrawals of Funds. Any funds received in the name of the Society shall be promptly deposited into an appropriate Society account." [change in



bold, from original text, which reads: “A. Deposits and Withdrawals of Funds. Upon receipt of any funds from any source in the name of the Society, a Board member, or the Executive Director as authorized by the Board, shall immediately direct said funds into an appropriate Society account.”]

- MOTION 4. The Executive Committee moves to revise the Constitution, Section I. Funds and Investments. B. Investments, to read: B. Investments. The Board shall determine specific policies that govern the purchase and sale of investments not otherwise specified in this article of the Constitution. [change in bold from original text, which reads: “B. Investments. The Board will formulate and approve specific policies that govern the purchase and sale of investments not otherwise specified in this article of the Constitution.”] 1. Purchase of Investments Instruments. Unencumbered funds in the checking and savings accounts of the Society shall be invested from time to time by the Secretary/Treasurer as authorized by the Executive Committee. Such investments shall be made with due regard to the proper diversification and safety of principal and shall be maintained in the manner that a reasonably prudent investor would maintain their own portfolio. [change is simply omitting the word and phrase marked by the strikethrough and making the word Investment plural] 2. Sale of Investments. In accordance with specific policy approved by the Board, investments shall be sold, exchanged, or redeemed and proceeds promptly deposited as provided above (Section I.A, this Article). [change from original text, which reads: 2. Sale of Investments. The Secretary/Treasurer shall, in accordance with specific policy approved by the Board and in place at the time, sell, exchange, or redeem investment instruments owned by the Society and promptly deposit the proceeds as provided above (Section I.A, this Article).]

- The secretary role has already been changed functionally, so the constitution is here being updated to reflect that change that is already occurring on a practical level.

- MOTION 5. The Executive Committee moves to revise the Constitution, Section II. Operating Expenses. C, to read: Section II. Operating Expenses. C. The Executive Director shall be responsible for executing the approved Budget and shall report expenditures regularly to the Board. [change from original text, which reads: “Section II. Operating Expenses. C. The Secretary/Treasurer, along with the Executive Director, shall be responsible for execution of the approved Budget and shall report to the Board.”]
- ITEM 6. We also plan to remove incorrect hyphens, but these are editorial changes that we do not need a Society-wide vote on (incorrect hyphens to fix in II.I.A.1: federally insured, instead of federally-insured, and federally guaranteed instead of federally-guaranteed). I would also propose changing which to that in the phrase “federally-insured financial institutions that which shall have a capital surplus and undivided profits of not less than \$100,000.00.”

- Motion: Having received the approval of Sigma Kappa Delta’s current board of directors and executive director Sheila Byrd, the Executive Committee moves that Sigma Kappa Delta’s board of directors shall become an advisory council, reporting to Matt Hlinak as Executive Director.

- Discussion

- Sigma KD merger into Sigma TD
  - Working the past 18 months on this integration. Find ways to serve the SKD students in the best way possible through this integration. Most logical way to do this is to treat SKD chapters the same as STD chapters by utilizing Write Away, and other STD systems in terms of management. Also move them into our scholarship management system and thinking additional about scholarships that would apply to SKD student members.
  - Has met with the SKD leadership in an expedited way.
  - SKD has always been part, and is, therefore, a more lateral move as a sister organization (Shannin)
  - The SKD board has approved this integration.
- Point of information: This is a new motion that had not previously been sent out.
- SKD Leadership: more questions will probably come that will need to be worked out to help.
- Public kudos to Sheila for her leadership. This will be Sheila's 45th year of being involved with Sigma TD or SKD.
- Working with SKD more closely will strengthen both organizations (Lexey, Shannin)
- This is not a constitutional motion, so it will not need to be ratified.
- Yea, Nay, Abstention: Vote called by Lexey. Motion passes unanimously.
- Regent-at-Large: Other committees have also suggested this would be a good idea. Working with other committees, a motion should be ready to come forward in the Spring.
  - Work with displaced members without chapters; virtual chapters; international chapters.
  - Allows regents to begin thinking about what this might look like and how to recruit and think about the cycle so that this regent could join at the 2026 Convention and be onboarded in the Fall 2026 at the next Regents retreat.
  - Would also be good to add a student leader from one of those virtual and international chapters at the same time as a new regent.
  - Should be aware of some of the complications in recruiting faculty for the international chapters and virtual chapters, as these advising positions are often being put on professional staff.
  - What constitutes a virtual chapter? Those that do not have a physical, brick-and-mortar presence.

