

SIGMA CHI

Accreditation Report

2015-2016

Intellectual Development

- Sigma Chi was ranked first out of 17 Interfraternity Council Chapters in the fall 2015 semester with a GPA of 3.1928, an increase of .02526 from the spring 2015 semester. The 3.1928 GPA placed the chapter above the All Fraternity average.
- Sigma Chi was ranked second out of 17 Interfraternity Council Chapters in the spring 2016 semester with a GPA of 3.19217, a decrease of .00063 from the fall 2015 semester. The 3.19217 GPA placed the chapter above the All Fraternity average.
- Sigma Chi's spring 2016 new member class GPA was 2.982 ranking seventh out of 17 Interfraternity Council Chapters.
- Sigma Chi had 26.9% of the chapter on the Dean's List in the fall 2015 semester and 26.1% on the Dean's List in the spring 2016 semester.
- Sigma Chi continued to utilize its recently revamped mentorship program, which establishes a network between brothers of similar majors and allows mentorship to be established more broadly across this academic commonality. The chapter has found great success in this program, and considers it to be one of the reasons for their continued success in increasing their chapter GPA.
- The chapter re-visioned their facility's game room to create a large, quiet study space for member use. With the presence of numerous desks, and lack of distractions like televisions and gaming systems, this is a good example of some of the positive benefits afforded to members who opt to live in a residential fraternity facility.
- Sigma Chi revisited their partnership with Gamma Phi Beta by co-hosting a Scholarship Dinner in April, with active members from both chapters and Lehigh faculty in attendance. The Dinner creates a meaningful opportunity for conversation between students and professors outside of the classroom space, and allows for the chapters to reflect upon their areas of success and development for their academic initiatives.
- Sigma Chi hosted an alumnus to present a résumé and career fair workshop in the fall. This workshop was a great success, and the alumnus stayed late to review résumés and provide individualized coaching to members. The Committee still considers this workshop to be a best practice, and encourages the chapter to consider partnering with another chapter in the future, or opening it to the public, to spread the positive impact of this experience.
- Sigma Chi hosted numerous political/societal debates on topics ranging from the upcoming Presidential election to the Black Lives Matter movement and the Syrian refugee crisis. These conversations have had a great impact on members, and the Committee hopes the chapter continues to focus on creating opportunities such as these to provide members with meaningful opportunities for intellectual growth and development. Additionally, the Committee recommends utilizing campus resources to expand upon the perspectives available during these conversations.
- The Committee would like to commend the chapter on their ongoing commitment to academic success and this past year's increased exploration of intellectual stimulation and development.

Chapter Development Question for 2016-17:

- **How can Sigma Chi intentionally and proactively maintain and extend their successes in academic success and intellectual development?**

In the area of **Intellectual Development**, the Committee rated Sigma Chi to be a **Silver Chapter**.

Leadership Development

- The Chapter sends four representatives to Sigma Chi's annual Balfour Leadership Training Workshop and ten representatives to the annual Provincial Workshop. The attending members shared their learnings from both experiences with alumni and the general membership. The Committee commends the chapter for its commitment to engaging in national and regional program offerings and resources from the international organization.
- Sigma Chi restructured their Executive Board this year, with fewer positions available on the Board. To maintain their commitment to seeking out voices from general members and encouraging leadership from non-executive officers, the Executive Board held regular meetings where all members were welcome to attend and voice their opinions and concerns on issues at hand.
- Sigma Chi had a member serve on the Interfraternity Council Executive Board as Programming Chair.
- The New Member Educator helped instill the idea that every member of a chapter can be a leader, without having a formal title, by initiating the re-election of a pledge class president every week of new member education. This experience allowed several members to experience formal leadership, while recognizing that leadership is something that can be exhibited even after the title is removed.
- Last year, the Committee wanted to see the chapter work on sustaining their practices related to becoming more inclusive, especially in response to the Umoja House incident two years ago. The Committee was disappointed to learn these lessons were not trickling down to the new members as expected, and the greatest learning new members reflected on were "not messing up," rather than inclusivity. The Committee would like the chapter to consider how to ensure greater learning and reflection can be done in the future, so past experiences are not forgotten in a matter of 2-3 years.

Chapter Development Question for 2016-17:

- **How can Sigma Chi continue to instill the message that leadership is not always formal or based on having a title, and encourage continued and greater engagement of their general and new members in the chapter and Lehigh community?**

In the area of **Leadership Development**, the Committee rated Sigma Chi to be a **Bronze Chapter**.

