

Some Questions About Selecting Members

We have 180 graduating seniors. We sent out invitation letters to the 18 who ranked in the top 10%. Four did not accept the invitation. Can we now invite students ranked 19-22 to join?

Answer: No. Students must rank in the top 10%. You may induct the top 10% and only the top 10%

When we compiled our list of the top 10% seniors, we discovered that several of them had been inducted last year as juniors. Can we ignore them and replace them with the next highest ranked seniors?

Answer: No. Students must rank in the top 10% of their class, including those already members. Students initiated as juniors count against you as seniors. Thus, if you have 223 seniors you can induct 22, but if 18 of the top 22 were initiated as juniors, this year you can induct only the remaining 4. This is the main reason most chapters induct primarily seniors in their final semester.

Can I round the top 10% up?

Answer: Yes, following normal rules for rounding: if the number is halfway or more you can round up. In the example in Ques. #2, you cannot round up, but if the number of seniors was 225-229 you could round up to 23.

Can we simply set a high grade point average and use it as a cutoff rather than trying to determine an actual ranking of the top 10%?

Answer: Maybe, but it depends. An arbitrary GPA determination is not acceptable. You would have to determine what cutoff is needed for the upper 10%. Short of preparing an actual ranking, you could proceed by trial-and-error to determine a cutoff by picking a GPA and seeing how many seniors are above the cutoff. If more than 10% of the class make the cutoff, you would need to reset the cutoff and check again until you have arrived at the precise upper 10% cutoff GPA. Unless you have reason to believe that grade inflation is rampant, you probably would need to check (and maybe recalibrate) the GPA cutoff every 3 or 4 years (but definitely no longer than that). Clearly, actual computation of the top 10% is preferred.

Under no circumstances may you induct more than the upper 10%. For example, if you find 3.76 is the cutoff this year and when you go to use it next year you discover that 12% of the class is above it, you'll have to whittle it down to the top 10%.

We have quite a few transfer students from junior/community colleges. Should we figure their GPA only on what they're taken in our program?

Answer: No. You must include all coursework taken that applies toward your degree, but you don't need to include other courses taken elsewhere.

Journalism/mass comm is one of several majors in our college of communication. Are students in our college not majoring in j/mc eligible for KTA?

Answer: Maybe, but certain conditions must be met. First, the administrative structure of the college must be such that the j/mc department reports to the same dean or director as the other departments within the college of communication. Second, non-j/mc students must meet all the other qualifications for membership, including the completion of 9 semester hours of professional j/mc courses (for example, newswriting, advertising copy, basic photojournalism, editing, magazine writing, reporting, desktop publishing, etc.) Examples of courses that do NOT meet the requirement

are j/mc history, mass media & society, comm law, comm theory, broadcast production, etc.) Except for rare exceptions, the qualifying courses will be taught by the j/mc unit within the college.

- For the non-j/mc students, it is very likely that you will have to inspect individual transcripts to determine if this requirement is met.
- For the purpose of determining rank in the top 10% of the class, students from non-journalism/mass comm departments must be considered separately.

What are the requirements for masters students?

Answer: Masters students must rank in the top ten percent of those who have completed the equivalent of two semesters of full-time coursework in their graduate degree programs.

Are doctoral students eligible?

Answer: Yes. But consistent with KTA membership at all levels, only the very outstanding, compared to other doctoral students, are eligible. Because Ph.D. enrollments are very small, using a cutoff like upper 10% is not very useful. Thus, a different kind of standard is used: doctoral students must have received no more than two course grades of B in their Ph.D. program, with A grades in all other courses. They must have completed all requirements for the degree but dissertation (ABD).

What are the qualifications for inducting faculty members?

Answer: Faculty members must meet high standards of excellence equivalent to those required of students (that is, upper 10%). In general, they must have demonstrable records of teaching and scholarly excellence at least equivalent to that required at most universities for the conferral of tenure. Faculty status alone is not sufficient for membership. It is expected that few faculty members will be inducted.

Some students came in after the deadline and want to join. Can I still take them?

Answer: No. Advisers are expected to set a firm deadline for an invitation response and collect the initiation fee. Membership is not open-ended; it must expire in a reasonable period of time. Once your Report of Initiates form has been received, additional initiates will be accepted only when you certify that the tardiness was due to oversight or error on your part, not the student's. In such instances, late nominations will be entertained up to but never beyond the end of the next semester/quarter.

We have a student who has excelled on the campus paper but falls just short of the top 10% class ranking. Can we initiate her as an honorary member?

Answer: No. Students are not eligible for honorary membership.

Who is eligible for honorary membership?

Answer: Those who do not meet the qualifications for regular membership but have excelled in other scholarly ways. Chapters must submit a letter of nomination for an Honorary Member and explain how the nominee qualifies.