

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 1, 2023

The 2023-2024 academic year (AY) is well underway and we hope your chapter has already planned several fun activities for the coming months. SGE is an associated society of the Geological Society of America and we are sponsoring a poster session at the upcoming annual meeting in Pittsburgh. We hope Sigma Gams will take in the poster session and stop by our booth (# 914) in the exhibit hall. As an associated society, SGE members who are not GSA members can receive a 20% discount when registering for the annual meeting. Please see the August 2 email from Lee Potter for details.

The national office is pleased to report that SGE had a total of 827 active members, across 58 chapters, last year (2022-2023 AY). This is a significant increase in membership over the 2021-2022 AY, and suggests that we are rebounding nicely from the pandemic. However, there is still work to do to in the reactivation of many chapters. Below is important information regarding steps you chapter should take to maintain or regain its active status. **Please forward this letter to your chapter officers and encourage them to share this information with all members.**

1. Society/Chapter Membership

As of August 1, 2021, new members (student or associate) pay a one-time fee of \$55 to become a **LIFETIME MEMBER** of the Society.

Chapters should submit their Member Form (including the names of new and active returning members) and Chapter Officer Form online. These forms can be accessed on the SGE website <www.sgeearth.org> under the link to Officer Resources. At the conclusion of your submission, you will have the option to pay online or to send your payment through the mail with a copy of your completed forms. If you choose to mail your payment, please send a check or money order payable to Sigma Gamma Epsilon with a copy of your forms to:

Sigma Gamma Epsilon
P.O. Box 324
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

It is important to have your fall initiation as early as possible, and to submit your membership fees and member lists by **November 1, 2023**. Even if your chapter does not initiate new members this semester, please submit a Member Form listing your active returning members. For various reasons, the national office needs to know the total number of students involved in SGE activities each academic year.

2. IRS tax information requests

All SGE chapters are considered subordinate organizations under the SGE National Office and they should be covered in a group exemption that we file annually. However, 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. Please make every effort to comply with IRS requests. The SGE tax year ends on August 31st and chapters can file the e-Postcard any time after that, but before the absolute deadline of January 15th. This means that for the 2023 tax year the e-Postcard should be filed after August 31, 2023 and before January 15, 2024.

3. The Compass

Many geoscientists started their career by publishing their first paper, including undergraduate research, in *THE COMPASS: Earth Science Journal of Sigma Gamma Epsilon*, SGE's official peer-reviewed publication. *THE COMPASS* can be accessed from the SGE home page at www.sgeearth.org or by going directly to digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/compass/.

4. James C. Walters Quality Chapter Award

Gamma Sigma Chapter (University of Northern Iowa), Gamma Chi Chapter (Eastern Illinois University), and Epsilon Omega Chapter (UTSA) each earned the JCW Quality Chapter Award during 2022-2023. Congratulations! This award is available to all chapters that meet the criteria listed on the SGE Website under the link to Our Community/Awards. They consist of things such as having submitted the Officer Form, Member Form, and appropriate fees and dues to the National Office by the appropriate deadlines. Recognized Chapters receive a certificate and a \$50 award. All Chapters are encouraged to consider applying for this award. The JCW Quality Chapter Award is named in honor of Dr. James C. Walters, a long-serving chapter advisor and National Secretary-Treasurer, and former National President. Jim did much to support SGE at the chapter and national levels over many years; this recognition is very well deserved.

5. Chapter Service Award

To be eligible for this award, chapter members must complete a significant outreach and/or service project or multiple projects during the year. Specific criteria are listed on the SGE Website under the link to Our Community/Awards. Chapters earning this award receive a certificate and \$50 award. 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. Gamma Chi Chapter (Eastern Illinois University) earned this award for their impressive contributions to their campus community during the 2022-2023 AY.

6. New Mission Statement

The student delegates to our 2022 biennial convention approved a new mission statement for SGE:

Sigma Gamma Epsilon is a national honor society that supports and encourages academic excellence, professionalism, and scholarship in the Earth Sciences. With guidance from the National Officers, student members shape and maintain the constitutional objectives of this honor society. The Society is committed to diversity and inclusion and promotes collaboration between and among faculty, students, and professionals in colleges and universities.

7. Please Check Your Spam Folder

This letter was also sent to you in an email. We commonly receive reports from chapter advisors that they are not receiving communications from the national office. Please check your spam folder and/or contact us if this is an issue for you.

8. Please Update Your Chapter's Webpage

If your chapter has its own webpage, please update the advisor and officer contact information and check to see if the link/URL is still active.

If you have any questions about your chapter's standing, SGE honor cords and the like, please contact Lee Potter at the National Office, 319-505-3391 or potter@SGEearth.org. Of course, you are always welcome to contact me directly (rford@weber.edu).

I hope you have a great fall semester and look forward to meeting many of you during the GSA annual meeting in Pittsburgh in October.

Regards,



Richard L. (Rick) Ford, PhD, PG
National Secretary-Treasurer