



GFWC-MFWC Epsilon Sigma Omicron (ESO) Handbook



“A book is a gift you can open again and again.” —Garrison Keillor

Introduction:

During the 2024-2026 Administration under the guidance of Dr. Carolyn S. Tedford, the GFWC-MFWC Epsilon Sigma Omicron program was revised to meet the needs of our clubwomen wishing to do planned reading for self-enrichment and personal growth.

ESO can take the form of a reading group or an individual's personal reading pursuit. The program provides membership, awards/certificates, pins, reading lists, and a framework in which to pursue continued self-improvement through reading. Many clubs combine club programming with ESO related activities, such as reading awareness and book promotion.

Today ESO is part of the GFWC Education and Libraries Community Service Program with clubs across the country continuing to participate in this self-improvement reading program. Since 1928, ESO has evolved into a diverse program with state chapters personalizing their programs based on clubwomen's needs and their communities. ESO members should follow the guidelines of their state ESO chapter.

ESO in Mississippi

How To Become A ESO Member

Step 1:

Contact the state ESO chairman to receive your copy of our ESO guidelines. You may also visit our ESO page on our website for a copy of our Handbook, Pledge Application, Reading List and Book Report.

Step 2:

Interested GFWC members must first pass through the ESO pledge stage before they can become ESO members. The completion of an ESO application is needed before a pledge can begin working towards membership status. The pledge application must be sent to the GFWC-MFWC ESO chairman, who will begin tracking the pledge's progress. A pledge qualifies for membership at her own pace, finishing in a few weeks or working slowly throughout a longer period of time. After proper completion of 16 books, the pledge receives a certificate verifying her ESO membership GFWC-MFWC ESO Chapter.

Moving Through The Levels

Reading is, of course, the main responsibility of an ESO member. The following steps must be followed to move through the ESO levels from Pledge to Diamond.

Step 1: Using the approved GFWC-MFWC ESO category listing, pick your first four categories. Then read and report on four books from that category. What books do you read to complete your chosen categories? You may pick from the GFWC ESO Reading list or choose a book of your choice. Your chosen books must be listed in the genre section that matches the GFWC-MFWC Approved Reading Categories, be listed in the Library of Congress and must have been read after your pledge date. Use Goodreads website (www.goodreads.com) to determine what genre your book falls in. You do not have to join Goodreads to take advantage of the genre listing for each book in which you wish to read. Use only the first five listings of genres listed for the book of your

choice. Example: from the Goodreads home page, enter the title of your book in the “Search Books” search box and press the magnifying glass. Type in “*Marley and Me*”. You will be redirected to a page with the picture of the book cover, title of the book, author of the book, short description of the book and then the genres of the book. In this example, nonfiction, memoir, animals, biography, dog and humor are listed. You may list this book in the above categories that match the GFWC-MFWC Approved Categories List. In this example, the book *Marley and Me* will fall into the following GFWC-MFWC approved categories: Biography and Memoir or Comedy/Humor. A book can only be listed in one category.

Step 2: Once books are completed, the member is required to complete a brief form, giving the title and a **brief opinion** of the book read. The ESO Book Report Form is submitted to the GFWC-MFWC State ESO chair to keep track of each member’s ESO levels, which are based on the number of books read and reports submitted. ESO Book Report Form will not be returned, so be sure to keep a copy for your records. The State ESO Chairmen and/or State President will issue certificates and awards at the Annual State Convention based on report forms received.

ESO LEVELS

There are many opportunities for ESO members to work their way up through the ESO levels. Clubwomen move to a new ESO level by completing a set of reading list requirements. The reading list is divided into subject categories. To complete a category, a member must read and report on four (4) books from that category.

- **Pledge.** A Pledge has obtained an enrollment application and has started to fulfill the reading requirements.
- **Member.** A Member has completed four books from four different categories, for a total of 16 books. She is then eligible to wear the ESO pin and receive a membership certificate.
- **Star Level.** A Star level member has completed four books from ten different categories, for a total of 40 books. She will then receive a Star level membership certificate. You only need to read 24 more books in 6 categories to reach this level.
- **Torch Level.** A Torch level member has completed four books from 16 different categories, for a total of 64 books read. She is then eligible to wear the ESO Torch Guard and receive the Torch level membership certificate. You only need to read 24 more books in 6 categories to reach this level.
- **Century Award.** A Century Award member has completed 100 books. She can continue to the Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Century Award levels and will be eligible to receive the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and/or sixth century membership certificates. For the first Century Award, you need to read only 36 more books.
- **Diamond Award.** A Diamond Award member has completed 1,000 books. She will be eligible to receive a Diamond Award certificate.

GFWC-MFWC Approved Categories

The categories or genres listed below are considered to be most popular book genres in the United States as of 2025.

- * American History
- * Arts
- * Biography and Memoir
- * Books about or taking place in Mississippi
- * Business and Finance
- * Comedy/Humor
- * Conservation and Ecology
- * Cookbooks, Food & Drinks
- * Drama
- * Education
- * Fiction, General
- * Fiction, Historical
- * Fiction, Mystery/Thriller
- * Fiction, Romance
- * Fiction, Science/Fantasy
- * Fiction, Classic
- * Fiction, Crime
- * Health and Medicine
- * Home and Garden
- * Horror/Gothic
- * International Authors
- * Mississippi Authors
- * Parenting and Families
- * Poetry
- * Professional
- * Reading to/with Children – Chapter Books
- * Reading to/with Children – Picture Story Books
- * Religion and Inspirational
- * Science
- * Self-help/Personal Development
- * Social Science
- * Sports and Recreation
- * STEM/STEAM Adults
- * STEM/STEAM Children
- * Travel and Geography
- * Volunteering
- * Women's Studies
- * World History

GFWC-MFWC ESO FORMS



All GFWC-MFWC ESO Forms can be downloaded from our website at https://www.gfwc-mfwc.org/GFWC_MFWC_ESO.html

All forms are fill-in-the-blanks and should be emailed to the current GFWC-MFWC ESO Chairman.



GFWC-MFWC Epsilon Sigma Omicron Pledge Application



Please complete the following application and send it to GFWC-MFWC State ESO Chairman. This form will be used to track your progress as an ESO Member through the ESO Levels.

Date of Application:

Member Name:

GFWC Club:

Address:

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Phone: _____ **E-mail Address:** _____

I hereby agree to pursue the goals of the ESO and to participate in the ESO programs.

Signature

GFWC-MFWC ESO Pledge Form – 11/25



GFWC-MFWC Epsilon Sigma Omicron Book Reporting Form



Please complete the following report form and send it to the GFWC-MFWC State ESO Chairman. This form will be used to track your progress through the ESO levels. Be sure to keep a copy of this form as it will not be returned to you.

Date of Report:

Member Name:

GFWC Club:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Phone:

E-mail Address:

**Current
ESO Level**

- Pledge
- Member
- Star
- Torch
- Century (100)
- Century (200)
- Century (300)
- Century (400)
- Century (500)
- Century (600)
- Century (700)
- Century (800)
- Century (900)
- Diamond (1,000)

The following book reports mark the completion of the

category.

For each book, include the following information:

Book Title:

Author(s):

Category:

What is **your opinion** of the book?

Example

Book of 4 in category: