

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**  
**of**  
**THE SOCIETY OF SIGMA GAMMA EPSILON**  
**A National Honorary for the Earth Sciences**

*(Founded March 30, 1915 at the University of Kansas)*



**PREAMBLE**

Whereas, the members of Sigma Gamma Epsilon, believing that students of the Earth Sciences should be associated for the better accomplishments of the aims of these kindred sciences, do adopt the following Constitution:

**ARTICLE I.**

**Name and Objectives**

Sec. 1. The name of this organization shall be THE SOCIETY OF SIGMA GAMMA EPSILON (hereinafter referred to as the Society).

Sec. 2. The Society shall have for its objectives the scholastic and scientific advancement of its members and the extension of the relations of friendship and assistance among colleges, universities, and scientific schools (hereinafter referred to as school or schools) with recognized standing, which are devoted to the advancement of the Earth Sciences. Furthermore, the Society shall encourage research and publication--both at the undergraduate and graduate level.

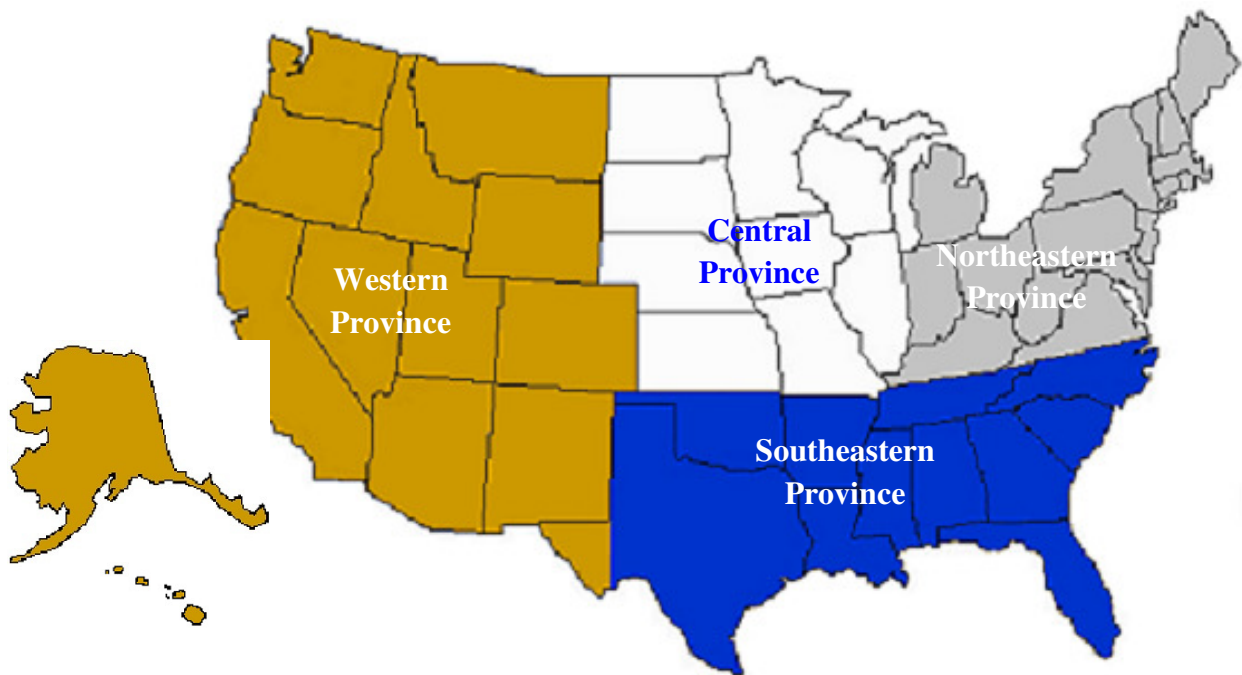
Sec. 3. Membership in the Society of Sigma Gamma Epsilon is intended for those scientists and students whose primary concern is the study of the earth. It shall be the policy of the Society to impose no restriction on membership on the basis of race, creed, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, or age.

