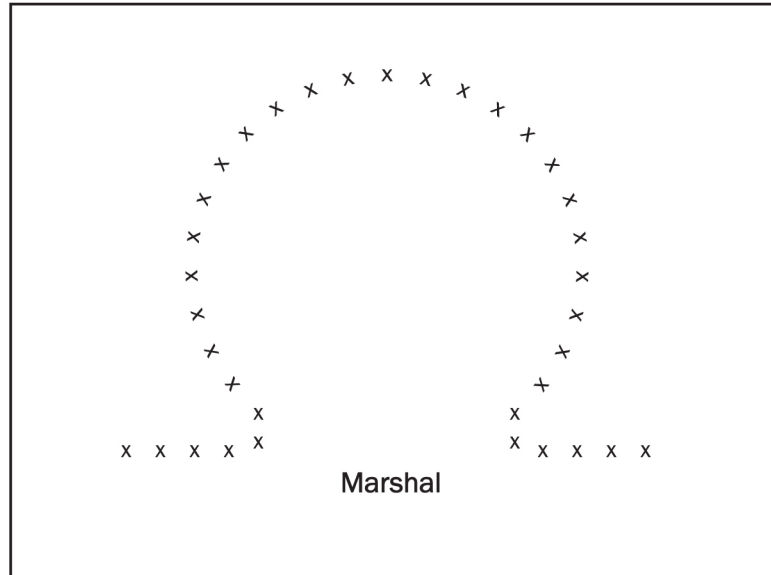


# Instructions – Black Lantern Processional

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## Key

x = Brothers



## INTRODUCTION

The Black Lantern Processional is one of our brotherhood's public rituals and one of Alpha Sigma Phi's oldest. It was born at Yale University in the mid - 1800s. Traditionally, those selected for membership were placed into the line in between brothers and taken to the place where they were to be initiated. Today the processional is used to celebrate Founders' Day, to mark the anniversary of a chapter, to gather new members for the formal Pledge or Initiation ceremony, or as a memorial for our deceased brothers. The processional is conducted from start to finish in a dignified manner and in total silence.

Great care should be taken when organizing and performing the Processional. This resource contains materials and checklists that will help your chapter carry out a successful Black Lantern Processional.

## EQUIPMENT

- Candle(s) or lamp oil for Lanterns
- Lanterns (1 per person or 1 for every 3 brothers)
- Local Permits for conducting Processional (if needed)
- Extra wicks for lanterns
- Processional Handouts (available on Fraternity's website)
- Fire Extinguishers

## **ROBES**

- Black Robe (with a white stole) for Marshal
- Black Robe with hood for each member

## **PREPARATION**

### **45 days prior to the proposed date**

- Chapter Planning Meeting (Marshal, Prudential Board, GCA, and Faculty Advisor) to select date, time, and delegate tasks, etc.
- Meeting with Campus Fraternity & Sorority Professional
- Inventory chapter equipment; make necessary arrangements to borrow robes and lanterns from area chapter if needed, or purchase additional materials

### **30 days prior to the proposed date**

- All press releases delivered
- Letter of notification sent to: Campus Fraternity & Sorority Professional, Vice President for Student Affairs, Residence Life office, IFC, NPHC, Panhellenic Council, and all campus Multicultural Groups
- Letters of notification sent to: Campus/city police
- Invitations to local alumni and/or chapters mailed
- Parade Permit obtained (if needed)
- Route for processional mapped out

### **20 days prior**

- Clean Robes (if necessary)

### **3 days prior**

- Lanterns checked to make sure they work
- Rehearsal

### **Day of the Processional**

Phone calls made to double check with:

- Campus Fraternity & Sorority Life Professional
- Campus Police
- City Police

### **LETTERS OF NOTIFICATION/INVITATIONS SENT TO**

- Fraternity & Sorority Life Advisor
- All Campus Multicultural Groups
- Dean of Students
- Vice President for Student Affairs
- IFC
- NPHC
- Panhellenic Council
- All other Greek Organizations on Campus

