

Sigma Theta Epsilon



Spring Conclave 2001
Nashville, TN
March 30-April 1

CONCLAVE 2001 Agenda

Friday 3/30: Arrive

Saturday 3/31:

8:30: Devotion

9:30: Business I (Officer and Chapter reports, Officer Elections)

11:00: Housing Corp. Meeting

12:00: Lunch (on own)

1:30: Business II (New Business)

4:00: Cabinet Meeting

5:30: Rituals (Officer Installation, Love Feast, Initiation if necessary)

6:30: Dinner

8:00: Free time

Sunday 4/1:

9:00: Devotion

9:30: Head home

THIS SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE, AND WILL LIKELY CHANGE

Business and Elections

OFFICES UP FOR ELECTION

Vice President- Charles Neff

Expansion- Craig Guido

Alumni-

Historian-

VOTES OF CONFIDENCE

President-Aaron Aldridge

Secretary- Chad Burdette

Treasurer- Joshua Parsell

Proposed Business

Alumni Association Policy

Sigma Theta Epsilon hereby authorizes the organization, whether by chapter or geographical region, of local alumni associations, subject to the following conditions:

1. Each local alumni association shall file a copy of its constitution with Sigma Theta Epsilon.
2. Each local alumni association shall maintain current contact information with Sigma Theta Epsilon, and keep the national fraternity advised of its scheduled activities.
3. No local alumni association shall conduct any activities that would besmirch the name of Sigma Theta Epsilon.

The National Alumni Director shall act as a liaison between the national fraternity and any local alumni associations.

Proposal concerning the initiation ritual (Beta Alpha)

A new form of the Initiation Ritual that incorporates everything of the Initiation Ritual with some of the major tenets of Sigma Theta Epsilon which includes brotherhood bonding and time alone with God that hopefully will have a more personal impact on the inductee's spiritual lives. More details and the specific proposal to be presented at Conclave.

REPORT OF THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT

This school year to date has been a rather uneventful one. While we have added another new chapter, Beta Epsilon at Bradley University, I do not feel that we have taken any great steps as a national fraternity. This is not necessarily a bad thing, as we have been adding chapter at the rate of almost one a year for the past three or four years. It does not harm us to take a breather before our expansion continues. And it is something that should continue. I see our future growth as a primary goal of the fraternity. But in expanding the number of chapters, we must not overlook the growth of our current chapters. I feel that this is easily overlooked on the national level, and that we need to focus more attention on strengthening our chapters.

If we are to grow, whether in the number of chapters or in the number of actives at each chapter, we need to have strong leadership. I believe that this is becoming a growing problem. Each Conclave it seems a struggle to attract qualified individual to take over leadership positions as our experienced leaders step aside. Too often we have seen national officers who do not fulfill the duties of their office. I am not criticizing any of our current officers, I think they are all doing a great job. But I feel that as our current crop of officers step aside that it is critical that we have enthusiastic leaders ready to step into their shoes. I must admit that it is not easy being a national officer, more and more I find myself putting the fraternity behind my job and my family. It has been increasingly difficult to find the time necessary to carry out my duties, as I grow older. This is one reason why I have in the past advocated a full-time paid staff person, but unfortunately we do not currently have the membership base to bear the required expenses. I would, however, take this opportunity to encourage all of our chapters to reach out to their alumni and encourage them to become more involved in the leadership of the fraternity.

In the six or so years that I have been involved in the national organization of Sigma Theta Epsilon, I have witnessed the fraternity grow at an amazing rate. Again, while it is necessary from time to time stop and focus ourselves, we must continue to grow. We must continue our efforts in maintaining contact with our alumni, including fostering the growth of alumni associations. We must continue to have a concerted effort at expansion. But most importantly we must, on a national level, ensure that our current chapters have the means to prosper and grow. To achieve these goals, strong leadership is vital. Again, please, as leaders of your local chapter take an active role in the national fraternity, and make an effort to encourage your alumni to do the same.

Respectfully,
Aaron Aldridge
National President

REPORT OF THE NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT

This has been relatively uneventful year for the office of Vice President. Monthly devotions have been written and emailed. The addition to the Benediction approved at Conclave 2000 was emailed to each of the chapters for inclusion in their Ritual Books. Permission to make one copy of the Ritual Book was granted to Beta Alpha and a copy of the Ritual Book was mailed to our newest chapter at National's expense.