## ARTICLE II.

### Chapters, Their Organization and Membership

Sec. 1. The Society shall consist of chapters established in schools having major courses in the Earth Sciences. The United States shall be divided into four provinces. These provinces shall be known as: (1) The Northeastern Province, (2) The Southeastern Province, (3) The Central Province, and (4) The Western Province. The Northeastern Province shall consist of the following States: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan excluding the Upper Michigan Peninsula, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia. The Southeastern Province shall consist of the following States: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas (east of 103 Longitude). The Central Province shall consist of the following States: Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. The Western Province shall consist of the following States: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas (that portion west of 103 Longitude), Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

All Chapters in the Society and all active members thereof shall have equal rights therein.



Sec. 2. A chapter of Sigma Gamma Epsilon may be established upon the petition in writing of five or more eligible students of some recognized school as hereinabove stipulated. The character and qualifications of such petitioners must be approved by the National council.

2a. Alumni Clubs of Sigma Gamma Epsilon may be established upon the petition in writing of not less than ten alumni members of the society.

2b. Individuals from a four-year college or university recognized by the National Council as having a qualified Earth Science program, but without an active chapter, may affiliate with an active chapter by petitioning to that active chapter. A simple majority vote of the active chapter will be needed for active membership of the petitioning individual or individuals.

Sec. 3. The petition for a chapter shall contain the following: name and location of school, qualifications for admission to the freshman class, courses of study and requirements for graduation, a brief personal record and signature of each petitioner, and letters of support from faculty in the petitioning department. A national officer will conduct a site visit to the petitioning school and submit a site visit report to the National Office. Copies of this site visit report are to be distributed electronically to members of the National Council, and they shall have seven days in which to cast their vote. A majority vote of the National Council shall be required to grant a charter for a chapter in this Society. Should a national officer fail to vote within the specified time, such failure shall be construed as a vote in whatsoever way the National Council shall see fit.

Sec. 4. Any person duly registered in a school herein before characterized as "recognized" and majoring in any branch of the Earth Sciences, who has at least ten (10) semester hours or fifteen (15) quarter hours in the Earth Sciences; or any person in a recognized school who had at least ten (10) semester hours or fifteen (15) quarter hours, and at the time of initiation is taking further work in the Earth Sciences, shall be eligible for membership.

4a. Academic eligibility for membership (detailed above) can include eligible Earth Science credit transferred from a previously attended institution that meets qualifications listed in Article II, Section 2b.

Sec. 5. In conformity with the objects of the Society, the general average required for admission to Sigma Gamma Epsilon shall be based upon a minimum overall average of 2.67 (based on the 4.00 system) but, in exceptional cases, chapters may elect to consider only the last two semesters or the last three quarters in computing this grade. A 3.00 grade point (based upon the 4.00 system) shall be the minimum requirement for all courses in the Earth Sciences. Graduate students who are in good standing with regular status, and who meet the above hourly requirements shall be eligible for membership, regardless of their grade point average.

Individual chapters have the prerogative to pass bylaws to set higher standards at their institutions by establishing higher grade point averages and/or minimum hours required. The National Council should be notified upon establishment of such standards.

Sec. 6. Associate membership may be granted by any chapter to any person on the faculty of the departments teaching Earth Sciences in that school where the chapter is located, or to any worthy professional person in a field of the Earth Sciences.

Sec. 7. Honorary membership may be granted to any person pre-eminent in a field of the Earth Sciences and of high scientific attainment and who has contributed to the goals of the Society. Written proposals for honorary membership may be approved by a vote of the National Convention, having been considered by an Awards Committee convened at that convention.

Sec. 8. Any member of this Society may be a member of any social, professional, or other honor society.

Sec. 9. At least twice yearly, each chapter shall prepare a list of individuals eligible for membership, and each individual must be duly considered. Any active member may propose any eligible person for active membership, the proposal to lay over at least one week before being voted upon except upon unanimous vote of the chapter to suspend this rule. A rejected candidate may not again be proposed for a period of one month.

