

National Council of The Society of
Sigma Gamma Epsilon



NATIONAL HONORARY SOCIETY in the EARTH SCIENCES

DATE: September 29, 2010

TO: Active Chapters of Sigma Gamma Epsilon
Members of the National Council of SGE

FROM: Jim Walters, SGE Secretary-Treasurer

RE: Start of the Fall 2010 semester

The move of the SGE National Office from Oklahoma to Iowa is now complete. A new Administrative Assistant, Paula Even, has been hired and many of you have interacted with Paula as you conduct SGE business.

The purpose of this letter is to welcome all Chapters back to their respective campuses for the start of the 2010-2011 academic year and to provide details on some of the many things that have been taking place with Sigma Gamma Epsilon.

1. New SGE Website

We are in the process of updating and revising the SGE Website. It will include more information, be more useful, and should be easier to navigate. The url for the new website is <http://www.sigmagammaepsilon.com>. Check it out when you get a chance.

2. SGE establishes an electronic database of membership

For many years, SGE initiates have completed an Initiate Data Card and submitted that card along with initiation fees and dues. Starting this fall, we are requesting that Chapters go to the new website, obtain the **New Initiate Form**, and complete the list electronically. There will be one list for fall and one list for spring, since dues will differ from fall to spring. Returning members will be listed on the **Returning Member Form**. These members pay only dues and not the initiation fee. Finally, there is the **Chapter Officer Form**. These three forms are to be completed electronically; the New Initiate Form and the Returning Member Form are due by November 1st. The Officer Form should be sent to us as soon as you have it. Save these forms as files under your Chapter name, e-mail as an attachment to even@sigmagammaepsilon.com and submit printed copies along with dues and fees as appropriate.

At first, this may require some additional work on the part of Chapters, but in the long run this should actually be easier and less time consuming, and it will provide the National Office with the electronic database we need in order to (belatedly) move into the 21st century.

3. SGE is financially sound

One of the most important things we have been working on in the transfer of the SGE Office is to get a clear idea of the finances of the Society. With the help of an accountant, we have determined SGE is financially sound. We are still working on the stock portfolio, but that should be completed in the near future. Our goal is to conduct a complete financial audit of the Society by next spring.

4. IRS tax information requests

Small tax-exempt organizations (SGE Chapters) whose annual gross receipts are normally \$25,000 or less may be required to electronically submit Form 990-N, also known as the e-Postcard. If your Chapter receives such a request, you should file the form so that you do not lose your tax-exempt status. It only takes a few minutes to file the e-Postcard. The form asks for your Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN), which will be located in the upper right corner of the letter of request. It also asks for your Chapter's address, SGE website (<http://www.sigmagammaepsilon.com>), and we are also suggesting that the Principal Officer (incidentally, type of name is "person") for Chapters be the Chapter Advisor at the same address. That's all the information it requests.

5. The COMPASS

The SGE journal, the COMPASS, has gotten seriously behind in publication. Delegates to the SGE biennial convention last spring elected Dr. Larry Davis as the new editor, and he is anxious to get things caught up. However, we are waiting for the previous secretary-treasurer to clean up details with manuscripts in review and revision before he can take over. We are told there is an issue currently at the printer, and that it should go out in the near future.

6. Two new SGE Awards

Delegates to the SGE Convention last April requested that two new awards for Chapters be developed. The **Quality Chapter Award** will be available to all Chapters that meet the qualifications. These qualifications will consist of things such as having submitted the Chapter Officers form, New Initiates form, and Returning Member form and appropriate fees and dues to the National Office on time. The **Distinguished SGE Chapter Award** will consist of one award a year to a Chapter that has distinguished itself by way of its activities. In addition to having submitted dues and fees and member forms on time, Chapters will be asked to submit a list of activities and briefly discuss what has made them a distinguished Chapter during the course of the academic year. Guidelines and applications for these awards will be available on the SGE Website by November 15th, with the first awards to be made tentatively fall of 2011.

7. Facebook page

Visit our new Sigma Gamma Epsilon Facebook page (link on the SGE Website). News items, National Office information, Chapter news and activities, etc. will keep you aware of what's going on with SGE.

We are looking forward to a productive and exciting academic year for SGE. As always, we will attempt to respond to your requests and inquiries as soon as possible. You can e-mail Paula at even@sigmagammaepsilon.com or call at 319-273-2707 or fax at 319-273-7124.

If you will be attending the GSA meeting in Denver, please stop by the SGE booth in the Exhibit Hall and visit the SGE Poster Session on Monday.

Best wishes,

James C. Walters
National Secretary-Treasurer