

Integrity



KAPPA SIGMA FRATERNITY

FELLOWSHIP • LEADERSHIP • SCHOLARSHIP • SERVICE



Our Vision

Gamma-Rho's vision is to provide our members with a great college experience; to ensure they are career-ready; to start a lifetime of friendships; and help them have successful lives.

- We will be a values-driven organization.
- We will be innovative and not afraid to lead.
- We will adapt as it makes sense and will collaborate with our campus & community stakeholders.
- We will focus on creating a fun and healthy environment.
- We will provide a quality living-learning environment.
- We will recruit those focused on academics, campus & chapter involvement, career-readiness, diversity & inclusion, leadership development, service and respect for differences, as well as those with a competitive spirit.
- We will on-board our members successfully, ensure our members are career-ready, and help them develop a lifetime affinity to Gamma-Rho, Kappa Sigma and the University of Arizona.

Strictly speaking, individual or organizational integrity means acting in accord with one's values. By that rather "feel good on a technicality" definition, everyone acts with pure integrity at all times. Only thieves and charlatans, and their mothers, attempt to sell this. Only fools buy it when they do.

Integrity is acting according to one's highest values, particularly keeping one's oaths or promises. It is **"being as good as one's word."** For those rare saints, and also the rare sociopaths, that have no conflicts within their values, there is never any doubt as to who they are or what they will do. Their perfect alignment / congruence of values means their integrity is never in question. For the rest of us who have countless conflicts within our values, though, every decision and action is affected by multiple values and we are nearly always "pulled in different directions." To act with integrity means taking "the high road" and choosing actions steered by our most noble and consciously chosen values. More often than not, this means choosing the hard way over the easy way.

As **building better men is the stated goal of Kappa Sigma**, developing and improving individual integrity, often by minding our collective integrity in spite of our individual impulses, is the foundation of that goal. The lessons of Kappa Sigma may not become fully apparent while in school but they can provide lifelong benefit. In short, integrity lies at the heart of everything it is to be human, and developing and improving it is the core of the Fraternity's mission.

Navigating our individual and group decisions and actions through the maze of conflicting values is complicated, difficult, and often without immediate and apparent benefit. The "high road" is usually the "hard road." Habitually "going along to get along," however, requires ignoring that which is most noble and cherished. Worse, pursuing values contrary to our stated values is deliberate corruption. Habitually ignoring one's oaths and promises means being forever branded as untrustworthy or a liar. Habitually facing the challenges, standing up for what is right rather than what is expedient, and being mindful of integrity in everything we do, is the path of a person of substance and one worthy of trust.

The "how" of integrity begins with understanding and being mindful of one's highest and most noble values. **We write, read, and memorize missions, vision statements, creeds, rituals, and the like to exercise this mindfulness. We swear oaths, repeat mottoes, wave flags, post banners, and sing anthems as further and far more outward exercises. But thoughts and words, choices and decisions, are meaningless without deeds.** The true exercise of integrity, and not just being mindful of it, takes place in our actions, not just occasionally, on a whim, or when convenient or expedient, but habitually.

The Fraternity is a wonderful place to practice, nearly perfectly suited to it. Here you will learn by doing, so long as you choose not to "go along to get along," particularly when influential members are leading the chapter down the low road. Here you will give and get immediate feedback with regard to choices, actions, and the values that drive them. Here you will have the chance to hold yourself and others to the standards you have sworn an oath to uphold. Simply trying to live up to high standards and coming up short is infinitely more valuable than not trying at all. The practice is in every moment and every action. The results of that practice range from immediate to a entire lifetime and everything in between. The biggest lessons will come from the biggest values conflicts and how they are handled by you and the Chapter. Individual impulses vs. the chapter's values, undergraduate priorities vs alumni standards, student behavior vs the University's rules and the law of the land, member and chapter behavior vs the Fraternity's Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules.

With this talk of Kappa Sigma's standards, you should already be asking "what are they exactly?" In Kappa Sigma they are contained in detail in our Ritual, which is intended to be a mystery only shared

with those who are ready to swear the oath. Those standards, however, are expressed outwardly in our mottoes, mission statements, constitution, bylaws, rules, and the like. Together they create a roadmap. Being true to the Fraternity requires both knowing the roadmap and habitually following it. Pledgeship is where you will learn the nature of the Ritual, initiation is where you will experience it. Prior to pledging, though, you should know roughly what it is you are getting into. During pledgeship you should make absolutely sure you are willing to make a lifelong commitment to it. Please don't do it lightly and please don't do it if you feel as if the members of the chapter are merely paying lip service to these standards and not striving to live by them. Here are some hints as to what we stand for:

- One of the best things ever written to express what it means to be a Kappa Sigma is the Star and Crescent: **“The Star and Crescent shall not be worn by every man, but only by him who is worthy to wear it. He must be a gentleman, a man of honor and courage, a man of zeal, yet humble, an intelligent man, a man of truth, one who tempers action with wisdom and, above all else, one who walks in the light of God.”** Truly so well stated that if there were nothing more to it than this, it would be sufficient.
- Another hint comes from comparison to a very similar roadmap, the Boy Scout Law. Everything in our Ritual is in alignment with it: “A Scout is Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean, and Reverent.”
- Our goals as a Fraternity are expressed in the **Four Pillars of Kappa Sigma: Fellowship, Leadership, Scholarship, and Service**. Devotion to these pillars in our actions, with attention paid not just to what we do but how we do it, is a major part of learning to live by our stated ideals. Both the journey and the destination are important when following our roadmap.
- Finally, and perhaps most significantly, Kappa Sigma's Ritual, our roadmap, is derived as are most Greek fraternities' rituals, from Masonic teaching and tradition. Kappa Sigma long ago evolved to be open to men of all faiths but Judeo-Christian values are the backbone of our Ritual and roadmap. If you cannot answer honestly that you respect and honor the Bible, upon which you will swear an Oath, then you should not proceed further.

We strongly encourage you to not seek out the Ritual until you are initiated, but to immerse yourself in all the offered learning to prepare you for it. Your entire pledge program is designed to help you understand it and to ensure that when you actually experience it, it is most meaningful. You will learn more than enough along the way to know what you will find before you commit.



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For more information, contact **Steve Maslowski**, smaslowski123@gmail.com (Advisor),
Pete Parker, pete.parker@fmgucson.com (Educational Foundation President),
or **Andy McEldowney**, andy@gamma-rho.org (House Corporation President).