Sec. 10. To elect a candidate for active membership shall require a simple majority vote of all active members present, provided at least one-half of the active members are present.

Sec. 11. Active members shall be those members duly initiated, who have paid current national and chapter dues, and who have registered for undergraduate work or graduate work in the school where the chapter is located.

11a. Active alumni members are those who pay yearly dues to the National Council an amount equal to the annual dues of an active member. An inactive alumni member is a former active member who has not paid such dues.

11b. Associate members shall be those who have been admitted as such.

11c. Honorary members shall be those who have been proposed as such, and approved by the National Convention.

11d. A Life Member shall be any member who has paid to the National Secretary-Treasurer the one-time fee of \$175.

Sec. 12. Active membership may be transferred from one chapter to another upon request, by letter from the individual requesting the transfer, to the National Office. No new initiation fee is required upon transfer, and the initiate records shall be retained by the initiating chapter.

Sec. 13. Alumni, Associate, Honorary, and Life members shall not have the power to vote, such power being vested in the active members only.

Sec. 14. Initiation may take place at such times as the chapter considers necessary.

Sec. 15. In the event of the dissolution of the National Society, the combined net assets of said Society shall be distributed equally to the Earth Science program of those colleges and universities having active chapters at the time of dissolution.

## **ARTICLE III.**

### **Government of Chapters**

Sec. 1. The officers of each chapter shall be: (1) President, (2) Vice President-Historian, (3) Treasurer, (4) Secretary and such other officers as may be necessary.

Sec. 2. The duties of the President shall be: To preside at all meetings of the chapter, to report to the National Secretary-Treasurer the conditions of the chapter within thirty days after assuming office, to perform the usual duties of the executive office, and such other duties as the chapter may require.

Sec. 2a. To transmit within one month prior to the biennial convention, to the convention delegate and to the National Secretary-Treasurer, a complete report covering the chapter activities since the last convention.

Sec. 3. The duties of the Vice President-Historian shall be: To preside in the absence of the President, to drill the members in the articles of the Constitution and Bylaws and Ritual, and to act as chair of the membership committee. Duties as Historian shall be:

3a. To keep a correct record of all members of the chapter, which list shall be provided by the chapter's Treasurer as part of their duties (See Art. III, Sec. 4b.), and to carry on all correspondence with the National Secretary-Treasurer relating to membership records.

3b. To provide the National Secretary-Treasurer with information relative to Active, Alumni, Associate, or Honorary members and archival materials relative to chapter history.

Sec. 4. The duties of the Treasurer shall be:

4a. To collect promptly all dues and assessments levied by the chapter or other proper authority, and to keep accurate account thereof.

4b. To prepare within fifteen (15) days after initiation, the New Initiate List. This list along with the Returning Member List shall be transmitted to the National Secretary-Treasurer as electronic files and also sent as printed copies along with appropriate dues and fees. Copies of these lists shall be retained by the local chapter.

4c. To render an itemized statement of the chapter's money at any time the chapter may require, but in all cases such a report shall be filed in the chapter records upon expiration of the term of office.

Sec. 5. The duties of the Secretary shall be:

5a. To keep a correct and faithful record of the meetings of the chapter, and to file reports of chapter officers.

5b. To transmit to the National Secretary-Treasurer within ten (10) days after the election, a list of names and addresses of the chapter officers. The Secretary will also notify the National Secretary-Treasurer as to any changes in the officer list during the academic year.

5c. To have charge of all chapter publications.

5d. To act as assistant to the National Editor and to transmit to the Editor annually a Chapter letter for publication in THE COMPASS.

Sec. 6. Chapter Officers shall be elected at least once during each calendar year at such times as the chapter may deem necessary. Vacancies shall be filled by special elections.

Sec. 7. Each chapter shall elect a Faculty Advisor, who is a Sigma Gamma Epsilon member, for a term of two (2) years. The name and mailing address shall be sent immediately after election to the National Secretary-Treasurer.

Sec. 8. Chapter Officers will be held responsible for the initiation of new members within their chapter. No activities causing physical or mental hazards shall be performed on a candidate for membership during the initiation ritual. This policy shall be enforced by disciplinary actions to be determined by the National Council.

## **ARTICLE IV.**

### **Meetings**

Sec. 1. A regular meeting shall be held not less than once a month during the school year, the first meeting to be held within one month after the start of the academic year of the institution in which the chapter is located.

Sec. 2. Special meetings may be called by the President or by any three Active members after due and proper notice of such meetings has been given to all Active members.

Sec. 3. Business may be conducted at a duly announced meeting. If the question of a quorum is raised by a member, a quorum must be present to transact business. One-half of the Active members shall constitute a quorum.

## **ARTICLE V.**

### **Policy**

Sec. 1. It shall be the policy of this Society to participate actively and openly in any school activity which it deems to be for the good of the school.

Sec. 2. In conformity with its status as an honor organization, this Society does not sanction the ownership and/or occupation of a chapter house for its membership.

Sec. 3. The execution of the Ritual shall be done in accordance with the Initiation Ceremony published and issued by the National Secretary-Treasurer.

Sec. 4. It shall be the policy of the Society to impose no restrictions on membership on the basis of race, creed, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, or age.

Sec. 5. It is the policy of Sigma Gamma Epsilon to abide by the Privacy Act. When determining initiate eligibility to the Society, student members shall not have access to any student's grades.

## **ARTICLE VI.**

### **Finances**

Sec. 1. The National Convention shall have the power to raise money by levy of assessments upon the chapters.

Sec. 2. Each chapter shall have the power to regulate the amount of initiation fees for itself but twenty-five dollars (\$25) shall go to the National Council for each initiation of an Active member or Associate member. The initiation fee and annual dues for each new member should be transmitted to the National Office together.

Sec. 3. The national dues for each Active member or Associate member shall be fifteen dollars (\$15) per academic year. For those new members initiated after February 1, the dues shall be eight dollars (\$8) for the remainder of the academic year. These dues shall be in addition to the initiation fee. These dues and a list of members shall be transmitted by the chapter to the National Secretary-Treasurer by November 1 for each academic year. Dues and initiation fees for new initiates shall be transmitted within fifteen (15) days of initiation. For a chapter to remain active, all members involved in the local chapter are required to pay appropriate initiation fees and national dues.

Sec. 4. The fiscal year for the Society shall end August 31 each year. The fiscal affairs of the Society shall be operated in conformance with requirements for non-profit organizations.

## **ARTICLE VII.**

### **Suspension and Expulsion**

Sec. 1. No chapter in arrears for monies due the National Council shall be entitled to representation at the National Convention.

Sec. 2. Any member may be expelled from membership in the chapter or in the general Society upon charges being filed with the Secretary of the chapter to which the member belongs, the charges to be signed by three members of that chapter. These charges shall be read at the next chapter meeting and the members of that chapter shall be notified by registered mail before the next meeting that the charges are to be acted upon at said meeting. At said meeting the member in question shall be given an opportunity to defend himself before the chapter. A four-fifths vote by secret ballot shall be required to expel an Active, Alumnus, or Associate member; a vote of three-fourths of the National Council shall be necessary to expel an Honorary member.

## **ARTICLE VIII.**

### **Bylaws of Chapters**

Sec. 1. Any chapter of this Society may make Bylaws for its government provided those Bylaws do not in any way conflict with this Constitution.

## **ARTICLE IX.**

### **Amendments**

Sec. 1. Amendments to this Constitution and its Bylaws may be proposed by (a) a chapter or by a National Officer between National Conventions, (b) by a delegate or a National Officer in the National Convention.

Sec. 2. Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws may be made in a National Convention and must receive a three-fourths vote of the delegates and National Council present to pass. Such amendments shall become effective at once, except that any chapter or member of the National Council may ask for a referendum vote on the amendments within thirty (30) days provided that the objections to the amendments are submitted with the request for the referendum. Such a request for a referendum vote shall be made through the National Secretary-Treasurer.

