

# INFORMATION FOR FACULTY SPONSORS OF GTU CHAPTERS

## SUCCEEDING AS A FACULTY SPONSOR

Faculty chapter sponsors are critical to the success of GTU chapters. At a minimum faculty sponsors are responsible for:

- Managing chapter membership and initiations including
  - Identifying students eligible for membership, verifying their eligibility, and inviting them to join
  - Sending initiate reports and dues to the International Executive Secretary
- Maintaining contact with the International Organization including
  - Serving as the contact person for the chapter for the International Organization
  - Circulating ballots from the International Organization to chapter members and submitting the results of the chapter's vote to the International Organization
  - Ensuring that the chapter's student leadership completes and submits the annual chapter report on time
- Writing letters of recommendation for GTU Scholarship applicants from your chapter
- Maintaining records for the chapter and ensuring continuity from year to year

These tasks are described in detail below.

Excellent faculty sponsors do much more to help their chapters succeed. An excellent faculty sponsor does not plan chapter activities, but instead helps students to develop the leadership and organizational skills that they need to have a successful chapter. Some of the best practices for advising a successful chapter as a faculty sponsor are found at the end of this guide.

While we have done our best to include accurate and up-to-date information in this guide, it should be noted that the Constitution, Bylaws, and procedures manual contain the authoritative and official rules and procedures for the society. If there are any discrepancies, those documents shall take precedence.

## CONTENTS

Succeeding as a Faculty Sponsor

Contents

Managing Membership and Initiations

Faculty Sponsor Membership Requirement

GTU Membership Requirements

Managing the Membership Process for a GTU Chapter

## Recommended Steps for Managing the Membership Process

STEP #1 SCREENING

STEP #2 INVITING

Step #3 COLLECTING DATA

Step #4 REPORTING INITIATES

Additional Information on Reporting Initiates

Handling Student Checks

Charging Local Dues

Timing of the Initiation Ceremony

The Value of Multiple Initiations

Inducting Faculty Who Are Not Yet Members

Honorary Membership

Planning and Holding the Initiation Ceremony

Chapter Creation

Reactivating Inactive Chapters

Maintaining Contact with the International Organization

GTU Newsletter

Voting on Honor Society Matters

Changing the Faculty Sponsor

Ensuring that Chapter Reports are Sent

Nominating Students to be Outreach Assistants

Encouraging and Supporting Student Scholarship Applicants

Maintaining Chapter Records and Ensuring Chapter Continuity

Chapter Records

Chapter Continuity

Advising a Successful Chapter

Integrating GTU with Geography Clubs and Societies

No GTU Chapter

No Geography Club

GTU as Academic Recognition

GTU as a Graduate/Undergraduate Organization

GTU as a Leadership Organization

GTU and Geography Club as Separate Active Organizations

#### Invitation Letter Templates

E-mail Invitation Letter

Formal Invitation Letter Template

E-mail Invitation Follow-Up Letter Template

Gamma Theta Upsilon Candidate Biographical Sheet

## MANAGING MEMBERSHIP AND INITIATIONS

The most important task that a faculty sponsor undertakes is managing the membership recruitment and initiation process for your chapter. As faculty sponsor you are required to offer membership in the chapter at least once during each academic year to those who qualify. This is something that only you can do as faculty sponsor. Neither students nor administrative assistants can be assigned responsibility for the tasks described below. Privacy laws restrict students from handling data about other students. While you may receive help from an administrative assistant, only you can verify and certify students' eligibility for membership in GTU.

### FACULTY SPONSOR MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENT

According to the GTU Bylaws, every faculty sponsor must be a faculty member and member of GTU. If you are a faculty member but not a member of GTU, all you need to do is include yourself as a regular member on your next initiate report and submit the initiation fee. If you're unsure about whether you are a member, please e-mail the Executive Secretary with an approximate date and chapter (institution or chapter name) that you think you may have joined.

### GTU MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

As stated in the [Constitution](#), the requirements for membership are as follows: "To become a regular member of Gamma Theta Upsilon, an initiate must have completed the equivalent of three semesters of college coursework, a minimum of three courses in geography with a geography GPA of 3.3 and an overall class ranking in the top 35%." An overall GPA of 3.3 can be used as a substitute for the ranking if the institution does not calculate rankings.

