

**Alpha Omicron-Miami (Ohio)**

**Fast Facts:**

* Installation date: February 2, 1923
* Location: Oxford, Ohio
* Region: 4

**History:**

The foundations for Miami University were first laid by an Act of Congress signed by President George Washington, stating that an academy should be located Northwest of the Ohio River in the Miami Valley. The Legislature passed "An Act to Establish the Miami University" on February 2, 1809, and a board of trustees was created by the state; this is cited as the founding of Miami University. The township originally granted to the university was known as the "College Township," and was renamed Oxford, Ohio, in 1810.

The University temporarily halted construction due to the War of 1812. The first day of classes at Miami was on November 1, 1824. At its opening, there were 20 students and two faculty members in addition to Bishop. Due to severely low numbers in student population, the board of trustees closed the school in 1873, and leased the campus for a grammar school. The period prior to its closing is referred to as "Old Miami."

The university re-opened in 1885, having paid all of its debts and repaired many of its buildings; there were 40 students in its first year. Enrollment remained under 100 students throughout the 1800s. Enrollment in 1923 was at 1,500 students. The Oxford College for Women merged with Miami University in 1928.

In the spring of 1920, 12 women attending Miami University felt the need to increase the number of women's fraternities on campus. They formed a new organization and called it Beta Phi Sigma after the three fraternities founded at Miami. The purpose of the new fraternity was the moral, intellectual, and social development of its members. The final goal was to petition a national organization for a charter. Beta Phi Sigma was eager to affiliate with the best national organization. After careful investigation, Delta Gamma was chosen. Correspondence with Delta Gamma officials and friends began in the fall of 1921.

Just after sending a letter of discouragement to another local group at Miami, the expansion chairman received an inquiry from Beta Phi Sigma. Because of the many letters of recommendations received, an official investigation was arranged for February of 1922. The reports were favorable, so Beta Phi Sigma was encouraged to petition.

In April, Beta Phi Sigma assembled a booklet titled *A Petition to the Delta Gamma Fraternity* and sent it to all of the Delta Gamma chapters. A copy of this booklet is in the Fraternity archives. It includes photographs of each member with a list of her campus activities, letters of recommendation, photographs of campus buildings, and an overview of the university including a section on the fraternity situation at Miami. In 1922 there were four national women's fraternities and four local women's fraternities at Miami. Total enrollment was 1228, 508 men and 720 women. The women were divided in two colleges: four-year liberal arts and two year teachers. Women in the latter could not join a fraternity.

In the fall of 1922, Delta Gamma asked for a vote of the collegiate and alumnae chapters for chapters at the University of Arizona and Miami. At the time, an affirmative vote from 95% of the alumnae chapters and 90% of the collegiate chapters was required.

The night before Christmas break at a Sigma Chi Sweetheart Party, Marguerite Sauer, future chapter president, received a telephone call which read the telegram of acceptance from Delta Gamma.

Installation activities began Friday night, February 1, 1923 with two hour individual examinations and the pledge ceremony. Initiation took place the following afternoon, February 2, at the Sigma Chi house for 11 alumnae and 26 collegians. The installation banquet, held in Bishop Hall that evening, was attended by all initiates and 100 Delta Gamma guests representing eight chapters. Sunday activities included church, the first chapter meeting, and an afternoon reception at the Sigma Chi house for guests, faculty, and representatives of fraternities and campus organizations.