Sec. 3. An amendment proposed by any chapter and favorably passed at two successive chapter meetings shall be sent to the National Secretary-Treasurer who shall submit it to all chapters of the Society and to the National Council for consideration. A three-fourths vote of all Active



members or four-fifths vote of all active chapters, and a majority vote of the National Council, shall be necessary to adopt the amendment.

An amendment proposed by a member of the National Council and favored by a majority of that body shall be submitted to a vote of the chapters in the manner indicated in the preceding part of the article.

Sec. 4. The vote of each chapter shall be certified by the Chapter President and the Secretary and mailed to the National Secretary-Treasurer within ten (10) days after action has been taken for or against the amendment.

For time allotted a chapter to vote on a communication from the National Secretary-Treasurer, see Bylaws of the National Council, Article V.

## **ARTICLE X.**

### **Government by National Convention**

Sec. 1. The ultimate legislative authority of this Society shall be vested in a National Convention. Legislation passed by the National Convention shall become effective at once, unless otherwise stated. A chapter may be represented at the convention by as many members as it may deem necessary, but each chapter shall have one vote. Only the official delegate shall have the power of casting this vote. The National President shall act as Chair of the Convention but shall have no vote except in case of a tie. The other members of the National Council each have one vote.

Sec. 2. The duties of the National Convention shall be: To transact all the business of the Society at large, a three-fourths vote of the Convention being required to transact business.

Sec. 3. National Conventions shall be held on alternate years preceded by a meeting of the National Council. The place of meeting of each convention shall be determined by the previous convention; or upon the recommendations of the convention, the time and place of the next meeting shall be determined by the National Council.

Sec. 4. Financial assistance for each active chapter delegate attending the convention shall be provided by the National Council at a rate determined by the Council. The expenses of the delegate, in excess of that already provided by the National Council, within a reasonable amount, shall be paid by the chapter.

Sec. 5. Financial assistance for each National Council member plus personal expenses shall be provided by the National Council at a rate determined by the National Council.

# ARTICLE XI.

## National Council

Sec. 1. The National Council shall consist of seven (7) members. They shall be designated as follows: (1) National President; (2) Four National Vice Presidents (one is to be elected from each of the provinces described heretofore); (3) National Secretary-Treasurer; and (4) National Editor. All members of the National Council shall be elected by the delegates at the National Convention, except the National Secretary-Treasurer who shall be nominated by the National Council. All members of the National Council shall have faculty status and be Associate, Alumni, or Life members of the Society.

In order to assure continuity of policy, past presidents shall serve in an advisory capacity to the National Council as deemed necessary, and in an editorial capacity whenever needed. National Council members shall be elected at each National Convention and shall serve until the next election.

The National Council shall have power to fill vacancies in its membership by a majority vote of the remaining members.

Sec. 2. The National President shall be the chief executive officer of the Society and of the National Council and shall preside at meetings of the Council and at the National Convention following election. The National President shall be in charge of improving relations and soliciting support from Alumni members. Term of office shall be for two years with succession in office not more than one time.

Sec. 3. The duties of the National Vice Presidents shall be: To represent their respective provinces at meetings of the National Council; if deemed advisable by the National Council, to conduct site visits of petitioning schools in their provinces, to make any necessary visitations to chapters in their respective provinces when requested by the National Council or upon request of the local chapter, and to solicit papers for THE COMPASS--such papers to be sent directly to the National Editor. They are encouraged to contact chapters once a year. They shall assist the President in improving and soliciting alumni support. The National Council shall designate one of the National Vice Presidents to preside over meetings of the National Council and the General Society in the absence of the National President. The National Vice Presidents shall be encouraged to organize meetings in conjunction with the sectional Geological Society of America meetings.

