

December 19, 2024

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SIGMA ALPHA EPSILON FRATERNITY DECISION LETTER

Thank you for meeting with Kristen Lemaster and me via Zoom on November 22, 2024 during Sigma Alpha Epsilon - California Theta chapter's Informal Conference. During the Informal Conference, allegations of policy violations were discussed. Specifically, a series of alleged hazing violations, as well as alleged violations of the chapter's probationary and interim suspension periods, were discussed.

Representatives of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity included Chapter President Lucas Teel, Director of Risk Management Steadman Boston, Chief Operating Officer Spencer Long, and Chief Executive Officer Steve Mitchell.

Findings

As discussed during the Informal Conference, Sigma Alpha Epsilon members indicated hazing behaviors occurred from at least the Spring 2021 term through Fall 2024. Specific hazing behaviors confirmed by members of the organization during this time period include, but are not limited to, physical assault, physical exercise that was both planned and forced as consequences, forced alcohol consumption, throwing substances at new members in a confined space, degradation, humiliation, and acts of servitude.

In addition to the hazing behaviors, the chapter engaged in behavior that intimidated members of the campus community in Fall 2024; encouraged members of the campus community to violate university policies during the Fall 2023, Spring 2024, and Fall 2024 terms; and furnished false information to university officials during the Fall 2023, Spring 2024, and Fall 2024 terms, both during investigative meetings and in discussion about reported behaviors. Furthermore, while the chapter was on an assigned Interim Suspension, Sigma Alpha Epsilon hosted unregistered social events, engaged prospective members and new members, participated in events with other organizations, and continued operations during the Fall 2023, Spring 2024, and Fall 2024 terms. In addition to continued activity during the period of Interim Suspension from the university, the chapter operated while on a Cease and Desist from the national fraternity in Spring 2024 and Fall 2024.

Sigma Alpha Epsilon's ongoing actions highlight a pervasive sense of impunity within the chapter. This behavior, coupled with the harmful impact of hazing, suggests a deep-rooted culture that disregards accountability and consequences, posing serious concerns for the well-being of the chapter and those involved.

Based on the information presented during the investigation, including confirmation of the behaviors by members of the fraternity, I have found based on a preponderance of evidence that Sigma Alpha Epsilon is in violation of the following Student Organization Code of Conduct policies:

(1) Aiding and Abetting. *Aiding, abetting, encouraging, permitting or assisting a student or student organization to do any act that would violate a university policy or applicable law; or that could subject the student or student organization to discipline.*

(2) Alcohol. *Violation of applicable law or University policy regarding the use, possession, manufacture, or distribution of alcoholic beverages while on or of campus.*

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(11-1) Dishonesty, including: *Furnishing false information to an official of the university or of a university auxiliary organization or law enforcement agency.*

(16) Failure to Comply. *Failure to comply with directions or interference with any university official or any public safety officer while acting in the performance of their duties.*

(20-1) Hazing or conspiracy to haze. *Hazing is defined as any method of indoctrination, initiation or pre-initiation into a student organization, or any other organization-related activity, which, regardless of location, intent, membership status or rank of the participants, or the express or implied consent of the participants, causes, or is reasonably likely to cause, physical or mental injury, substantial mental or physical discomfort or stress, personal degradation, harassment or intimidation of or to any former, current or prospective student of any educational institution.*

(20-2) Hazing or conspiracy to haze. *Hazing also includes any activity that compels a student to participate in any activity that is unlawful, publicly indecent or contrary to the policies and regulations of the university, or any activity that unreasonably and materially interferes with a student's academic efforts.*

(21) Health and Safety. *Conduct that threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person within or related to the University community, including physical abuse, threats, intimidation, harassment, sexual misconduct, throwing bottles or objects that could result in personal injury, or where three or more members of a student organization engage in group violence or taunt others to engage in violence.*

(38-1) Violation of the Student Organization Conduct Procedures: *Falsification, distortion, or misrepresentations of information related to a student organization discipline matter.*

(38-2) Violation of the Student Organization Conduct Procedures: *Disruption or interference with the orderly progress of a student organization disciplinary matter.*

(38-3) Violation of the Student Organization Conduct Procedures: *Attempting to discourage a person from participating in a student organization disciplinary matter.*

(38-5) Violation of the Student Organization Conduct Procedures: *Verbal, written or physical harassment, intimidation or retaliation of any participant in a student organization disciplinary matter.*

(38-6) Violation of the Student Organization Conduct Procedures: *Failure to comply with the sanction(s) imposed under a student organization disciplinary proceeding.*

As a result of the violations, Sigma Alpha Epsilon is sanctioned to **Expulsion** until **April 9, 2029**. The Interfraternity Council's (IFC) expansion process follows the North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC) protocol for Responsible Growth and will accept applications from Sigma Alpha Epsilon no earlier than Fall 2028 for a potential future re-establishment. San Diego State University's recognition of Sigma Alpha Epsilon has been revoked until Sigma Alpha Epsilon is approved to reestablish at SDSU. A formal invitation letter will be sent to the fraternity headquarters once the fraternity completes the IFC expansion process and is confirmed by the university.

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In addition to the sanction of Expulsion, Sigma Alpha Epsilon must complete the following stipulations prior to, through, and after the reestablishment process:

Members of Sigma Alpha Epsilon who were involved in the chapter from Spring 2021 through Fall 2024 and who retain their international membership, may not engage with the undergraduate chapter during and after the establishment. When graduated, the individuals may not serve in advisory roles or have contact with undergraduate members.

During the investigation, it was alleged that local alumni advisors of Sigma Alpha Epsilon, California Theta chapter, implicitly supported the chapter's continued operations while it was on interim suspension. Consequently, alumni advisors who served from Spring 2021 through Fall 2024 are ineligible to hold any advisory roles within the chapter before, during, and after the reestablishment process.

Any further violations of university policy by Sigma Alpha Epsilon during the term of the expulsion may result in additional conduct charges, which may lead to a lengthened period of expulsion from the university.

The content of this letter only reflects the outcome of the organizational administrative investigation. Please be advised that this organizational decision has no impact on individual conduct proceedings. Individual conduct proceedings are facilitated by the Center for Student Rights & Responsibilities and all students associated with Sigma Alpha Epsilon may be held individually accountable for behaviors that violate the Student Code of Conduct.

Respectfully,



Caryl Montero-Adams
Interim Dean of Students

cc:
Dr. Randy Timm, Senior Associate Vice President, Division of Student Affairs and Campus Diversity
Kristen Lemaster, Director, Pierce Greek Life Center
Dr. Lee Mintz, Executive Director, Center for Student Rights & Responsibilities and Office for Restorative Practices
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Spencer Long, Chief Operating Officer, Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity
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