

SIGMA GAMMA RHO

Accreditation Report

2015-2016

Intellectual Development

- Sigma Gamma Rho was ranked first out of three Multicultural Greek Council Sorority chapters in the fall 2015 semester with a GPA of 3.115, an increase of .131 from the spring 2015 semester. The 3.115 GPA placed the chapter below the All Sorority and All Greek average.
- Sigma Gamma Rho was ranked second out of three Multicultural Greek Council Sorority chapters in the spring 2016 semester with a GPA of 2.9825, a decrease of .1325 from the fall 2015 semester. The 2.9825 GPA placed the chapter below the All Sorority and All Greek average.
- Sigma Gamma Rho had 25% of the chapter on the Dean's List in the fall 2015 semester and 25% on the Dean's List in the spring 2016 semester.
- Sigma Gamma Rho had a successful year, supporting members academic achievement and celebrating professional achievements as three of their four active members prepared for life after graduation.
- Sigma Gamma Rho's international requirement for membership is a minimum GPA of 2.5, however the chapter actively pursues and values academic success and therefore expects interested members to hold much higher grade point averages than this minimum standard.
- Sigma Gamma Rho seeks to connect all aspects of engagement with intellectual development, including community events such as their Prayer Breakfast, service at The Caring Place in Allentown, raising awareness about sexual health at an HIV testing event, and hosting a candid discussion about gender, race, and politics at a BSU meeting. The Committee commends the chapter on this excellent way to connect experiences across different areas of development.
- The chapter supports their interests through the intake and T.O.R.C.H. education process by hosting mandatory study hours, so all interests and members can ensure they are prioritizing academic responsibilities and obligations over social events. This practice continued beyond the TORCH process, as active members subscribe to informal study hours as well.
- The Committee commends the chapter on maintaining strong relationships with their faculty and alumni advisors, and utilizing them as inspirations for scholastic success and supporters in times of academic struggle.

Chapter Development Question for 2016-17:

- **How can Sigma Gamma Rho ensure its current value of intellectual development and growth is continued, even as the chapter experiences a substantial turn-over in membership?**

In the area of **Intellectual Development**, the Committee rated Sigma Gamma Rho to be a **Gold Chapter**.

Leadership Development

- Sigma Gamma Rho supports the engagement of its members in local and national leadership development opportunities, including engagement in the Greek EMerging Leaders program and attendance at the Northeast Greek Leadership Association's Annual Conference.
- The chapter holds step practice several times per week, and experiences a growth in self-esteem and confidence, in addition to bonding with sisters, in response to this time together in practice.
- Sigma Gamma Rho promotes sisterhood through a multitude of engagements, and the Committee is impressed with their ongoing use of Restorative Practices as a means for proactively developing stronger relationships and communication skills, in addition to mediating conflicts. The chapter works with their faculty advisor, who is trained in facilitating restorative circles. The Committee considers this to be a best practice.
- The chapter did not hold a formal position within the Multicultural Greek Council (MGC), but the chapter regularly exceeded attendance expectations by sending multiple members to Council meetings. The chapter is active and present at all Council and All-Greek events, giving support and showcasing leadership within the entire Greek community.
- Sigma Gamma Rho is represented well on campus by its members who hold leadership and staff positions in several organizations, and represent the student experience as members of numerous committees. Examples include the Gryphon Society, LeaderShape, Spectrum, Echoes, Black Student Union, the Council for Equity & Community, etc.
- Sigma Gamma Rho encourages leadership from all members, especially in chapter operations. This is evidenced by the planning of the chapter's "Sigma Week," during which all members were responsible for organizing a particular event or activity during the week. This not only balanced the work load, it also allowed all members to learn similar skills of event planning and invited members to take ownership over projects for which they had passion. The Committee considers this to be a best practice.
- The Committee would like to extend over-arching praise for this category, and commend the members for their authentic leadership on campus. Sigma Gamma Rho members are recognized by students, faculty, and staff, as leaders who seek to create a better experience for all community members, which is a testament to the members' value of true leadership going beyond a positional responsibility.

Chapter Development Question for 2016-17:

- **How can Sigma Gamma Rho continue to intentionally connect with and utilize campus resources, such as the Office of Student Leadership Development, as the chapter grows?**

In the area of **Leadership Development**, the Committee rated Sigma Gamma Rho to be a **Gold Chapter**.

Community Development

- Sigma Gamma Rho plans monthly community service activities that focus on improving the quality of life for community members in a variety of ways. This monthly program is called “Serve with Sigmas” and occurs on the 22nd of every month, corresponding with the organization’s founding year of 1922.
- Sigma Gamma Rho worked closely with the Community Service Office to ensure their monthly service events were in response to stated community needs. The Committee considers this to be a best practice.
- Sigma Gamma Rho completed service events which contributed to their international organization’s signature program, Project Reassurance. For example, the chapter implemented “Project Big Bookbag,” which gathered donated school supplies and resulted in over \$100 of funds so the chapter good add to these supplies before donating them to Central Elementary School in Allentown.
- Sigma Gamma Rho raised awareness about sexual health and provided free HIV testing for students on campus. The event was a huge success, and the members found benefit in both the service provided to the community and the awareness raised about the issue at hand.
- Sigma Gamma Rho supported Greek and campus-wide service events such as After School Snack Bags, Spooktacular, Spring Fling, and partnered with Alpha Phi Alpha to visit The Caring Place of Allentown for discussion with high school students about their morals, values, and goals. The chapter was able to focus on empowering the young students to pursue a college in their near futures.
- The chapter regularly engages with and builds relationships with undergraduate and alumni members of Sigma Gamma Rho. For example, the members decided to send kits of gift bags of natural hair products to the Natural Hair Club (of which many Sigma Gamma Rho women are members) at Elizabeth City State University, which is their alumni advisor’s alma mater.
- The Committee commends the chapter for their tireless work to connect with stakeholders and resources across campus. To date the chapter has created partnerships with the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the Council for Cultural Organizations, the Women’s Center, the Acts II Live-Lehigh Community, the Dean of Students office, and many more.

