

National Council of The Society of
Sigma Gamma Epsilon



NATIONAL HONORARY SOCIETY in the EARTH SCIENCES

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RE: Site visit to **Adrian College**, Adrian, MI

In response to a petition (dated 13 September, 2010) from six students interested in forming a new chapter of *Sigma Gamma Epsilon (SGE)*, I visited the Department of Geology at Adrian College on 15 November 2010. Dr. Sarah Hanson, associate professor and chair, gave me a tour of the facilities within the Science Center in Jones and Peelle Halls. The facilities are in very good condition and are scheduled for upgrade and expansion beginning next year. Dr. Hanson would be acting as the chapter's advisor. I also met Dr. Forest Haines, professor, and he showed me some of the research on which he works and engages his students. Dr. Haines will be retiring soon and Adrian is currently searching for his replacement. While his presence will surely be missed, the foundation and expectations of undergraduate research are strongly present within the department. I also met with Dr. Keith McCleary, Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs, and had a very extensive discussion on the College's future goals and the role of undergraduate research. One aspect of research in the sciences is the addition of new space which will include a common analytical lab that will enable students from all of the sciences to have some interaction and will allow for extended supervised access time. Dr. McCleary indicated that Dr. Agnes Caldwell, Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs had also wanted to meet with me, but an emergency situation arose that required her immediate attention.

I had lunch with students and faculty and had discussions on the numerous extra-curricular field excursions sponsored by the department. The students felt that these trips were highlights of their experience at Adrian and increased their interest in the discipline. Following lunch I continued my discussion with the student applicants with our discussion focusing on research and its importance to their career goals. All of the students are involved in some aspect of research as the department has instituted a senior research requirement for majors. It was apparent from these discussions that current efforts of the department fit well with the goals of *SGE*. Following my meeting with students, I was asked to give a guest lecture on my own research. The lecture was well attended by students, and their numerous questions showed a clear interest in the geosciences.

The Department of Geology offers a major in geology with options for tracks in environmental geology and secondary education. Additionally, Adrian's environmental science program requires students to have a minor in another science discipline. The department is staffed by two full-time faculty and one part-time faculty. Although small, the faculty are very dedicated to both their students and their own research efforts. The geology student body averages about 15

majors, but has been growing along with the rest of the College over the past couple of years. Students tend to come from southern Michigan and northern Ohio, but they have recently been attracting students from a broader region including Canada. The students petitioning for a new chapter of *SGE* are very enthusiastic and academically oriented. I hope that you will enthusiastically approve their petition.

Cordially,

Mark R. Noll, PhD

SGE Vice President, Northeastern Province