Community Development

- Sigma Chi continued their partnership with Alpha Omicron Pi to co-sponsor their annual 50 Hour See-Saw Marathon event, through which each chapter selects one philanthropic cause or organization as their beneficiary to split subsequently raised proceeds. This year both chapters selected Wilson's Disease as their benefactor due to the experience of a Sigma Chi member's younger sister with the Disease. The chapters raised over \$11,000, which is more than double the amount ever raised by this event. The Committee commends the chapter on seeking philanthropic benefactors that have a meaningful impact on chapter members, which clearly results in an even greater commitment to hosting a successful philanthropy event.
- The chapter partnered with several Greek organizations to host the inaugural Lehigh Color Run. More than 50% of Sigma Chi members participated in the run, and in total the event raised over \$4,000 for Trinity Soup Kitchen, located in Southside Bethlehem.
- Sigma Chi hosted the Derby Days competition, with half of the proceeds going to the Huntsman Cancer Institute and the other half going to the winning sorority's benefactor of choice.
- Sigma Chi routinely engages several alumni from varying class years through transition retreats, chapter programs, recruitment and networking events, and one-on-one advising and mentorship opportunities.
- This year, the chapter hosted an alumni dinner as one of their recruitment events. New members reflected on the event as one of the pivotal experiences that solidified their decision to join Sigma Chi.
- The chapter did not meet community expectations for minimum attendance at the Gender Violence & Harassment Training sessions. The attendance requirement was 75% and even after make-up sessions were offered, the chapter achieved 73.1%.
- Sigma Chi was not engaged in any meaningful or ongoing community engagement and service work. The chapter acknowledged they struggled to get members to secure background clearances to work with minors, due to the new fingerprinting state legislation. This may have prevented the chapter from continuing their work with Donegan Elementary School, but the Committee is concerned that the chapter didn't find an alternative method of engaging in regular community service in light of this minor road block.
- Sigma Chi was placed on Disciplinary Probation in September 2015 through December 2015 after accepting responsibility for Respect for Community—Causing an Emergency and Respect for Community—Gross Disregard. Members of the chapter started a grease fire in the kitchen, and this was a major life safety violation warranting a \$500 fine.
- Sigma Chi received a Disciplinary Warning in February 2016 after being found responsible for Respect for Community and Respect for Self—Drug Paraphernalia. LUPD officers found a glass bong that smelled of marijuana in the living room in plain view and confiscated it.
- Sigma Chi received a Disciplinary Warning in April 2016 after accepting responsibility for Respect for Community—Fire Safety or Other Life Safety Violations. A member discharged a fire extinguisher in close proximity to a smoke detector causing it to activate. This caused the Bethlehem Fire Department to respond and approximately 60 people were evacuated from the chapter house.
- Sigma Chi was placed on Disciplinary Probation in April 2016 through December 2016 after accepting responsibility for Respect for Community—Irresponsible

Distribution of Alcohol. An underage member was highly intoxicated at an off campus party and transported to the hospital.

- Sigma Chi was also implicated in several situations regarding noise violations and disorderly house citations for off-campus residences. In these instances, the chapter was granted permission to conduct internal investigations through the standards board to address ongoing issues.

Chapter Development Question for 2016-17:

- **How can Sigma Chi find ways to engage with more stakeholders of the Lehigh community, and incorporate more community partners through meaningful one-time and ongoing service/philanthropy efforts?**

In the area of **Community Development**, the Committee rated Sigma Chi to be a **Poor Chapter**.

