Initiations and Ceremonies: Responsibilities & Resources for Chapters

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Definitions (Dictionary.com)

• Initiation
  - **formal** admission or acceptance into an organization…

• Ceremony
  - the **formal** activities conducted on some solemn or important …occasion…
Purpose of Initiation

• Welcome new members
• Promote professional counselor identity
  ◦ Promote pride in professional identity.
• Promote continued commitment to excellence
Purpose of Initiation Ceremony

• Provide public recognition of achievements.
• Help new members understand CSIs mission, vision, and goals.
• Provide opportunity for public commitment to excellence in counseling training and practice.
CSI Bylaws:
Article 6. Initiation

• 6.1 Notice of selection for membership shall be made in writing by the chapter President to each candidate.

• 6.2 Candidates for membership shall be initiated by their respective chapters at least annually, using procedures established by the Executive Council.
What the Bylaws Mean

• All new members of CSI must be formally initiated.
  ◦ Chapters that do not initiate members at least annually may be declared inactive
    • Unable to initiate members
    • Ineligible for membership rebates

• Active membership does not begin until new members are initiated.
CSI is…

• Not just a line on your vita!
• Not just another membership organization.
• CSI is an international academic and professional honor society that:
  ◦ Was created by and for professional counselors.
  ◦ Initiates *only* professional counselors as members.
  • See csi-net.org > About CSI > Professional Counselors > “What is a Professional Counselor?”
Planning Chapter Initiation Ceremonies

• Things to consider in planning your initiation ceremony
  ◦ Day, Date, Time
  ◦ Location, Location, Location
  ◦ Invitations & E-vitations
  ◦ Speakers & Program Considerations
  ◦ Receptions & Refreshments
  ◦ CSI Support, CSI logo
Day, Date, Time Considerations

• When are all “constituents” likely to be available?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiates</th>
<th>Family Members &amp; Friends</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Officers</td>
<td>Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Members</td>
<td>Speakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni</td>
<td>Professional Members</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Additional Time Issues

• Avoid times students are in classes.
• Avoid religious and spiritual holidays.
  ◦ Sabbath days (e.g., Friday nights, Sunday mornings)
• Consider needs of commuting students.
Location, Location, Location

• Consider “spaces” that contribute to the initiation purpose?
  ◦ University function rooms & policies
  ◦ Art galleries
  ◦ Auditoriums

• Avoid spaces that may detract from the purpose, e.g.,
  ◦ Parks & picnic areas
  ◦ Busy restaurants or bars
Invitations & E-vitations

- **Who should be invited?**
  - Initiates…Chapter Officers and Members
  - Family Members & Friends
  - Faculty…University Administrators

- **How can invitations be sent?**
  - Formal letters to initiates
  - Formal letters to speakers
  - E-vites to faculty
  - E-vites to family members
Inviting Initiates

• A written invitation is required
  ◦ csi-net.org > Chapters
    > Membership Processing & Initiations
    > Written Invitation to CSI Membership

• Only online applications are accepted
Speakers & Program Considerations

• Who welcomes the initiates?
  ◦ Chapter Faculty Advisor
  ◦ Department Chair
  ◦ Dean
  ◦ Chancellor or President

• Why invite administrators?
  ◦ Increase visibility of counseling program
  ◦ Increase perceived importance of event to initiates and family members
Choosing Your Speaker

• **Speakers should be CSI members**
  ◦ Professional Counselors
  ◦ Role Models for Initiates
  ◦ CSI International Officers & Committee Chairs
  ◦ CSI Academy of Leaders
Orienting your speakers

• Resource document:
  ◦ csi-net.org > Chapters
    > Membership Processing & Initiations
    > Guest Speaker Orientation

• Speakers should explain the mission and goals of CSI.