- Director of Residence Life (if route takes the chapter past residence halls)
- Public Safety/Campus Police
- City/Town Police

## SETTING

- The Marshal leads the procession, wearing a black robe, hood up or down, with a white stole. He carries a lantern in his left hand.
- Members follow the Marshal at 6-foot intervals. Members are in black robes, hoods up. Each carries a lit lantern in the left hand. *(If there are not enough lanterns for each man, every third man should carry a lantern.)*
- The Marshal should plan in advance where the brothers are to gather if other than the chapter quarters. The actual route of the march should also be determined and walked to see if there is a need for traffic control or any hazardous spots are to be avoided.
- The Marshal should mark the “Omega” symbol ( $\Omega$ ) with tape or chalk before the ceremony begins.

# Black Lantern Processional

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*The Marshal leads the procession, wearing a black robe (hood up or down, with white stole). The Marshal carries a lit lantern in his left hand. Brothers should line up behind the Marshal (traditionally brothers line up in roster order; alumni or visiting chapters are at the front of the line). Brothers should follow the Marshal at 6-foot intervals. Members are in black robes (hoods up). Each man carries a lit lantern in the left hand. (If there are not enough lanterns for each man, every third man should carry a lantern.) The Marshal may need to use a microphone or megaphone so that all brothers can hear the prayer. Once all of the brothers, pledges, and distinguished guests have arrived, the Marshal addresses the brotherhood:*

Marshal: Brothers, the Black Lantern Processional serves to remember our deceased brothers. It is one of the Fraternity's oldest traditions, dating back to the 1800s when it was used at Yale University to announce to the campus those candidates who were accepted into Alpha · Sigma · Phi. In just a moment, we will begin our slow and steady tread toward [insert location]. The Processional is conducted from start to finish in a dignified manner and in total silence. Upon completion of the Omega Prayer, brothers will place their lanterns on the ground and walk away in total silence. Brothers, you should remain in silence until you have vacated the immediate area of the Omega symbol.

*Once the Marshal has addressed the brotherhood, he should start marching with a slow and heavy tread, with marked emphasis on every third step. Each person marches in unison to the Marshal's lead. The tread should continue (even if that means stepping in place) until all members have arrived to the site of the Omega Prayer. Once the brothers have formed the Omega symbol, in a slow and steady voice the Marshal should read the Omega Prayer.*

Marshal: Gracious and Mighty God,  
Creator of Life with the promise of resurrection.  
Alpha – The Beginning and Omega – The End.  
We approach Thee in our weakness, and humbly crave Thy help.  
We lay our burden of great sorrow at Thy feet,  
and cry aloud to Thee, for comfort in our afflictions.

Thou has for some wise purpose seen fit to remove from our Mystic Circle brothers dear to our hearts. We pause now to remember those who are no longer with us:

*[First and Last Name, University and Year of Initiation]*

*After the Marshal has finished reading the list of deceased members, the Marshal continues reading the Omega Prayer.*

Marshal: Sanctify, we beseech Thee,  
to our understanding the truth of our loss,  
to see the light of wisdom, in a world dark with ignorance,  
and be reminded of the friendships in brotherly love,  
so that we may be an arm of service in a world of need,  
wretched with despair, and that we may redound it to our  
eternal good.

We cherish their memories and enter their names now into the Omega Chapter, there to remain from this moment, until that instant when we are gathered to our Fathers in that silent sleep of death, and are again reunited with our brothers within the Mystic Circle.

Hail, ALPHA · SIGMA · PHI, Amen.

*At the conclusion of the prayer, the Marshal places his lantern on the ground. This signals the rest of the brotherhood to do the same. Everyone then leaves the ceremony, and one should be able to look back and see the shape of an Omega still burning brightly. The Marshal should prearrange who will pick up the lanterns and transport them once the ceremony has concluded. Allow them to burn for a few minutes until the majority of people have vacated the immediate area.*

End of the Black Lantern Processional