#### d. Partnerships Committee (Felicia Steele)

- Updates
  - Agreed it would be a good idea to model how local chapters can partner with their own local organizations.
  - Have two roundtables worth of material that could be good for Convention.
  - Looking at creating more regional partnerships.
  - Try to revise AwardSpring to emphasize Sigma TD skills and service on applications.





- Questions: Partnership with Lambda. How would it work for students to attend their convention upon winning the award? The 12 winners are eligible and the faculty at the retreat will choose who the winner of those applications will be and then they will be fully funded to attend the retreat.
- Kudos to Felicia (Kevin) for wading through and working through the applications and working with the evaluators.
- We need to do a better job of expanding the options of where and how students and their applications are appealing to what Penguin wants—they want people to do more than work in editing.

e. Regents Committee (Kassia Krone & Felicia Steele)

- Updates
  - Getting acquainted with new regents and explaining what those tasks would be and how the committees work and what they do.
  - Focus also on the website and what the regents would like to see. Discussion with Namon about specific Regents pages. Notified the Communications Committee, which led to a more refined process for how website revisions would take place.
  - What is the Regents' interface and relationship with the different stakeholders in the organization? Wanted to stay way from the word internship for student leaders but wanted to also think about academic credit for those student leaders.
    - Discussion: Southwest PCA has a model that might work here with the way they utilize fellows (Lexey). Could add a name or titles to their roles, e.g. executive student board (Heidi)
  - How to differentiate between the needs of different regions and types of schools and what that might require from student leadership in how they fulfill their role given those differences.

f. Scholarships & Academic Awards Committee (Amy Gates)

- Updates
  - Strategies and timing for recruiting evaluators, which continues to be a challenge.
  - Planning a roundtable for Convention that will complement professional partnerships and development.
  - Need to update information and rubrics in AwardSpring to be aligning submissions with what evaluators are looking for in submissions.
  - Jessica may ask some of us to be practice evaluators to test the system and submission changes.
  - Public kudos to those who have helped to evaluate, especially under pressured circumstances.

g. Service Committee (Kevin Stemmler & Kelly Taylor)

- Updates
  - Working to get the book clubs running.
  - Project service grants: though about dates and will focus on getting those ready to go. It has already been built in.
  - Would like to put a motion together
  - Shannin moved to let this committee bring back a motion tomorrow to change their budget request for project grants.

- Second from Kassia
- Unanimously approved.
- Lambda will reserve 15 spots for Sigma TD judges and agree to donate their honorarium to the organization to then use that money for the related awards.
  - Further details will be in the email sent out and the links contained there for individuals who are interested in judging.
- **Motion: “The Service Committee requests a \$6000 budget line for Service inspired Book Club Projects and awards.”**
  - Questions: (Leigh) Is this a new addition to what is already there?
    - Yes, this is a new project.
  - Question: (Lexey) Is this a certain number of awards or how much per award?
    - Might be a certain amount per region. Student leadership is still working on it. HOW the money is distributed might change depending on how this goes forward in terms of awards.
  - Question: Is this in the service award category? How the service award is written, it defined specifics of how that money would be awarded, so this wouldn't fit really well.
    - This is a new award and will have different guidelines on how this would go forward.
  - Comment: could this be brought back as an amended motion with more detail. More discussion about further details about how this is going to go forward.
  - Suggestion: Which model is being aimed at in terms of this award? This needs to be clarified to answer the question.
  - Move to table the vote to help revise the motion for clarity (Leigh); seconded by Michaelann. Yay (unanimously approved)
  - **Original motion untabled and withdrawn. Moved: Felicia Seconded: Leigh**
    - **Permission to withdraw the original motion (Kelly).**
  - **New motion proposed by the committee:**
    - **Based on the established model of the Common Reader Award, the Service Committee requests funding for up to twenty Book Club Service awards of \$200 each for service projects inspired by chosen Book Club titles and their corresponding Book Club kits. These awards will be distributed after service projects have been completed by chapters. Chapters can be funded for one project within the award period. This would necessitate a new \$4000 budget line.**
      - Questions
        - Who will handle the evaluations? (Amy)
          - The service committee rather than the Regents, even though it is being modeled after awards judged by Regents.
        - What will the award be called? (Matt)
          - Book Club Service Award

- Votes: Motion carries with all board members approving and two abstentions from the student leaders.

