

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

January 12, 2026

HAPPY NEW YEAR, Sigma Gams!

The Society had a very successful poster session and exhibit hall participation during the recent *GSA Connects* in San Antonio, Texas, and we are actively planning for our participation in the *2026 GSA Connects* in Denver. In addition, we are presently responding to a strong petition to establish another new chapter in the Southeastern Province. **However, many current chapters that were active last year have yet to submit fees and forms to the National Office for the current academic year.** This is important if your chapter wishes to grant a W.A. Tarr Award this semester (see item 2. below). Important information regarding steps your chapter should take to maintain or regain its active status is provided below. **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.

Ideally, spring initiations should take place prior to March 15 and chapters should submit their Member Form (including the names of new lifetime members) online by that date. This form 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

If your chapter previously submitted the names of its **returning members** (those members initiated prior to the 2025-2026 academic year) on a Member Form during the fall semester, there is no need to list those members on the spring submission. However, **if your returning members were not reported during the fall semester, please list them on your spring Member Form.** For various reasons, the national office needs to know the total number of students participating in SGE activities during the academic year.

2. W.A. Tarr Award

Each **active chapter** of SGE has the option of presenting the **W.A. Tarr Award** to a graduating active member of the chapter. The award – based on scholarship, leadership, service, and collegiality – includes a certificate and a check for \$50. The award criteria and application form, to be submitted by the chapter advisor by **April 1, 2026**, are available on the SGE website under the link to Awards. Please allow 3-4 weeks for delivery of the certificate and check. For the purposes of the Tarr Award, an **active chapter** is one that has submitted dues during the current academic year.

3. Triple Joint Southeastern /North-Central /South-Central Annual Section Meeting (Geological Society of America)

The Southeastern, North-Central, and South-Central Sections of GSA are meeting jointly this year in Memphis, TN, March 8-11, 2026. SGE is an Associated Society of GSA and will have a booth (#217) in the exhibit hall. If you attend this meeting, please stop by the booth to say “howdy” and check in with representatives from the National Office.

4. The Compass: Earth Science Journal of Sigma Gamma Epsilon

The Compass, SGE's official peer-reviewed digital journal, is a great outlet for publishing undergraduate research. It can be accessed from the SGE home page at www.sgeearth.org or by going directly to digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/compass/. Scott Beason, our National Editor, has recently given *The Compass* a complete makeover and I think you will be impressed. Please encourage you members to submit their research for publication in their journal.

5. James C. Walters Quality Chapter Award

This award is available to all chapters that meet the criteria listed on the SGE Website under the link to [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 stated deadlines. Recognized Chapters receive a certificate and a \$100 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.

6. 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 [Awards](#). Chapters earning this award receive a certificate and a \$100 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.

7. Membership Status of Chapter Advisors

Any faculty member who volunteers to serve as a chapter advisor, and who was not a member of SGE during their student days, will be granted a lifetime associate membership in SGE at no charge to the advisor or chapter. Those advisors who were members of SGE as a student will be granted lifetime membership at no additional charge.

8. 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.

9. 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, for the 2025 tax year, the e-Postcard should be filed after August 31, 2025 and before January 15, 2026. However, better late than never.

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

Regards,



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National Secretary-Treasurer