

# DELTA KAPPA

## THE INTERNATIONAL MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY HONOR SOCIETY

One of the marks of a profession's vitality is the presence of institutionalized structures that support the people who promote the ongoing advancement of the profession and its contribution to society. *Delta Kappa, the International Marriage and Family Therapy Honor Society*, is such an institution for the profession of marriage and family therapy. The purpose of Delta Kappa is to provide marriage and family therapy professionals a face-to-face, ongoing scholarly forum for the exchange of ideas related to the development of research, theory, and clinical practice. To this end, members are received and local chapters chartered to create symposia, seminars, workshops, and other activities through which such professional leadership is encouraged and supported.

DELTA KAPPA, the name for the International Marriage and Family Therapy Honor Society has symbolic and historical significance within the field of marriage and family therapy. DELTA represents the triangle, a core concept of relationship life within marriage and family therapy theory. The points of the triangle represent the three corners of the therapeutic relationship, composed of the client family present in the room, the therapists and therapeutic treatment team, and the external influences intertwined between lives of client families and professionals. KAPPA was selected because it is the universal symbol for knowledge. The shape of the KAPPA symbol has a single long vertical line representing the intervention that occurs in the therapeutic process, and two lines meeting at the midpoint of the vertical line creating a point of confluence with the therapist and the client system joining together for change. Together, the lines of this symbol represent the collaborative co-evolving nature of relationships with clients within the therapeutic system.

Marriage and family therapy professionals are invited into membership in Delta Kappa through three avenues. The first includes students in accredited marriage and family therapy programs who have earned at least 12 hours with a grade point average of 3.7. The second includes graduates from such accredited marriage and family therapy programs with a concluding grade point average of 3.5. The third includes senior marriage and family therapy professionals who demonstrate high dedication to scholarship and professional leadership through instruction, research, and/or student/new professional training. Membership requires application through a local charter and a \$50 application fee.

The Alpha Chapter of Delta Kappa was installed on December 4, 1998, at The University of Louisiana at Monroe. This installation was the first time in the history of the marriage and family therapy field that a scholarly honor society has been established. The faculty sponsor of the Alpha Chapter was Dr. Charles Cole, the Spyker Endowed Chair in Marriage and Family Therapy at The University of Louisiana at Monroe from 1997 to 2003, and the person who provided the primary vision and organizing force for the formation of such an honor society. The traditions developed by the Alpha Chapter set the stage for the institutionalization of customs and rituals to be used by successful Delta Kappa chapters.

Through the innovative and ongoing work of its local chapters, activity in this Honor Society has three primary aims:

- Emerging leaders in the field of marriage and family therapy are to be mentored in assuming the mantle of leadership in the marriage and family therapy profession.
- Ongoing scholarly forums are to be organized that present opportunities to engage and apply cutting edge research and theory on marriage and family therapy clinical practice.
- Achievements of marriage and family therapy clinicians and scholars are to be recognized in ways that promote the visibility and dissemination of the profession's contributions within the broader service provider sector.

Through these aims, the stature of the marriage and family therapy profession is to be enhanced each time that the torch of leadership is carried high by the current generation of marriage and family therapy scholars and practitioners in Delta Kappa, the International Marriage and Family Therapy Honor Society.