### MANAGING THE MEMBERSHIP PROCESS FOR A GTU CHAPTER

As the faculty sponsor it is your responsibility to recruit new members, and most importantly, verify their eligibility (this responsibility must not be turned over to anybody else – our membership in the

Association of College Honor Societies depends upon our faculty sponsors personally verifying the eligibility of every single new member). You can usually work with somebody in your Registrar's office to target all students, not just geography majors, who meet our requirements.

## RECOMMENDED STEPS FOR MANAGING THE MEMBERSHIP PROCESS

---

### STEP #1 SCREENING

First identify those students on your campus who are eligible to be in GTU. Most schools have an Office of Institutional Research (or similar name). At other schools the Registrar might be able to assist. Contact them and ask for a generated list of all students on campus who have completed a minimum of three geography courses, rank in the top 35% or possess a GPA of at least 3.3 overall and in geography, and who have completed at least 3 semesters (or 5 quarters) of college. Have the Office include contact information (e-mail and surface address) for each student. Once in receipt of the list (usually generated in Excel), cross off the students at your campus who are already in GTU.

If your campus has policies intended to protect student privacy that prevent you from receiving lists of students who may be eligible, you will need to publicize the opportunity to join GTU to potential students and have them grant you permission to view their records and confirm their eligibility.

### STEP #2 INVITING

Using the remaining students from the list above, issue invitations to join GTU. You might want to send both a hard copy and an e-mail notice. Provide a sufficient amount of time for students to consider the invitation and respond, usually between two and three weeks. Follow up the invitation prior to the due date you have set with a reminder e-mail. You may choose to have an office assistant help you with mailing hard-copies of the invitations, but e-mail notices should come directly from you. A personal touch from a faculty member is helpful in recruiting members. If the list is small enough, you may simply inform those eligible by talking to them. Below you'll find an [e-mail template](#), an [invitation letter template](#), and a [follow-up e-mail template](#) which you may tailor to the needs of your chapter.

### STEP #3 COLLECTING DATA

While not required, it is useful to have all new initiates fill out a biographical sheet ([see example below](#) and, again, tailor to your school's needs). Send it out in the same envelope as the invitation letter or have the student fill it out when they come to pay their initiation fee. This form serves three purposes. (1) The information helps in completing the required [Initiate Address and Report Form](#) that must be sent in to GTU headquarters to confer official membership. (2) Before the assembled multitude at the initiation ceremony, you can read the information out loud while the initiate comes forward to be recognized. (3) After the ceremony, you may file the biography sheets to keep a record of previously initiated students.

---

## STEP #4 REPORTING INITIATES

At least five weeks prior to your GTU initiation ceremony (or whenever you present certificates), go online to <http://gammathetaupsilon.org/initiate-address-form.asp> and complete the Initiate Address and Report Form. When all initiate data has been entered into the online form, click Continue at the bottom of the page and print out the completed form. If you are initiating more than ten new members, you may complete and print out additional pages. Please remember to **sign** the form as well. Mail this form along with a single check made out to Gamma Theta Upsilon (total will equal # of initiates X \$40) to the GTU international office at the address listed on the form. Sorry, we cannot process credit card or debit card orders at this time. Allow our national office at least five weeks to fulfill your order.

The steps above conform to procedures of the [Association of College Honor Societies](#) (ACHS).

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON REPORTING INITIATES

Once you have identified potential members and have successfully recruited them, there are several vital things to keep in mind.

1. When you complete the initiate report form online, be very careful to fill in each field completely and correctly. If you misspell a name, we'll have to charge you \$10 for a replacement member certificate (but if we make a mistake, we will replace the certificate free of charge to you). If you're unsure about something, e-mail the Executive Secretary.
2. We do not accept student checks. Use a department or university account or use your personal account. If you send a student check, or a check we can't verify is that of a faculty member (if it's not from the department or university), we'll have to return it and that will delay the processing of your new members. There is more on this in the section below.
3. If you as a faculty sponsor fail to sign the initiate report form, or if someone other than you signs the form, that will also delay the processing of your report.
4. Chapter numbers reflect the total number of members your chapter has ever inducted. For example, if my chapter has inducted 100 members since we received our charter that means our next member will have chapter number 101, the next 102 and so on. We keep records of this and will complete that part of the initiate form when we process it. You will see those numbers on the form we e-mail to you once processed. There will also be an international number, reflecting the number of members inducted in all chapters when your initiate form is processed.
5. Once you place your completed, and signed, initiate report and check in the mail, it will take longer than you may think for it to get to us. Even if you take it to a non-campus post office (as you know, mailing from campus usually adds a day or two), it will be delivered to the campus post office of our Executive Secretary. Then it takes another day or two at our end even before we receive it. Allow 4-5 days for your initiate report and check to arrive. Initiate reports are processed in the order that they are received, usually within a week of receipt. During busy times of the year (March, April, and May), processing may take up to a week longer. When your initiate report is processed, new member certificates are ordered soon afterward. It then takes approximately 2-3 weeks after that for you to receive them directly from the printer. While it is possible for certificates to arrive approximately 3 weeks after mailing your initiate report, to be certain you'll get them on time you should mail your materials at least 5 weeks in advance of when you plan to present your certificates. As soon as the Executive Secretary has processed

