



UTD PHI KAPPA PHI NEWSLETTER

Fall 2011

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Inaugural Student Members Initiated

On Monday, November 21 and Tuesday, November 22, Phi Kappa Phi Chapter 316 initiated its inaugural group of undergraduate and graduate students. A total of 202 students accepted membership with 151 attending the historic event.

The next chapter meeting will take place in spring 2012 to elect our student vice presidents. Additional stories and pictures from the student initiation will be posted on the UT Dallas News Center, the chapter's [Facebook](#) page and [this website](#). Congratulations to all our students for their academic achievements.



IMPORTANT DEADLINES

<u>Scholar and Artist Awards</u>	February 15, 2012
<u>Literacy Grants</u>	April 1, 2012
<u>Study Abroad Grants</u>	April 12, 2012
<u>Fellowships</u>	April 15, 2012
<u>Love of Learning Awards</u>	June 30, 2012

UTD Conducts Its First Tapping Ceremony



During the last week of September the UTD community witnessed teams of faculty in full regalia with envelopes in their hands. They were on a mission to “tap” eligible juniors and invite them to join The University of Texas at Dallas Chapter of The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi as part of an inaugural group of student members. Although tapping is an old tradition for Phi Kappa Phi, this is the first time it has been conducted at UTD. Initiates are chosen from the top 7.5 percent of juniors who had completed at least 72 credit hours and the top 10 percent of seniors. At least 24 hours must have been completed at UTD. Eligibility was determined separately for each school at the UTD. Graduate students are nominated by their programs and only a select number are chosen based on program size and graduation cohorts. Phi Kappa Phi invited 167 juniors, 417 seniors and 78 graduate students to join the organization.

Kratz Urges New Initiates to “Go for Gold”



Dr. Dennis Kratz, Dean of the School of Arts and Humanities, the Ignacy and Celina Rockover Professor of Humanities, and Phi Kappa Phi member, was invited to give the keynote speech during the first student initiation at UTD. As dean, Kratz has fostered the development of an interdisciplinary curriculum that connects the arts with the humanities, critical with creative thought, theory with practice, and the university with the community. Among his many accomplishments, Dr. Kratz has conducted scholarly investigations of epic poetry, the changing concept of heroism, translation theory, fantasy and science fiction. A translator of classical and medieval literature, Dr. Kratz has been co-editor of the journal *Translation Review* since 1979.

Dr. Kratz received his Bachelor of Arts, *magna cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa, from Dartmouth College. He received a Master of Arts in Classical Studies and a Doctorate in Medieval Latin from Harvard University. Kratz taught at the Roxbury Latin School in Boston and The Ohio State University before joining the UT Dallas faculty in 1978. The full transcript of his speech has been included in this newsletter.

Full Text of Dr. Dennis Kratz's Speech

"Go for Gold!" A poster advertising Phi Kappa Phi caught my eye. It struck me as not only a catchy slogan but also as good advice, considering that this morning gold was selling for more than \$1,750 an ounce. And yet that number, impressive as it is, does not begin to reflect the true value of gold or the reasons for pursuing it.

The poster set me to thinking about gold and its undeniable attractions, especially for academic honor societies. The allure of gold transcends its physical beauty, beautiful though it is, and its market value, expensive though it is. In fact, gold fascinates us to the point of intoxication. We adorn our fingers, necks, wrists, teeth, ankles and lord knows what else with it. We name our basic rule of moral conduct after it; and we associate it in our minds with all manner of positive attributes, concepts, and aspirations

The associations of gold are not all positive, of course, especially for an honor society. The technical description of gold's physical properties is that it is "inert, malleable and dense," hardly the definition of our ideal student or one likely to be at this event. Moreover, like most intoxicants, gold sometimes brings out the worst in us. The Spanish conquistadors justified their pillage of great American empires by declaring that they suffered from a disease that could be cured only by large doses of gold. Tolkien's Lord of the Rings centers on a gold ring that unleashes our lust for power; and there is of course a cynical version of the Golden Rule to the effect that "those with the gold make the rules."

But on this day of celebration let's focus on the brightness and the positive reasons for our fascination with gold: Why do rulers place golden crowns upon their heads and weave golden threads into their garments to emphasize their power and divine mandate? Why do lovers choose a gold ring to express the depth and permanence of their commitment? Why do we award a gold medal to indicate the highest athletic achievement? Why does Phi Kappa Phi make gold its symbol of the intellectual excellence that we honor this evening?

The answers are multiple and spring ultimately from our innate and irrepressible human urge to make connections that invest the objects of the world around us with deeper meaning. We are the ultimate symbolizing creatures. A recent book by a leading neuroscientist describes the brain as an "association machine" that is designed to create connections among the objects and events that we encounter. That is, of course, the secret of advertising: to link a particular product with images of happiness, good times and social prestige.

