

Alpha Chi National College Honor Society is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization (EIN 74-6047760) that has been an active and certified member of the Association for College Honor Societies since 1955. The one-time fee for a student's lifetime Alpha Chi membership is \$55, and chapters may add a reasonable local fee not to exceed the national fee. There are no other national fees charged to remain a member or maintain a chapter. ACHS is the certifying agency for college and university honor societies.

How to Evaluate the Credibility of an Honor Society

All campus administrators and faculty should beware of predatory organizations that call themselves honor societies without requiring high academic standards for membership. These organizations can charge exorbitant initiation and membership fees and often more than once. They exist primarily to make a profit rather than to create opportunities for the students they purport to serve. Some have found ways around privacy laws and invite students via email from a national (non-campus) office, without input from a campus academic advisor to verify that the student would qualify as a high achiever. **If an honor society has not been certified as meeting the high standards of the Association of College Honor Societies (www.achshonor.org), examine the following criteria:**

Minimum Scholastic Criteria

- Undergraduate (General)—Rank in the upper 20% of the class
- Undergraduate (Specialized and Leadership)—Rank in the upper 35% of the class. That rank converts to a 3.2 or 3.3 GPA in most cases; 3.0 is likely too low in this age of grade inflation. Honor societies that advertise a minimum 3.0 are probably more appropriately labeled as Recognition Societies (a definition that has been generally accepted since 1925).
- These criteria are minimums; many societies have higher standards.

Governance

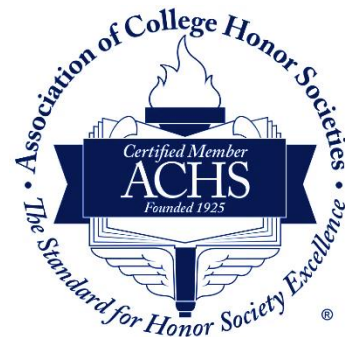
- Membership participation in setting authority for control of the affairs of the organization
- Governance by officers/board members elected by the membership
- Membership participation in approving and amending bylaws
- Full financial disclosure
- **Recognition as a 501(c)3 non-profit (the organization itself—not only a foundation or arm of the organization)**

Campus Chapters

- Formal chartering of each campus chapter by institution and college/departments petition, approved by official action of the governing body of the national organization
- Candidate selection by the campus chapter
- Membership invitation by an official chapter
- Chapter representation in national governance

Web Site—These should be accessible to the public:

- National Officers and Headquarters Staff
- National Office mailing, telephone, and e-mail addresses
- Criteria for membership
- Benefits of membership
- Membership fee
- Constitution and/or Bylaws
- Chapter charter policies and procedures



Warning Signs that Raise Questions about Credibility

- Address limited to a post office box/number
- Missing web site items (above), especially bylaws—thus transparency is lacking
- Missing contact information for the Chief Executive Officer
- An online application (certified honor societies issue invitations to qualified candidates only from institutional chapters)
- Vague and flexible eligibility standards
- No structure of institutional chapters
- Lack of non-profit status (Not sure if it's a non-profit? See <https://www.guidestar.org/Home.aspx>.)