your initiate report and sent you a confirmation e-mail, your initiates are members of GTU. They are not members before that time, so they cannot list membership on their resumes until the international office has processed the paperwork. After the Executive Secretary has e-mailed the chapter sponsor a confirmation, however, new members do not need to wait until their certificate arrives to list their GTU membership.

6. Please be certain that you have everyone on the report so that you do not have to send follow-up reports. Doing so will delay the receipt of certificates.
7. You, and other geography faculty, if not already a member, should be inducted as a regular member, not as honorary (see honorary membership below). Anybody who meets the qualifications (GPA, hours) whether currently enrolled, an alum, a member of the faculty, whatever, qualifies as a regular member. As faculty sponsor you must be a member. If you are not, just include yourself on the first initiate report you send in.

## HANDLING STUDENT CHECKS

The GTU office will accept only one check from each chapter (totaling all initiation dues for that semester). This means that payment from individual students will need to be aggregated. At some universities, students can write a check to a department or university and the department or university then sends a single check from the chapter. If that is not possible, or desirable, we highly recommend that you set up a GTU checking account to handle student checks and cash payments with yourself and one other faculty member authorized to sign checks. In some cases, even that is not possible, so some Chapter Sponsors have deposited the membership fees into their personal checking account and then sent a single check to the GTU Office. If you choose this method, we recommend that you keep good records of all transactions.

## CHARGING LOCAL DUES

The GTU lifetime dues are \$40, but many chapters charge an additional fee for Local Dues. Many chapters charge \$5 per new member. It may not sound like much but, over time, the extra fee per initiate will accumulate in your GTU account allowing you to use the money for expenses such as refreshments at your initiation ceremonies or speaker honoraria. In deciding whether to charge local dues, your chapter should consider whether doing so will discourage new members from joining and whether your department or university has the means to provide support for GTU events.

## TIMING OF THE INITIATION CEREMONY

It is strongly recommended that you send your initiate report and receive your certificates prior to holding your induction ceremony so that you can present the certificates at the ceremony. This requires advanced planning to make sure that you schedule your induction ceremony at least five weeks after the date you mail your initiate report and payment. Even if certificates will not arrive in time for your induction ceremony, you should send in your initiate report as soon as possible.

If, despite this recommendation, you hold an induction ceremony before sending the initiate report, you absolutely **MUST** send in your initiate report and payment immediately. Any delay could result in

students being declared ineligible for GTU scholarships or benefits they apply for. In the past, a few faculty sponsors have held an induction ceremony and have inappropriately failed to send an initiate report and payment altogether, resulting in students learning months or years later that they never officially became members of GTU.

#### THE VALUE OF MULTIPLE INITIATIONS

As faculty sponsor you are required to offer membership in the chapter at least once during each academic year to those who qualify. However, one of the most useful ways of increasing participation in GTU is to have more than one initiation each year. Having an initiation each semester or quarter rather than once a year means that students do not have to wait until the end of the year to become members and can begin formal participation in GTU as soon as they are eligible for membership. Switching from one initiation a year to two or more initiations has helped many chapters to create the critical mass of students needed to have a thriving GTU chapter.

#### INDUCTING FACULTY WHO ARE NOT YET MEMBERS

If you have geography faculty on your campus who are not yet members of GTU, you should endeavor to make sure that they become members of GTU. All faculty with graduate degrees in geography should be inducted as regular members, not honorary, if they wish to join. Individuals with a PhD in geography should have met the requirements and are generally assumed to be eligible for membership. Honorary membership is reserved for very special cases.

#### HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

Honorary membership is available only under extraordinary circumstances and upon approval by the Executive Committee for a person whom the committee feels has contributed to a marked advancement in any phase of geography. A chapter may apply directly to the Executive Committee to petition for honorary membership on behalf of an individual. Please note that honorary membership is reserved for those not eligible for regular membership.

#### PLANNING AND HOLDING THE INITIATION CEREMONY

It is beneficial to work with the members of your chapter to plan an induction ceremony. While it is tempting as a faculty sponsor to plan the whole thing yourself, give the student members a chance to lead and be responsible for the legwork. The induction ceremony can be as simple or elaborate as your chapter's membership desires. Make sure that the ceremony is scheduled at least five weeks after the date you plan to mail your initiate report.

You'll find scripts for several different versions of an initiation ceremony on the [Initiation Ceremony](#) page. In 2019 two Student Outreach Assistants helped update the ceremony to make it more relevant. You'll also find a template for a program for the ceremony.

It's always a nice touch to order cake & coffee to serve guests/family/friends at a short reception afterward. Some chapters may even hold a dinner. Consider inviting department faculty and an administrator to your ceremony. To strengthen relationships with other honor societies on campus, you

might consider pooling your efforts and holding a common ceremony, each taking turns at initiating their members. Consider asking the school newspaper if they'd like to cover the ceremony.

#### Checklist for the Faculty Sponsor

- Send initiate report to the GTU Executive Secretary.
- Schedule ceremony at least five weeks after date initiate report sent.
- Provide student members with link to the [Initiation Ceremony Scripts and Program Template](#) or to your institution's preferred ceremony or past programs.
- Make sure student members have discussed options for refreshments; discuss who will be coordinating refreshments and how they will be paid for.
- Ask students if they would like to have a program for the ceremony and decide who will design it.
- Ask students if they would like to have administrators attend and clarify who will be inviting them.
- Make sure that the initiates have been invited to the ceremony. Send a reminder close to the event.
- Sign and bring the certificates to the ceremony.
- Attend the ceremony and play whatever role you have agreed to play with the members of your chapter.
- At the ceremony remind students about the benefits for which they are eligible as members of GTU (<http://gammathetaupsilon.org/membership.html>).
- Share or have the students share photos from the ceremony on your chapter's social media and on the official [Gamma Theta Upsilon Facebook Page](#)

## CHAPTER CREATION

If your institution does not have a chapter, creating one is easy. First make sure your institution doesn't already have a chapter that has become inactive. Visit our [chapters page](#) and search through the list for the name of your school. If you're on the list, you can simply reactivate your chapter (see Reactivating Inactive Chapters directly below). Accredited institutions that offer a major, minor, certificate or its equivalent, in geography and lack a GTU chapter may petition for a charter for a new chapter. Institutions outside of the United States must meet and maintain the standards of the Association of College Honor Societies with respect to the mission and quality of eligible institutions. A petition must be made by a group of six or more individuals eligible for membership. The faculty member who will become the sponsor or the department chair must complete the petition. The fee to establish a new charter is \$100 minimum. The fee may be higher based on actual cost of printing the charter certificate. A letter of support from the geography department chair or appropriate administrator must also be submitted. A [Petition for Charter form](#) is available on the GTU website. Approval of a charter is accomplished by a vote of the President, First Vice President, and Executive Secretary after accreditation of the petitioning institution is verified.

## REACTIVATING INACTIVE CHAPTERS

Chapters that fail to add at least one member in two successive years are considered inactive. There is no formal procedure for reactivating a chapter beyond submitting an initiate report form. After the Executive Secretary processes the initiate report and payment, the chapter is active again.

## MAINTAINING CONTACT WITH THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION

As faculty sponsor, you are the main point of contact between your chapter and the International Organization. You may receive requests for updates from your Regional Councilor or other members of the Executive Committee from time to time. You will also be sent information, including a PDF of or a link to the GTU Newsletter (<http://gammathetaupsilon.org/newsletter/>) that you should pass along to your members. You may also contact your Regional Councilor, the GTU Outreach Coordinator, the Executive Secretary, President, and Vice Presidents as appropriate for guidance. Finally, you are encouraged to share and have members of your chapter share photos and stories about your chapter on the [GTU International Facebook page](#) and in the GTU Newsletter.

## GTU NEWSLETTER

Approximately four times a year you will receive the GTU Newsletter via e-mail. Please forward the newsletter on to the members of your chapter. It contains important information about many of the benefits of GTU for students, including scholarships. You may also encourage your students to share information about your chapter's activities by writing an article for the newsletter. Submissions should be sent to the GTU President.