Chapter Development Question for 2016-17:

- **How can Sigma Gamma Rho engage and include other campus organizations with its off-campus community development efforts?**

In the area of **Community Development**, the Committee rated Sigma Gamma Rho to be a **Gold Chapter**.

Organizational Development

- Sigma Gamma Rho chartered their chapter on May 1, 2015, and though that was technically during the last academic school year, it is worth acknowledging the hard work and commitment the members gave to the chartering process. This quality work ethic has proven to be something to expect of the chapter, as it continued throughout this school year. The Committee applauds the members on their chapter recognition and chartering.

- Sigma Gamma Rho leaders learned how to delegate tasks and responsibilities, acknowledging and attempting to overcome this as a common challenge amongst organizations, but particularly present in smaller Greek chapters.
- The chapter hosted three informational events, called “Chat & Chews,” and submitted a request to conduct intake for the interested members they had acquired this year. Unfortunately, due to the status of the graduate chapter, they were unable to conduct intake, but it is evident the chapter did not rest on their laurels and continues to maintain a presence on campus to assure they are prepared when they are approved to do intake in the future.
- Sigma Gamma Rho meets regularly with their OFSA advisor, Carter Gilbert, and does so in a way that benefits all parties involved. The Committee commends the chapter on taking the initiative to send multiple members to this meeting, exceeding the expectations of OFSA Assistant Directors maintaining contact with just the chapter president.
- The chapter graduated three of its four active members this May, and has already been planning for this transition for the past semester. Plans for programs, service events, informational sessions, and intake are already scheduled and planned, so this responsibility can hopefully be lessened on the solo member this upcoming fall semester.
- The Committee would like to commend the chapter on their first experience with accreditation; having chartered late last year, the chapter was unable to witness or benefit from a “bye” year in the accreditation cycle. This clearly did not hold the chapter back as their submitted materials and presentation were excellent, authentic, and humble, and the chapter should be proud of their accomplishments.
- Sigma Gamma Rho does not have a residential facility and therefore had no facility-related violations or common damages.

Chapter Development Question for 2016-17:

- **How can Sigma Gamma Rho create measures to engage alumni and ensure their involvement and commitment to the chapter’s success for years to come?**

In the area of **Organizational Development**, the Committee rated Sigma Gamma Rho to be a **Gold Chapter**.

Overall Rating

Overall, Sigma Gamma Rho has been rated a Gold chapter by the 2015-2016 Accreditation Committee.

Sigma Gamma Rho has proved themselves to be a viable force on campus, especially in terms of leadership and service to the community. Having only existed as a charter organization for one year, the members have impressed the Committee with their ability to navigate administrative processes and build relationships with Greek and non-Greek organizations, alike. Though challenges can often arise with local, regional, and national oversight of intake processes, the chapter did not let their particular situation set them back and pushed forward to continue to pursue the values and commitment the organization is meant to provide to the campus and local community. The upcoming year will be even more challenging as the chapter graduated the majority of its members, but the Committee is impressed with the proactive measures the chapter has taken to ensure this time of transition goes as smoothly as possible. Overall, the chapter should be exceptionally proud of their

accomplishments this year, and the Committee looks forward to witnessing their continued progress and future successes.

The Accreditation committee assigns Sigma Gamma Rho an overall rating of Gold, which is considered an exceptional level of achievement in the Accreditation process, with all the privileges and rewards that accompany such a rating. Congratulations!

Chapter Development Questions

- How can Sigma Gamma Rho ensure its current value of intellectual development and growth is continued, even as the chapter experiences a substantial turn-over in membership?
- How can Sigma Gamma Rho continue to intentionally connect with and utilize campus resources, such as the Office of Student Leadership Development, as the chapter grows?
- How can Sigma Gamma Rho engage and include other campus organizations with its off-campus community development efforts?
- How can Sigma Gamma Rho create measures to engage alumni and ensure their involvement and commitment to the chapter's success for years to come?

Best Practices

- Sigma Gamma Rho promotes sisterhood through a multitude of engagements, and the Committee is impressed with their ongoing use of Restorative Practices as a means for proactively developing stronger relationships and communication skills, in addition to mediating conflicts. The chapter works with their faculty advisor, who is trained in facilitating restorative circles. The Committee considers this to be a best practice.
- Sigma Gamma Rho encourages leadership from all members, especially in chapter operations. This is evidenced by the planning of the chapter's "Sigma Week," during which all members were responsible for organizing a particular event or activity during the week. This not only balanced the work load, it also allowed all members to learn similar skills of event planning and invited members to take ownership over projects for which they had passion. The Committee considers this to be a best practice.
- Sigma Gamma Rho worked closely with the Community Service Office to ensure their monthly service events were in response to stated community needs. The Committee considers this to be a best practice.