

**Kappa-Nebraska**

**Fast Facts:**

* Installation date: October 19, 1888
* Location: Lincoln, NE
* Region: 5

**History:**

The University of Nebraska was created by an act of the Nebraska state legislature in 1869. The school received an initial land grant of about 130,000 acres and the campus construction began with the building of University Hall in its first year. By 1873, the University of Nebraska had offered its first two degrees to its first graduating class. The school remained small and suffered from a lack of funds until about 20 years after its founding, when its high school programs were taken over by a new state education system. From 1890 to 1895 enrollment rose from 384 to about 1,500. A law school and a graduate school were also created at about this time period, making it the first school west of the Mississippi to establish a graduate school. By 1897, the school was 15th in the nation in total enrollment.

In the fall of 1887, the university had approximately 500 students and life primarily centered around two literary societies, the Union and Palladian; together, they dictated most of the politics of the college. Two women, Ada Caldwell and Sara Schwab, became discontent with the social conditions on campus and decided that the answer was to form a new fraternity. The women withdrew from the Palladian Society and invited their friends, Alice and Elizabeth Wing and Laura Haggard, to join them in forming a new group. The women then sought help from Phi Delta Theta members, who provided the women with a connection to George Banta.

The women decided on Delta Gamma from a manual listing all the sororities at the time; they liked the Fraternity’s anchor and the number of chapters already established. They were put in touch with Lizzie Shiell, Xi-Michigan, who knew that no action could take place without approval from the Convention body. The following spring, the women wrote Aurora Fisk Zeublin, Sigma-Northwester, Secretary of the Grand chapter, who sent information cards for them to fill out. Anna Crandon, Sigma-Northwestern, came to investigate and gave a favorable report.

In fall 1888, Ada had to leave school because of family illness, and Carrie Dennis joined the group as they needed a fifth member to be granted a charter. Kappa was chartered on October 19, 1888. The five women were initiated the same day in the home of charter member Sara Schwab Deutsch; Susie Wegg, Omega-Wisconsin, Chairman of Chapters and Charters, conducted the Initiation. Thus, Kappa was installed as the Fraternity’s 22nd chapter. Delta Gamma became the third sorority established on campus.

The evening of Initiation, five Phi Delts escorted the DGs to the Philodecean Society, a literary organization that is considered a forerunner of the Panhellenic and IFC organizations of today. Delta Gammas early social functions were mostly literary in nature. Kappa became known on campus for their spreads which featured oysters, bananas, and pickles. The social life of the chapter was rather limited to these spreads. Dancing did not occur, because at the time dancing was not a part of University life.

Throughout the 1890s, chapter membership ranged from 11 members to 20. Kappa’s first international office position was that of historian, to which the chapter was elected in 1893. At the 1885 Convention, the two Kappa representatives were vocal advocates for grating a charter for an alumnae chapter in Lincoln. It was soon granted, but the Convention body was “dubious as to the wisdom of it.” This alumnae chapter is the oldest in Delta Gamma, and still exists today.

Many Delta Gamma firsts attributed to Kappa Chapter occurred around the turn of the 20th century. Some of Kappa’s worthy contributions to Delta Gamma were soon adopted internationally. The chapter was the first to use membership certificates in 1899, and the first to use a chapter roll book in 1901. In 1903, they began implementing a National Fraternity Examination and using the official seal with the insignia.

In October 1902, at the urging of Delta Gamma, the women's fraternities at UNL met to form a Panhellenic Association. In the same year, a charter was granted for an Omaha alumnae chapter. Kappa’s size continued to grow during this decade, with numbers continually in the twenties.

Kappa celebrated its 75th anniversary at Founders Day 1963. More than 300 collegiate members and alumnae attended the banquet.

In 1898, Delta Gamma was among the first Nebraska sororities to rent a chapter house. It was located at 719 S. 16th St and housed 8 members and a house mom.

Kappa moved their residence twice in 1914, but in 1921 Kappa Chapter purchased a house located at 1510 K Street and became the first women's group at UNL to own its own home. Delta Gamma remained there until 1926 when they moved into the present location at 400 University Terrace.

In 1960, an addition was added to the North side of the house. It included a new dining room and kitchen, the presidents room, and housing accommodations for 25 more women, bringing the housing capacity of Kappa Chapter to 61. The house is designated as a historic landmark, due to an ordinance passed by the City of Lincoln, so it will never be torn down; the house is one of only three Greek houses on campus to be categorized as such. In 2008, the house was renovated again. In the summer of 2010, the sun deck was redone to replace many broken boards.

On April 12-14, 2013, Kappa celebrated 125 years on campus with a ceremony. Over 600 collegians, alumnae and guests attended the celebration.