## VOTING ON HONOR SOCIETY MATTERS

Annually the International Organization holds elections for officers and occasionally may submit changes to the organization's Constitution and Bylaws to the membership. As faculty sponsor, you will receive the ballot for elections for which each chapter has a vote. You should circulate the ballot to the chapter membership, have members vote, and then transmit the chapter's decision to the teller for the election as directed. The vote you send should reflect the desire of your chapter and not your own personal assessment of the issue.

## CHANGING THE FACULTY SPONSOR

From time to time it is necessary for a chapter to assign a new faculty member as sponsor. The way to communicate this change to the International Organization is to include the new faculty sponsor's name on your chapter's next initiate report. The former faculty sponsor should forward communications from GTU to the new sponsor until their name is included in the next initiate report. This procedure allows GTU to guard against changes that may be made without the knowledge of the chapter or department and allows GTU to verify that those named as faculty sponsors are GTU members and are serving active chapters.

## ENSURING THAT CHAPTER REPORTS ARE SENT

Each spring you will receive a request from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President of the Executive Committee to provide a [report from your chapter](#). This report should be written and submitted by your student leaders and therefore you should forward this request to them and ensure that they follow through on making the report. If your student leaders do not follow through, you should provide the report yourself. Chapters can only apply for chapter awards if they have submitted a report. These reports are [posted on the GTU website](#) and serve as an excellent resource to inspire chapter activities.

## NOMINATING STUDENTS TO BE OUTREACH ASSISTANTS

One significant way that students can participate in GTU at the international scale is as a Student Outreach Assistant. The goal is for each regional division of GTU to be represented by a Student Outreach Assistant who is recommended to the Outreach Coordinator by the division's Regional Councilor. If you have excellent students you think would be well suited for service to GTU as an Outreach Assistant, send your recommendation to your Regional Councilor and copy the Outreach Coordinator, after checking to insure the student's interest in the position.

## ENCOURAGING AND SUPPORTING STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP APPLICANTS

Faculty sponsors should do all they can to encourage students to apply for the [scholarships](#) that GTU offers annually. The folks who evaluate the scholarship applications can identify active and enthusiastic faculty sponsors because we receive multiple scholarship applications from their members. Students who apply for scholarships are required to obtain a letter of support from their faculty sponsor and another faculty member. You should encourage your students to apply as early as possible so that you have time to write this letter and do not have to write it after the semester has ended.

## MAINTAINING CHAPTER RECORDS AND ENSURING CHAPTER CONTINUITY

The faculty sponsor plays a significant role in maintaining chapter records and ensuring chapter continuity.

### CHAPTER RECORDS

Your chapter should keep records of its membership and activities in a safe and secure location. Your chapter likely has an ongoing roster of its members. If it doesn't, you should start keeping one. You may also want to keep important documents, photos, and other materials that document the chapter's activities. While your chapter's Secretary and Historian may be in charge of keeping chapter records for the current year, the chapter will rely upon you to keep records over the long term. When your term as faculty sponsor ends, you will want to pass along the chapter's records to your successor.

### CHAPTER CONTINUITY

As student leaders graduate, you'll want to ensure that new leaders are elected to replace them. Especially if new leaders are elected in the spring, you may need to encourage the new leaders to jump start the chapter's activities in the fall. Some universities may require student organizations to register

as official organizations each year to be eligible for funding. You'll want to make sure that students have completed any such registration so that your chapter remains in good graces with your institution.

## ADVISING A SUCCESSFUL CHAPTER

The minimum duties of a faculty sponsor are described above, however, being a faculty sponsor for a successful chapter requires much more than that. If you want your chapter to take off and be a true asset for your students and your department, there is much more that you can do.