How does this process of association work with regard to gold? Let's start with gold's extraordinary denseness and malleability: It can be fashioned as a result into an almost infinite variety of shapes; one ounce can be hammered into a sheet thin enough to cover 300 square feet. It is also so ductile that one ounce can be drawn into a thin gold wire 50 miles long. The adaptability of gold leads to a connection with our power of thinking that enables us to transform the world from the ordinary to the marvelous. We have minds that can traverse the universe; we have imaginations that can draw a concept into miles and miles of implications. You all have heard of alchemy, in some respects the origin of the modern science of chemistry. One physical goal of the alchemists was to transform base metals into gold. But this practice was intimately connected with spiritual transformation: the transmutation of lead into gold was seen as an analogy for the larger goal of personal transformation and spiritual perfection.

Gold glitters. Its brightness inevitably creates a connection with the sun, the source of light and energy and warmth and life itself. And so gold becomes the color and the precious metal of rulers who seek to display power; athletes, energy; men and women, the life-affirming warmth of their love. Sometimes power and love – or more accurately lust - become intertwined, especially in mythology, as in the Greek tale of Zeus's infatuation with a beautiful woman named Danae.

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Her father, having heard a prophecy that he would be killed by his grandson, locked his daughter (Danae) in a tower to keep her from ever becoming pregnant. But Zeus, ever resourceful (and often aroused) descended upon her as a shower of gold: a truly cool way to impress your date! Yes, he impregnated her; she gave birth to a son named Perseus; and yes, Perseus eventually killed his grandfather.

Finally, gold, being chemically inert, resists tarnishing; time does not dull its brilliance. How powerful a symbol this becomes for our yearning that some part of our lives – be it love or reputation or an immortal soul – maintain its integrity, its beauty and (in the most profound sense of the word) its value! Gold therefore is associated symbolically in Christianity with the steadfastness of God. And it makes a gold band an obvious choice for a wedding band.

It was the combination of radiance, expansiveness and incorruptibility that inspired a poet in the sixth century BC in Greece to establish, in my mind, the most profound association of all for gold. Pindar was his name, and he made his living essentially by composing long poems commissioned by victors in athletic competitions to commemorate and celebrate those triumphs.

His genius lay in two poetic decisions: The first was to make the victories less important than the qualities behind their attainment. He helped establish the future of Greek thought and art by describing his subjects not as they were physically but rather as a reflection of a concept called *arête*, an untranslatable Greek word for an ideal that should guide our aspirations and the way that we pursue them. That ideal is the pursuit of greatness. For him, the athlete became an exemplar of the fusion of skill and will that sheds light on the heights of achievement of which every human being is capable, across the domain of human endeavor, and to which we should aspire.

The second decision was to make gold the poetic symbol of this *arête*. He begins one of his most famous poems:

Water is best, but gold, like a blazing fire in the night
Rules all wealth.

The rest of the poem elaborates on the meaning of this at first odd announcement: water is necessary to sustain life, but a life without aspiration is empty. “Gold” represents *arête*: that is, our striving for the completion and perfection of our potential as human beings. Elsewhere Pindar makes his point explicitly when he exhorts us, in our pursuit of *arête*:

Do not seek immortality
But exhaust the limits of the possible.

The knowledge that once we approached this golden summit of excellence remains, untarnished, a reminder of our capacity for excellence again and again.

It is, I believe, symbolic that America’s two great academic honor societies choose Greek as the language to express their ideals. On your symbolically golden pin Phi Kappa Phi declares *Philosophia Krateito Photôn* “Let the love of learning/wisdom rule humanity.” The Greek exhortation and the gold place us in the context of Greek idealism and its exhortation to seek greatness. I hope that you will consider your selection and initiation into Phi Kappa Phi, symbolized by the golden pin you are now privileged to wear, as a stimulus to pursue a modern form of *arête*: a sustained quest for learning and wisdom and a better world.

The world is, after all, an endlessly fascinating place that contains a life-long supply of gold to be mined and made yours. It can be found in the solution of a perplexing equation, in an insight into the meaning of a work of art, in the invention of a new digital device, in the composition of a sonnet, and in a perfectly executed bicycle kick. In that extended, symbolic and much more invigorating sense of the word, then, I invite you to join me in a lifetime of “going for gold.”