#### h. Strategic Planning Committee (Leigh Dillard)

- Updates
  - Appreciate the potential growth with the integration of SKD.
  - What can we do to help NEHS with getting information about our contacts with schools to Chris rather than him trying to track them down. We can help with this pathways beginning with ELA and up through each organization.
  - The committee would like to work toward creating a sustainable chapter development plan. How are we supporting chapters at all levels and different situations (virtual, schools that have lost chapters, etc.)?
  - Strategic planning repeat will happen in early December and the plan is to have small virtual meetings to discuss goals and plans.
  - The new plan will reflect new challenges and also any carry-over challenges from the previous one.

**Motion to Adjourn at 6:07 pm. (Leigh); seconded by Shroeder/Stemmler**

#### i. Student Leadership Committee (Autumn Koors Foltz & Kelly Taylor)

- AI Usage: While this can be used in a variety of ways, Sigma TD is not one of those places. The principles of the society do not align with the use of generative AI.
- Student adviser bylaws need to be revised to reflect the in-practice system.
- Book Club Kits: These are activities that give chapters ideas on service. Each kit is a different book that helps the chapters to host their own book clubs. These are interactive for chapters and provide ideas for service related to those books.f
  - Would be good to release the actual book titles ASAP so that chapters can prep for this.
  - Additional clarifying questions asked by board members.

### 4. Advisory Council / Task Force Reports

#### a. Alumni Advisory Council (Tiffany Nolde)

- Alumni rep will be taking over the process of posting on the Discord channel.
- Will begin meeting on a more regular basis.

#### b. Past President's Advisory Council (Shannin Schroeder)

- Made plans to continue to invite past presidents and Delta winners to Convention and to a luncheon to use as a business meeting as a way to keep folks active and connected to the organization.

- Would like to work more directly with the alumni to create a faculty aspect of alumni for former advisers, board members, etc. if they make professional changes where they are no longer attached to a chapter.

c. Membership Initiatives Task Force (Ami Comeford) (new; no report)

## 5. 2025 Proposed Budget Review & Investment Update (Matt Hlinak)

- The additional \$4,000 is not showing up, but it doesn't impact the overall budget that we need to vote on and approve. This is a technical difficulty that will be remedied in the budget when this technical difficulty can be resolved back at the CO.
- This budget is better at having broken down the expenses of ELA and NEHS.
- The groupings that have been requested to be broken out have been to help keep track of awards and where the money is going for each of those awards.
- Investment income has been good over the past few years.
  - Questions
    - Regent expenses—the Regent's budget of \$2,000 is not represented in that number if it is a proposed rather than actual.
    - Could we have a break-down of award, specifically for the internship and journal awards, since the internship stipend specifically is variable, and the number that the committee can award is based on that line item number? The more detailed spreadsheet can be made available to board members. In future, both the collapsed and detailed versions will be sent out.
    - What is the publication line item covering? These items are further broken down into three areas, most of which are stipends for reviewers.
    - The estimated number of new memberships for NEHS are too large and need to be adjusted, as does the number reflecting merchandise sale.
    - The board needs to see the budget numbers in relation to last year's actuals.
      - This was shared with the EC.
    - Concern expressed that the board can't do its due diligence with regard to the financial matters if the discussion has to be continually deferred away from the meeting.
      - A Zoom session will be set up to go through the budget and vote, which will allow for additional questions.
  - Further budget questions can be posed when the proposed budget is presented and sent out to the board for an electronic vote.
  - The EC will work on the process issues to be sure that all committees and board members can feel confident about budget requests and give the CO time to incorporate those requests.
- Other New Business (outstanding societal issues not in reports)
  - No new business
- Announcements
  - Various kudos given to board members on accomplishments.
  - Reminder about cultural and historical events and places in Pittsburgh.
  - Deadline reminders for various conferences, contests, webinars.



- Reminders
  - Reimbursement forms and required receipts (in accordance with the travel policy) should be submitted to Jeannine Szostak no later than Friday, October 4.
  - Committee minutes should be sent to Jeannine Szostak and Lexey Bartlett no later than Friday, October 4.

Adjournment: Motion by Leigh   Seconded by Kevin   Adjourned at 10:2