- Be organized. Maintain information that will assist with the year-to-year continuity of the chapter including: financial records, bylaws, position description of officers and members, lists of committees and their descriptions, and contact information for members.
- Create a calendar (helps with planning and publicity): When does recruitment occur? Is there a traditional timeline of events? When/where are meetings held? When and where will the GTU initiation will be held?
- Be aware of the club's meetings and activities schedule.
- Meet with the officers on a regular basis (at least once a month) during the academic year. Give them responsibilities, assign them duties that are well within their skill level and that they can successfully accomplish.
- Attend chapter meetings and participate in club activities (time permitting).
- Assist in the transition of new officers and orientation of new members.
- Inform the students about the details of GTU. It is important to orient new members to your chapter's goals and objectives, organizational structure, rules and norms.
- Educate the officers and members about departmental resources and policies that impact the club, including: event planning, risk management issues, and funding guidelines and options.
- Get support and buy-in from your departmental chair/division head.
- Connect with faculty colleagues and keep them informed about the chapter activities: Ask faculty to promote GTU in their classes and have them stress the importance of academic achievement. Encourage them to participate in at least one club activity each academic year. Invite them to give a talk about their research to the club.
- Encourage students to apply for GTU scholarships and provide letters of recommendation for those who do apply.
- Ensure that the student leaders submit a chapter report annually.
- Pass along GTU Newsletters and other announcements to students from the International Organization.

## INTEGRATING GTU WITH GEOGRAPHY CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

Many campuses host a geography club or society in addition to the local GTU chapter. Some universities may have a critical mass of students capable of successfully supporting two separate organizations. In most cases, however, there will be significant overlap in membership and one or the other organization may be more active. There are several options that your chapter may wish to pursue to ensure the success of both your geography club and your GTU chapter. These are presented in an evolutionary

sequence with the first being the default option and the succeeding options as steps on the way to having two healthy organizations.

---

#### NO GTU CHAPTER

An institution may have a geography club but no GTU chapter or a chapter that has lapsed into inactive status. In such cases, the geography club may help to start a new chapter or to reactivate the inactive chapter. See [Petition for Charter](#) or the document on [Reactivating a Chapter](#).

---

#### NO GEOGRAPHY CLUB

Some institutions have the opposite situation where a GTU chapter has been established but no geography club exists. In such cases, one of the goals of the GTU chapter may be to start a geography club to serve a broader campus interest in geography.

---

#### GTU AS ACADEMIC RECOGNITION

In this case GTU has a limited role and serves almost exclusively as a way to recognize academic achievement with the only formal activities being one or two initiations a year while a larger geography club organizes activities and service projects. This option is not preferred but is acceptable, especially in cases where a GTU chapter has a small membership. Chapters that find themselves in this situation should work to move to one of the following models.

---

#### GTU AS A GRADUATE/UNDERGRADUATE ORGANIZATION

At some institutions, GTU may become primarily a graduate student organization while the geography club is primarily an undergraduate organization or is not active at all. Alternatively, GTU may be primarily an undergraduate organization with little involvement from graduate students. Ideally GTU should be an organization that brings graduate and undergraduate students together. The interaction certainly has a great impact on undergraduates and may help encourage them to pursue a graduate degree. In such cases the leadership of the GTU chapter may want to broaden membership by recruiting outside of their graduate or undergraduate student cohort while taking care not to weaken the existing geography club. In cases where there is no separate geography club, as noted above, the GTU members may want to help start one as a way of broadening undergraduate participation in the life of the department and as a pool for recruiting to GTU. Representation of both graduate and undergraduate students on the GTU chapter's executive committee, perhaps in the form of graduate and undergraduate membership chairs, may help to facilitate this participation.

---

#### GTU AS A LEADERSHIP ORGANIZATION

In this model GTU and the geography club are integrated such that the student leaders of the GTU chapter also serve as leaders of the geography club. Both organizations typically share a single faculty advisor. Activities include membership of both organizations. Formal membership in GTU is of course restricted to those students who qualify, but there are typically few or no separate activities restricted only to GTU members. This appears to be the most successful model at many institutions, especially at

smaller ones where the number of geography students is small, because a critical mass of students helps plan the events and then attends them, which helps the events succeed and raises awareness about GTU and the geography club.

---

## GTU AND GEOGRAPHY CLUB AS SEPARATE ACTIVE ORGANIZATIONS

Having a GTU chapter and geography club that are two separate and equally active organizations is the ideal situation. That said, few if any institutions achieve this situation and it may not be appropriate in all cases. In this model, each group has sufficient membership to organize separate activities though they may also collaborate on activities. Typically, membership in the two organizations will overlap though individual members may be more active in one or the other organization.

Whatever the situation, the important thing is to work to promote both healthy GTU chapters and healthy geography clubs.

