

Gamma Theta Upsilon Initiation Ceremony

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Part 1 - Welcome and History

Props: Four electric candles, GTU charter, badge, large picture of badge and code of arms, costumes for the five characters, and props for the five characters.

Beginning of ceremony, all lights are on with the candles, and actors with costumes are sitting nearby.

President: Hello all. This meeting of the Theta Kappa chapter of Gamma Theta Upsilon will now come to order. The purpose of this meeting is to initiate members into the Chapter of Gamma Theta Upsilon. Who suggests these people for admission?

Sponsor: President, I take pleasure in presenting to the Chapter of Gamma Theta Upsilon this group of students for Membership. All of these Candidates have met the requirements and are eligible for induction.

President: I am glad to receive the petition of this group for Membership. Before proceeding with your pledge to service in Gamma Theta Upsilon, our historian shall acquaint you briefly with its history and symbolism.

Historian: Thank you President.

Gamma Theta Upsilon was created in 1928 as a local professional fraternity in Normal, Illinois, under the leadership of Dr. Robert G. Buzzard. This fraternity began as the Geography Club of Illinois State Normal University, and after three years of successful function, letters were sent out to other Geography clubs suggesting that a national fraternity be organized. That national organization was announced in May, 1931 and in March 1936, Gamma Theta Upsilon was incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois as a professional fraternity in Geography. In 1949, Gamma Theta Upsilon became an International Geographical Honor Society.

And now having given the History of Gamma Theta Upsilon, we shall undergo the GTU initiation ceremony. This ceremony is designed to teach a lesson to you - friends of geography. May I now introduce **Geographicus**, our Master of Ceremonies, who will conduct this initiation.

Part 2 - Story of Geography

Turn lights off and have candle light to guide ceremony.

Geographicus: Hello friends. I am **Geographicus**, the Spirit of Exploration and Inquiry. I have gone with brave explorers to the ends of the earth, and likewise, I shall go with you. I have taught wanderers many lessons as they have rolled back the curtain of the unknown. I shall now take you with me as world travellers. Together we shall survey the discoveries which geographers have made and see what yet remains for them to explore.

Geographicus: In the beginning, humans were confronted with the problem of finding their way home safely when they chose to venture into the unknown. For this task, the power of vision was their greatest asset. Gazing into the heavens in search of help, these early adventurers sight settled upon the sun by day, and by night, Polaris - that magnificent star, pointed out by the signs of the Big Dipper. Let us begin our adventure by consulting this great guide and asking what is left for us geographers to discover in our earthly realm.

(Knock on floor 3x)

Polaris: Who rudely awakens me from my long sleep in this Arctic night? Who dares challenges of our northern lands to seek conference with I, the mighty Polaris?! Speak!

Geographicus: O might sovereign of the northern skies, it is **Geographicus** who awakens you. I bring you seekers of knowledge - novices who would learn of the tasks left in the field of geography. We ask you - what remains to be done and where shall we find these tasks?

Polaris: I am Polaris - humankind's greatest guide. I have watched in glee as humankind has travelled to the ends of the earth - ever progressing, ever innovating - mimicking nature in their attempts to further exploration. Now, with exploration nearly finished, other tasks await you geographers. These tasks are not in my domain though - I am a guide and nothing more. Travel then to the other points of the compass. Seek there the answers to your query. Fare thee well, and good luck in your ventures.

Geographicus: Come then friends, we shall follow Polaris' advice and voyage westward into the sun, to see if we can find answers in our search. (Knock 3x)

Gamma: Who knocks at the sunset gate and braves the shadows of the night?

Geographicus: Great Gamma, it is I, Geographicus, with a group of brave explorers. Polaris had suggested conference with the cardinal directions, so we have sought you out. We would ask what is known of the world's geography, and what remains unknown.

Gamma: I am Gamma, representative of all that is in and on the earth. Humans have sought out, mapped, studied, and utilized my resources and terrain. From these studies have grown the physical, biological, and social sciences. All of these are founts of knowledge for a geographer. Study these and analyze, searching for their inter-dependence. In this inter-dependence, you shall find your special contribution.

Geographicus: Is there nothing yet remaining to be discovered, O Gamma?

Gamma: As Geographers, vast labors are yet uncompleted. Your duties include the mapping and interpretation of land use, the description and analysis of patterns of human living, and the teaching of conservation of all resources. However, not all of the province of geography lies in my domain. Take counsel with Theta who rules an even broader realm. Be off with you; I must soon begin another night.

Geographicus: Come, Candidates, we will journey to the South and put our queries to Theta, ruler of the sea! (Knock 3x)

Theta: Who pauses beneath the sun to seek conference with the ruler of the deep? Speak!

Geographicus: It is I, Geographicus - together with seekers after problems concerning the waters of the great seas. We seek conference with you - give us the challenges of the World's Oceans.