2011 Phi Kappa Phi Undergraduate Inductees

Sarah Abdulqader
Naveen Abedin
Hannah Adams
Lisa Allman
Juliana Almeida
Jordan Anderson
Tyler Andrews
Rocky Angelucci
Karen Attebery
Yanjun Ba
Drew Babb
Andrew Baer
Erich Bao
Sorna Basirat
Conway Bass
Alison-Leigh Beatty
Olivia Belli
Sherri Bogard
James Bowen
Julie Bowles
Jonathan Boyd
Alyson Brands
Charles Cage
Philip Campbell
Evan Carr
Ryan Castle
Lewis Chang
Sophia Chang
Reba Cherian
Nari Choi
Woomi Choi
Joshua Clouch
Marissa Co
Jonathan Conrad
Lindsey Cook
Geoffrey Cooper
Katherine Crowell
Telo Cude

Laura-Jane Cunningham
Gloria Daniel
Lauren Davis
Vickie Davis
Truc Do
Jennifer Dykes
Samah El-Khaled
Brittany Ellenberg
Marwah Elsehety
Aya Embabi
Kyle Evans
Robert Farmigoni
Deborah Farrell
Stevin George
Mary Goodnight
Laura Gorecki
Jessica Greenhouse-Beeson
Riccardo Gregorat
Jeffrey Gunn
Mary Gurak
Tuan Ha
Elizabeth Hanacik
Kaitlyn Hansen
Kathleen Hardin
Anthony Hernandez
Logan Hindes
Timothy Hoffman
Lisa Holmes
Michael Howell
Clifford Hsieh
Sharon Hudspeth
Adam Humphreys
Laura Hunt
Martin Huynh
Benjamin Irwin
Nistha Jajal
Da Hee Jeong
Angela Johnston

Leon Joseph
Michael Kandalaft
Grace Keller Scotch
Michael Kendrick
Sartaz Khan
Taehoon Kim
Jeffrey Kirk
Aaron Klick
Winford Ko
Christopher Kraft
Sabin Kshattray
Joshua Lay
Duc Le
Brenda Lee
Caroline Lee
Chang Min Lee
Audrey Lentz
Anna Li
Emily Lichtenheld
Rose Lodowski
Samantha Loehr
Amanda Loveless
Penelope Maley
Christina May
Deanna McGee
Samantha McMillan
Robert Miller
Kara Milot
Sara Minor
Michael Mirsky
Laura Moos
Harrison Moosavi
Elena Morten
Mohammed Nasim
Viswam Nathan
Aivy Nguyen
Chris Nguyen
Derek Nguyen

2011 Phi Kappa Phi Undergraduate Inductees

Hoang Nguyen	Fredrick Robehmed	Ermias Sori
Long Nguyen	Elizabeth-as Robinson	Delores Standeven
Nathaniel Nicandro	Alan Roderick	Katherine Strassel
Monica Niewiarowski	Jeffrey Rosa	Monica Tamil
Michael Nimmo	Gabriel Rosenfield	Min Tang
Stephanie Nimmo	Ali Saherwala	Matthew Tiso
Aisha Noor	Sepanta Saida	Saskia Versteeg
Lilian Ogott	Iqra Sawani	Emily Wagoner
Julianne Oliver	Lauren Schaper	Star Walker
Elizabeth Olson	Audra Scharbauer	Kelly Weeren
Elizabeth Organ	Elizabeth Scheirman	Larissa Weidenbruch
Mayur Patel	Anna Schuessler	Dustin-Kirk Weir
Yolanda Pazwakavambwa	Lindsay Sloan Scott	Craig West
Lam Phan	Lauren Sechrist	Krystal Williams
Anitta Philip	Kristi Selover	Lye-Ching Wong
Justin Philip	Shravik Sethi	Peter Wonica
Rhonda Poole	Sachin Shah	Alex Wu
James Porter	Lisa Shepherd	Mei-Chen Yeh
Andrew Previc	Prarthana Sheth	Minhee Yoon
Ali Rafiee	Jennifer Short	Mohammad Zaman
Alexandra Rapp	Cynthia Smith	Katerina Zhelnova
Helen Reyes	D'Anna Smith	Gretchen Zuefeldt
Allyson Rice	Joon Sohn	
Clayton Roark	Dale Soney	

2011 Phi Kappa Phi Graduate Inductees

Alejandro Tirado Alcaez	Dilon Hanks	Jeremy Prince
Ziad Aldahhan	Malinda Hicks	James Scott
Eric Blackburn	Erik Jensen	Richa Singh
Joel Browning	Melissa Kenfield	Mark Standeford
Rebecca Choi	Tao Li	Linxue Su
John Connolly	Jingyi Liu	Michael Ten Eyck
Garrett Davis	Guang Ma	Rajsree Vijayan
Ling Ding	Amit Maheska	William Walker
Sandria Edgar	Xiaoke Mao	Julie Wallace
Blair Flicker	Mary Catherine Mueller	Ben Wilson
Steven Foland	Mark Neiberding	Samuel Woolard
Christine R Getts	Erin Orrick	Quxian Zhang