



## History of Xi Sigma Pi

Xi Sigma Pi, forestry honor society, was founded at the University of Washington on November 24, 1908. The objectives of Xi Sigma Pi are to secure and maintain a high standard of scholarship in natural resources education as it relates to the forest ecosystems, to work for the improvement of the natural resources profession, and to promote a fraternal spirit among those engaged in activities related to the forest.

The Society existed as a local honor society until 1915, when a new constitution creating an executive council was adopted. The original chapter at the University of Washington was designated Alpha. With the advent of Beta at Michigan State University in 1916, and of Gamma at the University of Maine in 1917, the Society spanned the continent! A period of expansion, largely concentrated west of the Mississippi, followed. Delta and Epsilon at the Universities of Minnesota and Idaho, respectively, were founded during 1920. Zeta at Oregon State University entered in 1921. In 1924, Eta was installed at Pennsylvania State University. Theta was born at the University of California in 1925. Iota, chartered at the Pennsylvania State Forest School in 1927, placed two chapters in one state for the first time. In 1929, when the Pennsylvania State Forest School ceased to exist, Iota became permanently inactive. Kappa was established at Purdue University in 1934.

From 1939 through 1952 the number of active chapters doubled. Six of the nine chapters acquired were east of the Mississippi. Lambda was installed at Utah State in 1939. Mu, the first chapter in the South, was added in 1940 at North Carolina State. That same year Nu, the second southern chapter, became established at Louisiana State University. The advent of Xi, at the University of Georgia in 1941 and of Pi at the University of Florida in 1948 strongly entrenched Xi Sigma Pi in the south. Omicron, Colorado State, was installed in 1943. This development phase culminated in 1952 with the Society's first "tri-chapter" year: Rho, West Virginia University; Sigma, Auburn University; and Tau at the University of Missouri.

The present era opened in 1958 when Upsilon was installed at the University of Michigan. Symbolically, this represented a historical tying together of the past and the present in the entities of Beta and Upsilon. Subsequent growth has involved a bolstering in sections

where Xi Sigma Pi had been relatively weak. Phi was established at Montana State University in 1960. Two chapters, Chi and Psi were chartered in 1962 at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and the University of Massachusetts, respectively. On October 16, 1964 the first trip through the alphabet was completed when Omega was installed at Southern Illinois University.

On January 6, 1965, Alpha Alpha was chartered at the University of Illinois. Alpha Beta at Clemson University and Alpha Gamma at Iowa State University made 1965 the Society's second "tri-chapter" year. The chartering of Alpha Delta at Washington State University on May 9, 1966 again reinforced the historic tie between the past and present. This was followed three days later by the installation of Alpha Epsilon at the University of New Hampshire. The addition of chapters in three consecutive years was another society first! The next thirteen years gave birth to twelve additional chapters. Alpha Zeta was installed at Stephen F. Austin State University in 1968. Two chapters, Alpha Eta at Michigan Technological University and Alpha Theta at Mississippi State University followed in 1971. Alpha Kappa at the University of Tennessee was next in 1972 with Alpha Lambda at Humboldt State University in 1973 and Alpha Nu at the University of Wisconsin (Madison) in early 1974. The second banner year for new chapters was 1975 with three being installed that year; Alpha Xi at the University of Wisconsin (Stevens Point), Alpha Omicron at the University of Vermont, and Alpha Pi at Northern Arizona University. The University of Kentucky was next in line for a charter establishing the Alpha Rho Chapter there in 1976 followed by the Alpha Sigma Chapter at Texas A & M University in 1978. That brought the number of chapters to 40. March 3, 1980, represented the most recent landmark in Xi Sigma Pi's history. On that date the first international chapter, Alpha Tau, was granted a charter at the University of Alberta, Canada. Little more than a month later the Alpha Upsilon Chapter at California Polytechnic State University became the third Xi Sigma Pi Chapter in the state of California making it the most recent addition.

Recent accomplishments include the development of membership rolls. An agreement to become International was effected. The Constitution, Rituals, and By-Laws were revised in 1974 and again in 2017. The most recent revisions allowed chapters flexibility in recruitment within academic programs where forestry is offered under a wider umbrella of natural resource education. The Society became a full-fledged member of The Association of College Honor Societies in 1965. A decision was made to contribute to the endowment fund of the Society of American Foresters. The establishment of a national technical paper contest was approved in the mid-late 1900s but has since been discontinued. A regional scholarship awards program was initiated to recognize excellence in forestry academic achievement. Five regional winners are selected by participating chapters.