

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

August 16, 2017

FROM: Jim Walters, National Secretary-Treasurer

SUBJECT: Fall letter

Welcome to the start of the 2017-2018 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 or money order**. 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

To be an active member, students must pay annual dues (\$15) 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 still requires 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 Form 990-N. The form asks for your Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN), which will be located in the

upper right corner of the letter of request. The IRS may request Chapters to file a new 990-N every year, so please make every effort to comply. Instructions for completing and submitting Form 990-N (e-Postcard) can be found at [www.irs.gov/990N](http://www.irs.gov/990N). The SGE tax year ends on Aug. 31<sup>st</sup> and Chapters can file the e-Postcard any time after that, but before the absolute deadline of Jan. 15. This means that for the 2016 tax year the e-Postcard should be filed after Aug. 31, 2017 and before Jan. 15, 2018.

#### 4. The Compass

Since 2012 *The Compass* has been an open-access online publication. We sincerely appreciate the excellent work Editor Dr. Larry Davis does. He especially 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

2017 Quality Chapter Awards winners are: Gamma Sigma at the Univ. of Northern Iowa, Gamma Chi at Eastern Illinois University and Eta Gamma at Weber State 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. All Chapters are encouraged to consider applying for this award.

#### 6. Chapter Service Award

Chapter Service Awards went to two Chapters in 2017: Gamma Chi at Eastern Illinois University and Eta Gamma at Weber State University. 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. SGE 44<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention, September 22 – 24, 2017

Eastern Illinois Univ. in Charleston, IL will be the site of the 44<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention of SGE. The Convention will run Friday afternoon through Sunday late morning/early afternoon, with a field trip on Saturday. Chapter reports and other business will make up the rest of the event. Chapters wishing to have business items brought before the delegates must notify the National Office of their intentions by Sept. 8, the day registration is due. Although Convention materials were mailed to Chapters during spring semester 2017, they are being sent again with this letter. Since these materials are time sensitive, please respond in a timely fashion. Active Chapters are encouraged to send a delegate and additional members (alternates) if possible and Chapter Advisors are also welcome and encouraged to attend.

#### 9. SGE at GSA

The SGE Poster session at GSA in Seattle will be held on Monday, October 23, 9:00 am to 6:30 pm. As in previous years, SGE will be presenting both the National Council Award and the Austin Sartin Award for the two best posters. Only active SGE members are eligible for these awards. This means members who have paid dues for last academic year (2016-2017) OR already have paid dues for this year (2017-2018), postmarked and submitted electronically to [even@sigmagammaepsilon.com](mailto:even@sigmagammaepsilon.com) by Oct. 1). Also, please make sure you visit the SGE booth in the Exhibit Hall (**booth 722**). We hope to see many of you there.

We are looking forward to a great year 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 Associate Director at [even@sigmagammaepsilon.com](mailto:even@sigmagammaepsilon.com) or call 319-505-3391 or fax 319-273-7124.