

# **Bylaws & Policies of Sigma Mu**

## Fayetteville, Ark. Chapter of Tri-Ess

(Covering Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri & Oklahoma)

### **I. Vision Statement**

It is with great pride that the ladies and gentlemen of Sigma Mu, embrace the acceptance of all heterosexual cross-dressers, their spouses &/or partners, family and friends. With this in mind, we strive to provide a secure and structured atmosphere for those seeking a gateway to acceptance with themselves and the general public in which we live. Sigma Mu will engage in programs, services and social activities designed to support our members. Through these, we will further the education and enlightenment of society as to the nature of cross-dressing.

### **II. Membership**

1. All full members of Sigma Mu must be members in good standing in Tri-Ess International.
2. All full members must be at least 21 years of age.
3. Membership types;
  - A. Full membership: voting privileges at all meetings.
  - B. Friends of Sigma Mu membership: no voting or board privileges at meetings.
4. The membership year shall run from November 1 to October 31 of each year.
5. Membership shall not be denied on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, gender or gender role.
6. Termination of membership in Tri-Ess International automatically terminates full membership in Sigma Mu.

7. Full Membership:
  - A. Members are entitled to all rights and privileges including the right to vote on Chapter matters that are subjected to a vote.
  - B. May serve any office position.
8. Friends of Sigma Mu Membership:
  - A. Shall be open to supporting individuals or businesses.
  - B. Open to Friends of Tri-Ess.
9. Membership eligibility:
  - A. Personal meeting; Applicant will receive a personal meeting by a full member.
  - B. Application; Prospective member fills out Membership Application, which reflects their agreement to abide by these bylaws and policies.
  - C. Complimentary meeting; each prospective member may attend one meeting before joining the Sigma Mu Chapter.
  - D. Should an applicants' spouse or partner wish to attend meetings or functions, both must agree to observe the chapter's code of conduct.

### III. **Code of Conduct**

1. Confidentiality
  - A. All attendees of a Sigma Mu meeting shall hold the personal privacy of all other attendees in the highest regard. Information about any attendee is confidential.
  - B. Chapter meeting locations may only be disclosed to members, approved applicants and guests.

2. Attire
  - A. Cross-dressing is not required at meetings, but is encouraged to maintain a conducive atmosphere to cross-gender expression and personal growth.
  - B. We uphold a high standard of dressing which is in respect for womanhood. Outrageous, sexually suggestive or fetish outfits, bearded ladies and the like are not how we present ourselves. We strive to dress well, with good taste.
3. Behavior
  - A. To present a positive public image, individuals are to conduct themselves in a ladylike or gentlemanly manner at all times.
  - B. Since Sigma Mu is a support group, explicitly sexual behavior and/or items are prohibited.
4. Restrooms
  - A. Individuals are encouraged to use the facilities of the chapter meeting room whenever possible.
  - B. Use of public restrooms is not restricted, but use due consideration and caution when using the appropriate facilities.

#### **IV. Chapter Meetings**

1. A regular chapter meeting will normally be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month.
2. No person may attend a chapter meeting without agreeing to abide by the code of conduct as outlined in these bylaws.
3. During each regular meeting, a business meeting will be held to address the business of the chapter.
4. A quorum of five members, two of whom are board members, is required to conduct a business meeting.

**V. Dues/Fees**

1. Yearly chapter dues are \$30.00 per year for full members (single or couple); \$15.00 per year for friends of Sigma Mu members.
2. Chapter dues are due and payable at the November meeting.
3. Meeting fees are required at each meeting regardless of the meeting location. Fees are \$10.00 per single or \$15 per couple.

**VI. Votes/Election Procedures**

1. Votes/elections are to be held only during a business meeting.
2. During a vote/election a member may cast a vote by show of hand, voice, written ballot or secret ballot.
3. Absentee ballot submitted to a board member must be received prior to the time of vote/election.
4. Officer elections will be held at the November meeting of each year, for one-year terms.
5. Nominations will be accepted in October.