• Speakers should provide current and accurate information about CSI.
Gifts for Speakers

- A thank you is always appropriate.
- CSI logo memorabilia may be a good "match" for the event.
  - csi-net.org > CSI Store > Logo Merchandise
- Set a budget and stay within your limits.
CSI Support for Speakers

• Submit written request for financial help
  • csi-net.org > Chapters
    > Membership Processing & Initiations
    > Assistance with CSI Speakers

• Possible speakers include
  ◦ CSI Distinguished Scholars
  ◦ Academy of Leaders for Excellence
  ◦ CSI International Executive Council
Paying for Speakers

• **CSI supported-speakers**
  ◦ 50/50 split on *expenses* between chapter and CSI
    • Travel, hotel, meals
  ◦ *No* speaker fees are charged or paid
    • *All CSI speakers are pro-bono*
    • *This includes workshop presenters*
Receptions & Refreshments

• Some chapters have formal banquets
• Some chapters have receptions with punch, cake, etc.
• Some chapters have hot and cold hors d’oeuvres
• What would your members like?
Using the CSI Trademarks

- CSI’s colors are blue and white.
- CSI is the sole official acronym of Chi Sigma Iota, International.
- The CSI Logo is trademarked
  - CSI Chapters may use the logo with permission.
  - The online Chapter Logo Request Form is on the CSI website:
    Go to csi-net.org > Chapters > Development > Chapter Logos
The Initiation Program: Key Elements

- Introductions and Welcomes
  - Department Chair, Dean
- Introduction of Faculty
- Recognition of Family & Friends
- Introduction of Speaker
  - Initiation Speech
- Initiation of Members
Initiation of Members

• Use Official CSI Initiation Protocol
  ◦ The official protocol is required.
    • csi-net.org > Chapters > Initiations and Ceremonies > Initiation of New Members

• Consider introducing each initiate
  ◦ e.g., “Susie Smith is a second semester student in the school counseling track. Her goal is to be an elementary school counselor.”
Initiation Follow-Ups

• 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 new office for local papers.
Sample Initiation Timeline: 3-6 Months Prior

• 3-6 months prior
  ◦ Set day, date, time
  ◦ Confirm location
  ◦ Confirm and invite speakers
  ◦ Confirm and invite welcomers/greeting bearers (e.g., Dean, Chancellor, president)
    • Send formal letters of request
  ◦ Request CSI support
Sample Initiation Timeline: 10-12 Weeks Prior

• 12 weeks prior
  ◦ Send speaker confirmation letters
  ◦ Obtain speaker bios and vita

• Invite members to join
  ◦ CFA identifies potential qualified initiates
    • CFA or Membership Chair sends formal letter of invitation
  ◦ Deadline for responding is specified
Sample Initiation Timeline: 8-9 Weeks Prior

• Prepare list of initiates
• Prepare/distribute invitations for
  ◦ Faculty
  ◦ Adjunct faculty
  ◦ Alumni & Professional Members
  ◦ Family & Friends
  ◦ *Initiates*!
Sample Initiation Timeline: 6-7 Weeks Prior

• Draft initiation program
  ◦ Sequence of events
  ◦ Who is responsible for what
  ◦ Draft congratulatory letters to initiates
  ◦ Plan refreshments
    • Review budget, revise refreshment list of meet budget constraints
  ◦ Order speaker gift
Sample Initiation Timeline: 4-5 Weeks Prior

- Send 2nd letter of invitation/e-vites
- Send reminders to invited guests
- Prepare 1\textsuperscript{st} draft of program script
  - All speaker introductions are written
- Confirm speaker itinerary and responsibilities for transportation
- Complete the CSI Initiation Certificate Form to obtain new member certificates
  - CFAs > Required Forms and Letters for Membership Processing > Initiation Certificate Form
Sample Initiation Timeline: 2-3 Weeks Prior

- Confirm all guests
- Review draft program and script with Chapter officers and Faculty Advisor
- Publicize initiation in classes and through listservs
- Finalize reception plans & budget
Sample Initiation Timeline:
1 Week Prior

- Print program
- Print script for
  - Officers
  - Introducers of speakers
  - Chapter Faculty Advisor
- Verify all certificates and pins received
- Rehearse as needed
Sample Initiation Timeline: 1-2 Weeks After

• **Send thank you letters**
  - Speaker
  - Welcomers – Greeting Bearers
  - Faculty

• **Review process**
  - Make notes on what went well
  - What will the chapter change next year?
Creative Initiation Ideas

• Candlelight ceremonies.
• Gifts to initiates
  ◦ Inexpensive CSI memorabilia
• Expanded programs with descriptions of initiates
• Invite all faculty to join in receiving line to congratulate initiates
What to do if a new initiate missed the initiation?

• Initiations are required for active membership status.
• Those who miss can wait until the next chapter initiation or the Chapter Faculty Advisor may individually administer the CSI Oath.
For further information and support...

• Please contact us if you have questions, suggestions, or just want to share your creative ideas!

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