## INVITATION LETTER TEMPLATES

### E-MAIL INVITATION LETTER

(Sent prior to Formal Invitation Letter)

SUBJECT: Invitation to Join GTU

Dear <Student Name>--

*Congratulations!* You are among a select group of <Your School> students who will be invited this semester to membership in Gamma Theta Upsilon, the International Geographical Honor Society. This is indeed a significant honor extended only to top students and it is based on your excellent academic work to date. For more information, visit the national GTU Website at <http://www.gammathetaupsilon.org/>.

Soon you will receive an official letter notifying you of how to accept membership in Gamma Theta Upsilon. If you do not receive your letter by <Set a Date> please contact <Chapter Advisor's Name>.

Our initiation ceremony will be held at <Time/Date>. New GTU initiates receive a handsome certificate suitable for framing and an ID card. Initiates are also eligible to apply for one of five \$1000 national GTU scholarships awarded annually.

Again, congratulations on an honor well-deserved. We hope you will accept our invitation to join Gamma Theta Upsilon.

Sincerely,

<Chapter Advisor's Name>

## Formal Invitation Letter Template

(printed on university stationary and sent by mail or handed to student)

<Date>

<Student Address>

Dear <Student Name>,

The <chapter name> chapter of Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU) at <institution name> is pleased to extend you an invitation to become a member of this international geography honor society. **Membership is earned through superior scholarship and is a professional distinction.** Connection to an academic honor society is evidence of dedication and competency in your career field. Moreover, some employers as well as the federal government give hiring preference to honor society members.

If you accept this invitation to GTU membership, you have until **Noon on <date>** to inform Dr. <Faculty Sponsor> (<Faculty Sponsor Contact Info>). There is a one-time \$40 membership fee. Please fill out the enclosed biographical form and return it to Dr. <Faculty Sponsor> along with your \$40 (cash or a check made out to <appropriate name>). No further dues are paid after the initiation fee, which provides you with lifetime membership, a handsome certificate suitable for framing, and an ID card. In addition, you may apply for one of five \$1,000 national scholarships awarded annually to GTU members in order to continue undergraduate work or pursue graduate study.

GTU initiation will be held at the **<location>**. Please feel free to invite parents, partner, and guests to join us for your special occasion. The program will take place on **<date time and location>**. <Details of a reception or other event to follow>. We would be delighted to have you join us along with your family and friends.

We hope to hear from you and, again, congratulations!

Sincerely,

Dr. <Faculty Sponsor>  
GTU Faculty Sponsor

## E-mail Invitation Follow-Up Letter Template

(e-mailed after receipt of Formal Letter)

Greetings,

Recently, you were mailed a formal invitation to join Gamma Theta Upsilon, the International Geographical Honor Society. This invitation was based on your academic success in geography to date. Acceptance of this invitation will inform those who review your resume/vita and future job applications of your accomplishments. We hope you will accept membership. If you did not receive a hard copy invitation, consider this e-mail as a substitute invitation. New GTU initiates receive lifetime membership, a handsome certificate suitable for framing, and an identification card.

This e-mail is a reminder that cash or check (made payable to <appropriate name>) in the amount of \$40 is due no later than <Time/Date> to <Chapter Advisor's Name/Office Location> along with your completed biographical sheet (see attached). The one-time fee covers local and national dues for lifetime membership. If you have already turned in your membership materials, thank you. If you will have difficulty in turning in these materials by the above date, please see me ASAP.

I hope to hear from you soon. Congratulations again on your academic success!

Sincerely,

<Chapter Advisor's Name>

Faculty Sponsor for Gamma Theta Upsilon

GAMMA THETA UPSILON CANDIDATE BIOGRAPHICAL SHEET

**Gamma Theta Upsilon Candidate Biographical Sheet  
(Please Print)**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** Fall 2020  
*(or date you want to have listed on your certificate)*

**Your Home Town** \_\_\_\_\_

**Current year in school** (circle one): Grad Student   Senior   Junior   Sophomore

**Major(s)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Advisor** \_\_\_\_\_

**Minor(s)** \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address  
\_\_\_\_\_

Local Address  
\_\_\_\_\_

Local Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Address  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Your Parent(s)/Guardian(s)--include first name(s)**  
\_\_\_\_\_

Expected Graduation Date (circle one):  
Fall 2020   Spring 2021   Fall 2021   Spring 2021   Other \_\_\_\_\_

*Please complete the following statements to be read aloud at the initiation ceremony:*

**I enjoy studying geography because:**

---

---

---

---

**Other campus activities (clubs, organizations, etc.) include**

---

---

---

---