**VII. Board of Directors**

1. President
2. Vice President
3. Treasurer
4. Secretary
5. Editor
6. Outreach Coordinator
7. Activities Director
8. First Contact Representative

**According to Provision A-13 of Tri-Ess Policies:**

No officer or contact person of a Tri-Ess chapter shall serve as an officer or contact person of any transgender organization not affiliated with Tri-Ess

**VIII. President**

The President is the hub position for the group providing direction, vision, focus and balance to the group she serves. She presides over board and general business meetings serving as the final figure of authority for the group in all matters. She has overall responsibility for the group to Tri Ess International, to her board, to the general membership, and to potential members. She provides final representation of the group to the public. She should therefore present herself as a lady and a leader, especially in the face of adversity.

**IX. Vice President**

The Vice President is the secondary position for the group, and under the leadership of the President also provides direction, vision, focus and balance to the group she serves. She presides over the board and general business meetings when the President is unable to do so, and is responsible for performing other duties as the President may direct. Along with the President she provides representation of the group to the public, and should therefore present herself as a lady, and a leader.

**X. Treasurer**

1. The treasurer is to maintain and report in a prudent manner, those matters which impact Sigma Mu financially such as: checking accounts, rate changes, and reoccurring expenses of the group.
2. To maintain the Sigma Mu Roster and archive it on a monthly basis.

**XI. Secretary**

1. Take minutes of the board & business meetings and provide overviews at regular monthly business meetings with membership.
2. Provide applications for new membership.
3. Maintain and archive monthly minutes.

**XII. Editor**

1. Assemble articles and photos for the monthly newsletter.
2. Prepares monthly newsletter
3. Email or snail mail out the newsletter to membership.
4. Maintains an archive of past newsletter issues and masters.

**XIII. Outreach Coordinator**

1. Seek out and perform group outreach/educational presentations to enlighten and further educate people on the Transgender community, with an emphasis on cross-dressers.
  - A. This can include educational, religious, law enforcement, community or any other group that might have an interest.
2. Assist others that are interested in performing their own presentations.
  - A. This would include guiding them to resource material and processes, attending presentations with them until they are comfortable to go on their own, and anything else that can be done to assist in their success.

#### **XIV. Activities Director**

To direct the activities of the Sigma Mu group “outings”, after regular business meetings once a month. This will include a balance between, “in” & “out” activities throughout the year. Due to the scheduling of activities that are not in the town of our normal meeting place, it may also require working with the board in rescheduling of the meetings, in order to facilitate time and place.

#### **XV. First Contact Representative**

1. Be available to receive queries concerning Sigma Mu from people that show an interest in learning more about our organization. Follow up on visitors and other non-responsive inquirers.
2. Be prepared to refer inquires to a Sigma Mu member that is closest to the person interested, so that a meeting can be setup to verify the sincerity of the new person. This member should also act as a sponsor to introduce the new person to Sigma Mu, at the first meeting attended by the new person.

#### **XVI. Amendments**

1. Amendments may be submitted in writing to the board for a vote by the membership at any time.
2. Amendments to these bylaws/policies require notice and simple majority vote to pass.

**XVII. Relinquishment of Membership**

1. If membership is relinquished, all information concerning the member shall be deleted from the records. No portion of the membership fee shall be refunded.
2. Membership may be involuntarily terminated if any member of Sigma Mu engages in conduct detrimental to the Chapter.
3. Misappropriation of any Chapter funds.
4. Any illegal use of a controlled substance and/or abuse of alcohol during meetings.
5. Termination of membership in Tri-Ess International automatically terminates membership in Sigma Mu.

**XVIII. Legislative History**

Drafted by Tessa Kay on June 14, 2003

Revised on October 3, 2003 by attending membership.

Ratified by attending membership on November 15, 2003.