Theta: I am Theta - significant of all there is in and on the sea. Over 70% of this planet lies in my domain. I have been one of humankind's greatest obstacles - but those who have challenged me have been taken to the far corners of the earth. It is I who furnish the moisture for rain and snow, I who bring food to famine-laden shores. I keep humans alive in times of distress. Yet humans know little of what is contained within the vast unknown of my depths. What are my resources? Who can harness my tides? These are a few of the challenges I set forth for you, seekers of geographic knowledge. Include these problems in

your plans for study. I am, indeed, the great unfathomed. I must now do my work. Speed thee onward.

Geographicus: Come now seekers of geographical tasks, we must head eastward, where dwells Upsilon, ruler of all that is in and under the sky. There we must turn our steps, hoping to learn what else is left for us to accomplish in geography. (Knock 3x)

Upsilon: Who braves the dawn and invades the east at daybreak to consult the great Upsilon?

Geographicus: It is I, Geographicus, together with earnest seekers of the problems and knowledge of geography. We have come into the blaze of the morning sky to have conference with thee. We seek any problems in your dominion, so that we may go about helping to solve them. Give us hearing, as we have travelled far, and our journey has been arduous.

Upsilon: I am Upsilon, significant of all there is in and under the sky. I hold dominion over the gases of the atmosphere and all that comes to Earth through it. I am the ever-present, yet the great unseen. I take the gifts of Theta, ruler of the seas, and spread them over the vastness of the earth, the dominion of Gamma. I bring the light of the sun and the moon to the earth. Polaris is my watchdog in the northern skies. In the southern hemisphere I have set a Cross as man's guide-post. I hold the earth, the province of Gamma, and have mastered the seas, Theta's dominion. I am ready to receive these fledglings into my domain. Equally ready am I to give them problems of geographical kind. How may they learn to forecast accurately and endure the dryness of the land? How will they manage my distribution of powerful cold, and enervating heat? How will they maneuver the fury of the storms with which I threaten man's efforts at aerial navigation? These are the problems of Upsilon. Take them, Geographicus, and set your novices in the field of geography to work. Away with you. I must be about my daily tasks.

Geographicus: Come candidates, we must prepare for the problems of Geography. We have followed the advice of Polaris, ruler of the northern heavens. He has sent us to the other cardinal directions; to Gamma of the West; Theta of the South and Upsilon of the East, from whom we have heard the challenges of the Earth, the Sea, and the Sky. We have set before you the great tasks ahead in Geography - tasks which each of you may help solve through your interest in this field. All great works start with humble beginnings. Now that I have acquainted you with what the future holds, I may go no further with you. May you be successful in all of your geographical undertakings.

Part 3 - Symbolism, Pledge, and Closing Statement

President: Now that you have travelled this long journey so that you might discover the challenges found in Geography, we may now look to the future.

The symbolic journey through which you have been conducted was to impress upon you the struggles of Geography - Past, Present and Future. You are now prepared to bear the mark of one trained in undertaking of the search for Geographic knowledge. We shall now explain to you the privilege of wearing the badge of Gamma Theta Upsilon, and its heraldry.

GTU Officer (Historian?): The Gamma Theta Upsilon badge is a key that signifies the achievement of quality in a field of Geography. The base or body of the key is a seven-sided shield, with each bevel bearing the initial of one of the Earth's great land masses. Beginning with Europe at the top, there are the continents of the Old or Eastern World: Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia, On the left side of the key are North America, South America, and Antarctica, the three continents brought into recorded geographic knowledge as humanity expanded westward from the Old World to the New World.

Spread across the base of the key are five wavy blue lines representing the five great oceans that have carried voyagers to all the lands of the Earth: the Atlantic, the Indian, the Pacific, the Arctic, and the Antarctic or Great Southern Ocean.

A White star above the waves symbolizes Polaris, the great guide to early travelers over the northern hemisphere's uncharted vastness.

At the key's top are the letters Gamma, Theta, and Upsilon, the initials of three Greek words, Ge (Earth), Thalassa (sea), and Hypaithrois (atmosphere), to serve as a reminder of the three environmental domains of concern to geographers.

The colors of Gamma Theta Upsilon symbolize these three geographic domains: brown for the Earth, light blue for the sea, and gold for the sunlight or sky.

Gamma Theta Upsilon is an honor society in the field of Geography. There are no secret signs, words, or handshakes. Gamma Theta Upsilon Members wear the Society's badge as a

sign to the World of their interest and achievement in Geography and their pledge to support and promote the discipline.

Vice-President: Having become acquainted with the meaning of Gamma Theta Upsilon, are you willing to take the Pledge of Membership? If so, answer "I am." Now please raise your right hand and repeat after me:

I do hereby pledge myself...
to service in Geography...
throughout my lifetime...
in whatever capacity I may find,...
and to use Geography...
to the service of humanity'.

President: As President of the Theta Kappa chapter of Gamma Theta Upsilon, I welcome you into Membership of Gamma Theta Upsilon with all of the rights and privileges which such Membership entails. I hope that your years in this organization and as a friend of Geography will bring you much pleasure and happiness.