Sec. 4. The duties of the National Secretary-Treasurer shall be: To manage the affairs of the Society in accordance with the procedures determined by the National Council; to keep the minutes of all meetings of the Council; to have in custody all monies of the Society at large; and to render account of these monies to the National Convention. The National Secretary-Treasurer shall be bonded for \$50,000. The expense of this bond is to be borne by the National Council,

Sec. 5. The official publication of the Society shall be THE COMPASS of Sigma Gamma Epsilon. The duty of the National Editor shall be to edit and publish THE COMPASS on a schedule to be determined by the National Council. The Editor shall have the power and

authority to enter into such contracts and agreements relative to the publication of this journal as may be necessary, subject to the approval of the National Council. The National Editor shall have the authority to call upon chapters and members of the Society for material with which to make the publication as prescribed by vote of the Society.

Sec. 6. The National Council shall direct the policies of the Society and shall have power, when upheld by three-fourths vote of all chapters of the Society, to revoke the charter of any chapter.

Sec. 7. A majority vote of the National Council shall be required to grant a charter for a chapter in this Society.

Sec. 8. A scholarship may be awarded each year to an active member of Sigma Gamma Epsilon who has been approved by the Scholarship Committee.

Sec. 9. This Constitution, issued August 2016 by the National President and the National Secretary-Treasurer supersedes all former Constitutions, which are hereby declared void.

Signed AARON JOHNSON, National President

JAMES C. WALTERS, National Secretary-Treasurer

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## **BYLAWS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL**

ART. I. Meetings may be called by the President at his or her discretion and whenever it is convenient for a majority of the Council to attend. The votes of the absent members may be obtained by mail.

ART. II. All the business of the Council may be transacted by correspondence under the following rules:

Rule 1. Any question may be brought before the Council for action by a written motion of a National Officer, or any National Officer may take the initiative in proposing a motion.

Rule 2. The maker of a motion shall write it out in full and precede it with the words, "I move that ...."

The text of the motion shall be followed by:

Place, Date, Signature

The motion shall then be sent to the National Secretary-Treasurer, who shall send a copy to each member of the National Council. Each National Officer (except the National President, who does not have a vote) shall write below the resolution as follows:

"I approve (or disapprove) the above motion."

Place, Date, Signature

The National Officer originating the motion shall then send the motion to the National President. If a majority of four National Officers approve, then the National President shall declare the motion passed and send it to the National Secretary-Treasurer for record.

Rule 3. If a National Officer does not approve, suggestions, as well as objections, must be stated to the motion. These shall be concisely stated above the member's signature. Unless it shall appear to the National President that the consensus is strongly against the motion (in which case it will be declared lost), the motion shall be returned to the maker to be recast and re-submitted. On the second submission, the approval of four members shall be sufficient to pass the motion.

Rule 4. The failure of any member to vote on an issue within two weeks from the time of probable receipt of the motion or ballot shall be equivalent to an affirmative vote on the issue, and such vote shall be entered by the President.

ART. III. The visitation of petitioning schools and the installation of new chapters shall be as directed by the National Council, and the traveling expenses of the officer shall be borne by the National Council.

ART. IV. When a chapter shall have unpaid fees, dues, or assessments due the National Council, it shall receive from the National Secretary-Treasurer two notifications, the second to follow three weeks after the first. After a period of one month following the second notification, the National Council shall have the power to recall and annul the charter of the chapter.

ART. V. Communications from the National Council must be acted upon by the chapters within one month (not counting regular college vacations) from the time of their receipt, except when a chapter shall ask for further information, when one month shall be added. Should a chapter fail to report on such a communication within a specified time, such failure shall be construed as a vote in whatsoever way the Council shall see fit. Notification of this action will be sent to the chapter at once.

ART. VI. Every order for insignia items or honor cords of Sigma Gamma Epsilon must be approved by the National Secretary-Treasurer.

ART. VII. The directors of Sigma Gamma Epsilon shall be the National Officers of the Society.

ART. VIII. These Bylaws of the National Council, issued August 2016 by the National President and the National Secretary-Treasurer; supersede all former bylaws, which are hereby declared void.

Signed AARON JOHNSON, National President

JAMES C. WALTERS, National Secretary-Treasurer