

National Council of The Society of  
**Sigma Gamma Epsilon**



NATIONAL HONORARY SOCIETY in the EARTH SCIENCES

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

September 18, 2015

Welcome to the start of the 2015-2016 academic year! This letter provides reminders of things Chapters should be doing and details on some important news items. Much of this is a repeat from last year, but many of you may be new to SGE or just need to be reminded of SGE procedures.

1. SGE electronic membership database

The SGE forms for Chapters to report on **Returning Members**, **New Initiates**, and **Chapter Officers** are to be completed electronically and can be found on the SGE Website <[www.sigmagammaepsilon.com](http://www.sigmagammaepsilon.com)> under the Officer Resources link. Note that there is a form for Fall Initiations (June 15 - Jan. 31) and a form for Spring Initiations (Feb. 1 - June 14). Please use the appropriate form, noting that the dates refer to the ACTUAL date of the initiation, NOT the date they are submitted. Once you have completed these forms, save them as files under your Chapter name, e-mail as attachments to [even@sigmagammaepsilon.com](mailto:even@sigmagammaepsilon.com), and mail printed copies to the National Office of SGE along with dues and fees as appropriate. Please use the Excel versions if possible. If your computer is not compatible with the Excel versions, use the pdf versions and print the information clearly on them. (If you submit the New Initiates form using a printed pdf version, you MUST also electronically submit a typed list of new initiates with the initiation date). It is preferable to submit total dues and fees as **one check**. The New Initiate Form and Returning Member Form are due by November 15<sup>th</sup>. The Officer Form should be sent to us as soon as you have it.

Please note that dues run the academic year (fall through spring) and not the calendar year. This is one of the reasons it is so important to have your fall initiation as early as practically possible, and submit your dues and fees and lists no later than November 15<sup>th</sup> so that new and returning members can get the full benefit for their dues.

2. Returning members should pay annual dues

We continue to have some Chapters that fail to have their returning members pay annual dues (\$15). To be an active member, students must pay annual dues during their initiation year and each subsequent year of their enrollment. In addition, returning members who will be graduating in December still pay the full annual dues, since membership runs for the academic year. The Constitution specifies that half-year dues be assessed only for those members initiated after February 1<sup>st</sup>.

3. IRS tax information requests

Although we consider all SGE Chapters to be subordinate organizations under the SGE National Office and they should be covered in a group exemption that we file annually, the IRS may still require subordinates 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 (for your Chapter if you have one) 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. The IRS may request Chapters to file a new 990-N every year, so please

make every effort to comply. Instructions for submitting Form 990-N (e-Postcard) can be found at <https://epostcard.form990.org/>.

#### 4. The Compass

Since 2012 *The Compass* has been an open-access online publication. Dr. Larry Davis continues to do a great job as Editor, and he welcomes manuscripts from SGE members. The COMPASS can be accessed from the SGE home page at [www.sigmagammaepsilon.com](http://www.sigmagammaepsilon.com) or directly by going to [digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/compass/](http://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/compass/).

#### 5. Quality Chapter Award

2015 Quality Chapter Awards winners are: Eta Gamma at Weber State Univ., Gamma Chi at Eastern Illinois Univ., Gamma Sigma at the Univ. of Northern Iowa, and Eta Epsilon at Southern Utah Univ. The Quality Chapter Award is available to all Chapters that achieve the criteria listed on the SGE Website under the link to Awards. They 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 by the appropriate deadlines. Recognized Chapters receive a certificate and \$50. We encourage all Chapters to consider applying for this award.

#### 6. Chapter Service Award

Our newest SGE award went to four Chapters in 2015: Eta Epsilon (Southern Utah Univ.), Gamma Chi (Eastern Illinois Univ.), Delta Beta (Auburn Univ.), and Alpha Lambda (Univ. of Texas El Paso). Chapter members must complete a significant outreach and/or service project or multiple projects during the year. Chapters recognized with this award receive a certificate and \$50. Chapters conducting outreach and/or service projects are asked to submit photos of their activities to be posted on the SGE Website and/or the Facebook page.

#### 7. Department addresses

We suggest that all Chapters use Departmental addresses when notifying the SGE national office of where to send shingles, membership cards, and pins. We have had several instances of lost items when sent to off campus addresses.

8. The SGE Poster session at GSA in Baltimore will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 3, 9 am to 6:30 pm. Also, please make sure you visit the SGE booth in the Exhibit Hall (**booth 337**). We hope to see many of you there.

9. **ACTION ITEM:** We have learned that some universities do not allow the wearing of honor cords during commencement. In an effort to determine how many chapters this affects, we are conducting a brief survey. Please respond to the following question, putting your Chapter name, and Survey in the subject heading:

Does your institution allow for the wearing of honor cords from national honor societies?

Send your email to [even@sigmagammaepsilon.com](mailto:even@sigmagammaepsilon.com) by Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>.

We are looking forward to a great Fall Semester for SGE. As always, we will attempt to respond to your requests and inquires as soon as possible. You can e-mail Paula Even our Administrative Assistant at [even@sigmagammaepsilon.com](mailto:even@sigmagammaepsilon.com) or call 319-273-3818 or fax 319-273-7124.

Best wishes,



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