

**Delta Iota-Georgia**

**Fast Facts:**

* Installation date: February 17, 1968
* Location: Athens, Georgia
* Region: 3

**History:**

The University of Georgia was incorporated on January 27, 1785, by the Georgia General Assembly, which had given its trustees, the Senatus Academicus of the University of Georgia, 40,000 acres for the purposes of founding a "college or seminary of learning." The Senatus Academicus was composed of the Board of Visitors and the Board of Trustees, with the Georgia Senate presiding over those two boards. The first meeting of the university's board of trustees was held in Augusta, Georgia on February 13, 1786, which installed its first president, Abraham Baldwin, a native of Connecticut and graduate of Yale University. Many features on the University of Georgia campus resemble the campus of Yale. On July 2, 1799, the Senatus Academicus met again in Louisville, Georgia and decided that the time was right to open the university. During this meeting, 633 acres on the banks of the Oconee River were chosen on which the university was to be built. This tract of land, now a part of the consolidated city-county of Athens-Clarke County, Georgia, was then part of Jackson County. The meeting also established a new president of the university naming Josiah Meigs, another Yale University graduate, to the post. The first classes were held in 1801, in what was called the Franklin College, named in honor of Benjamin Franklin. The first graduating class graduated on May 31, 1804. The university began educating female students during the summer of 1903, and were finally admitted as full-time undergraduates in 1918.

In 1866, men’s social groups established at UGA, but it wasn’t until 1921 that a women’s social group was established: Phi Mu. In 1936, Delta Gamma became interested in colonizing at UGA. It wasn’t until January 1967 that the university invited Delta Gamma to establish. Roberta Abernethy, Epsilon-Ohio State, Executive Secretary, and Carolyn Coffman Moorman, Alpha Omicron-Miami (Ohio), Fraternity Treasurer, came to visit Athens after Delta Gamma was extended an invitation from UGA to colonize.

On April 17, 1967 the Fraternity hosted small introductory parties in the Chapel on campus. The next month, the colony of Delta Iota chapter of Delta Gamma was established. Marcia Connell Strickland, Xi-Michigan, NPC Delegate, and Eleanor Smith Slaughter, Alpha Psi-Mississippi, Third Vice-President, came to select the original group of women for the colony. With the assistance of Athens alumnae, Mrs. Eugene Odum, Iota-Illinois, and Mrs. Bernice Huff, Sigma-Northwestern, planned a series of pink punch parties, which marked the beginning of rush activities. Refreshments featured bronze, pink and blue petit fleurs, decorated with “Delta Gamma” and tiny cream-colored roses. Entertainment included informal chatting with rushes, a pictorial display “This is Delta Gamma,” and slides showing the various chapter houses.

The next two days were reserved for individual interviews, followed on Friday evening by the Preference Dessert. In keeping with the long-standing tradition of many collegiate chapters, Coreene Pence Cullison, Iota-Illinois, Athens alumnae president, arranged for a flower-pot dessert, centered with a cream-colored rosebud. The Anchor Choir from Gamma Psi-Emory serenaded the rushes with a candlelight anchor ceremony.

Early the next day, a pledging ceremony occurred. The ceremony was conducted with the assistance of the Emory and Georgia State collegians at stately Lumpkin House, the site of the Founders Memorial Garden, and the headquarters of the Garden Clubs of Georgia, Inc. Gowned in white and adorned with the pledge shield and colony anchor, the women gathered at the Georgia Center with the state alumnae for the Pledge Luncheon. Bids were extended to 25 women on May 13, 1967.

Installation weekend took place February 16-18, 1968 and was the culmination of a lot of hard work by the colony and a handful of dedicated alumnae under the guidance of council. On February 17, Delta Iota chapter was installed at the University of Georgia, initiated 31 women and became the 18th national sorority on campus. Ceremonies took place at the Methodist Student Center, facilitated by members of Gamma Mu-Florida State. Due to an emergency appendectomy the night before, Sherri Dorr was initiated with a special ceremony in the hospital.

Eleanor Smith Slaughter presented the charter to Connie Lawson, chapter president. Coreene Pence Allison, Iota-Illinois, was a local alumna who acted as chairman for the initiation banquet. Local alumna Janet Bowers, Sigma-Northwestern, presided as the installation chairman, and as toastmistress. The theme was the Anchor and the Arch; the Arch at the entrance to the campus has been a symbol of the university for more than 150 years. Sunday morning, the chapter attended church at the Catholic Student Center, and a reception was held in the afternoon in the glass-walled lower lobby of the Georgia Center for Continuing Education. This was to introduce the chapter to the community and university, and most of the parents of the women drove in to see the party. Sunday evening the local alumnae gave an informal buffet supper for Council at the home of Martha Huff Odum, Iota-Illinois.

In 1971, Delta Iota held its first Anchor Splash®, and held their first Miss Eyes contest in 1975. Anchor Splash is still held every spring.

The pamphlet *The Anchor of Delta Gamma* was produced at Executive Offices as an added display brochure for the colonization of Delta Iota. This booklet is still used and included in the mailing to parents of new members of the chapter.

In 2014-2015, Delta Iota was acknowledged for acquiring the most number of service hours out of all Delta Gamma chapters. Delta Iota has been awarded the Patricia Peterson Danielson Award for the past eight years in a row, in recognition of its overall achievement of excellence to the chapter and outstanding contributions to the fraternity.

Delta Iota celebrated its 50th anniversary in the spring of 2018. Nearly 300 alumnae attended the festivities held in Athens, Georgia.

In the fall of 1967, Delta Iota purchased land for a future house. However, from 1967-1968, the colony called Bloomfield Terrace Apartments home.

Groundbreaking for the Delta Iota house took place 3 days later on February 20, 1968. The house was finally dedicated in a ceremony and reception for the public on October 19, 1969. That year, local alumna Martha Odum presented the chapter with a hand-carved shield, and an Athens-based Navy school gave Delta Iota an anchor for the front lawn. The design of the house was said to compare to that of a ship, with bedrooms along the outside with small windows, and bathroom and storage on the inside. The house was featured on Good Morning America in 1983.

The Delta Iota House Corporation completed a renovation of the chapter house façade in late 2006. The House Corporation and collegians began selling brinks to be engraved and placed in a new walkway. They were able to raise over $37,000 for the projects.

Delta Iota began a capital campaign to raise $750,000 for renovations to the house in 2017. They surpassed this initial goal, raising over $900,000. The first phase of the renovation was completed in the summer of 2018, featuring structural updates to the façade of the house, as well as renovations to the front entryway. The other phases include updating the interior of the house, as well as expanding off the back of the house to increase the size of the chapter room, dining room, and study spaces.