Organizational Development

- Sigma Chi restructured their Executive Board this year, with fewer positions available on the Board. Executive Board meetings are now scheduled, consistent, and open for all members to attend, to encourage multiple perspectives and transparency between the Executive Board and general membership.
- Sigma Chi has continued to refine their elections process by staggering them over the course of 4 weeks, rather than past methods with attempts to elect all positions in 1 or 2 evenings. Additionally, the officer transition process will be aided by write-ups of major events and responsibilities encountered by executive officers in the 2015-16 academic year. The Committee believes this has the potential to become a best practice, and hopes this is consistent across all positions and not just programming positions.
- Sigma Chi expended significant—and appropriate—efforts preparing for their first registered event with alcohol in over 2 years. The chapter leadership sought counsel from appropriate advising resources, the event was deemed a success, and no issues arose before, during, or after the event.
- The chapter reflected on their year and, in preparation for their accreditation review, prepared their own chapter development questions. The Committee commends the chapter on this practice, and despite whether the questions are reflected in this report, the Committee hopes the chapter will additionally work on these self-recognized areas of growth and challenge.
- Sigma Chi was found responsible for several facilities management and conduct issues this year. The facility sustained a grease fire, as well as other situations that could have presented fire safety issues involving frying oil and the intentional discharge of a fire extinguisher when no fire was present. The Committee is concerned that repeated issues with fire indicate the members do not take the responsibility of facility management seriously, nor do they truly understand the severity of situations involving fires as a risk to life safety.
- The chapter incorporated new elements of fire safety and a “Resident Hall Introduction” component to their New Member Education, to ensure all new members understand their responsibilities of living in the fraternity facility next year. The Committee hopes this will make a difference, but also expects more efforts will be taken to ensure these issues never arise again.

- The chapter received two life safety violations as a result of these incidents, and was at risk of losing their facility if they had an additional violation before the end of the academic year.
- These incidents, in tandem with the conduct and off-campus issues mentioned above, lead the Committee to be deeply concerned about the abilities of the chapter to positively influence the community and ensure a value-added experience for student members. The chapter should make no limitations in addressing these issues this upcoming year, and the Committee expects this will be done with the support of internal and external stakeholders.
- Sigma Chi's common damages for year were \$660.10.

Chapter Development Question for 2016-17:

- **How can Sigma Chi instill proactive measures to reduce the amount of issues the organization experienced this academic year, and ensure the long-term sustainability of the chapter?**

In the area of **Organizational Development**, the Committee rated Sigma Chi to be a **Poor Chapter**.

Overall Rating

Overall, Sigma Chi has been rated a Poor chapter by the 2015-2016 Accreditation Committee.

Sigma Chi has had a tumultuous year regarding conduct and safety issues. The chapter is improving the effectiveness of their response protocol to issues that arise and has created more transparency in their communication with stakeholders. It is reassuring to know the chapter is actively seeking advice and support from their OFSA and alumni advisors when challenges arise. That being said, these timely responses do not measure up to the need to proactively reduce harm and avoid certain issues altogether. Though that chapter is doing well in intellectual development, the concerns within community and organizational development overshadow those areas of success. The Committee is deeply concerned the chapter is on a path to self-destruction and there must be a dramatic overhaul to ensure the sustainability of the chapter. Additionally, it should be noted that there is likely a connection between leadership development and the ability of the chapter leaders to not only understand the gravity of these concerns but to also communicate and ensure the same understanding within the chapter's general membership. The understanding of general members is subpar when it comes to recognition for the impact of their actions, as well as learning from these issues. The accreditation presentation brought to light that the general members are focused on not getting into trouble, rather than understanding the impact of their actions and seeing value in creating a positive experience. The chapter leadership should work diligently to reverse this deficit-style thinking, and the membership should buy in to the need to create change for the chapter experience and the organization's future.

The Accreditation committee assigns Sigma Chi an overall rating of Poor. As a result of being a poor chapter, Sigma Chi must meet in its entirety with their assigned Assistant Director of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs and Alumni Advisor monthly to work towards improvement. A chapter that receives a rating of poor for two consecutive years loses recognition.

Chapter Development Questions

- How can Sigma Chi intentionally and proactively maintain and extend their successes in academic success and intellectual development?
- How can Sigma Chi continue to instill the message that leadership is not always formal or based on having a title, and encourage continued and greater engagement of their general and new members in the chapter and Lehigh community?
- How can Sigma Chi find ways to engage with more stakeholders of the Lehigh community, and incorporate more community partners through meaningful one-time and ongoing service/philanthropy efforts?
- How can Sigma Chi instill proactive measures to reduce the amount of issues the organization experienced this academic year, and ensure the long-term sustainability of the chapter?

Best Practices

- Sigma Chi hosted an alumnus to present a résumé and career fair workshop in the fall. This workshop was a great success, and the alumnus stayed late to review résumés and provide individualized coaching to members. The Committee still considers this workshop to be a best practice, and encourages the chapter to consider partnering with another chapter in the future, or opening it to the public, to spread the positive impact of this experience.