Chad and I represented the National Cabinet at Fall Gathering West in Oklahoma City. We had wonderful fellowship with our brothers and sisters from Texas and Oklahoma. We especially enjoyed the frozen peas.

The only project of any scope undertaken this year was recopying the Ritual Book into Word and Works format for easier corrections, additions, and distribution now and in the future. Also of note, the office has also purchased nearly all the items necessary for a national ritual bag. The only item still withstanding is a suitable (and transportable) cross.

To facilitate the office of Historian, which will be filled during this Conclave, I have requested that each chapter submit an historical update. I have also made ready all historical documents that are in the possession of the office of Vice President to hand over as well.

May God continue to bless the ministry of Sigma Theta Epsilon in the colleges and universities it serves and in the lives of the people it touches.

Philo,
Charles E. Neff
National Vice President

REPORT OF THE NATIONAL SECRETARY

This year has been a relatively busy one for the office of the National Secretary. I have been able to take care of the shingle backlog, put out an issue of the Philoi, keeping in contact with everyone (my email runneth over) and put together an email listserve for the national cabinet. I also had the chance to fly out to Oklahoma for Fall Gathering, which was a blast (except the jet lag). I would like to thank the brothers of Beta Alpha for their great hospitality and making my trip one an enjoyable one. Whether it was playing football, bagging peas, or just hanging out I enjoyed the time of fellowship with them and the brothers from the Beta Delta chapter. I also made it back up to WV Wesleyan a few times to see how my old chapter was doing. I was able to make it up for the first semester contact party and the Chill and Grill, which was a blast.

Things I have planned to work on in the upcoming year include housekeeping stuff such as going through the files and condensing them into a single storage area instead of the two boxes where they are currently being stored. I would also like to bring the files up to date with the most current drafts of the chapter constitutions. I am also going to be working with the webmaster to devise a way to submit monthly reports via the national web site (more details to follow). These projects along with the regular duties (shingles, philoi, etc.) should keep me very busy in the year to come. I think that the upcoming year will be better now that I have had a chance to try things out and see what has worked and what has not.

Philoi,

Chad Anthony Burdette
Sigma Theta Epsilon National Secretary

REPORT OF NATIONAL ALUMNI DIRECTOR

As I write this report, it is two weeks before Conclave 2001, and I am putting the finishing touches on the second alumni mailing sent during this fiscal year. It is also the fifth of my term as Alumni Director. We currently have 537 mailable addresses and slightly over 200 valid e-mail addresses for alumni.

The focus of my term has been on keeping in touch through regular and reliable alumni mailings. This has almost exclusively been the focus of my efforts. I have not actively pursued the formation of alumni organizations or planned alumni events. Perhaps this is something my successor may consider, but hopefully not at the expense of mailings. I believe this is the foremost purpose for this office - keeping alumni informed about today's Fraternity, and about each other.

The balance of this report I write specifically to my successor. I have found it helpful to contact the 200+ alumni who have e-mail addresses one month prior to doing a mailing. In this e-mail, I inform them of the upcoming mailing and ask if they have anything to share (e.g. moved recently? married? expecting/had a baby? changed jobs? started a business? retired? gone back to school? etc.). This final mailing was almost exclusively made up of alumni-provided updates. Also in this pre-mailing e-mail, I include a list of "missing" alumni names – persons whom I have no mailable addresses for. I requested, and many alumni graciously obliged, to forward the e-mail to other alumni whom they saw on the list, who in turn replied to me with their mailable addresses. (I have found that Universities don't always have current addresses, so asking for their "current" lists haven't been tremendously fruitful. I recommend that my successor maintain the mailing list and include both good and bad addresses, as tested through mailings. If you have two addresses for one name, mail to both to weed out the bad one. Better than losing an alum by not trying either!)

All mailings during my term used a bulk mailing non-profit permit. This allowed us to mail each 1 ounce piece at the bulk rate of \$0.169, instead of the First Class rate. The permit costs \$100 annually (may have increased to \$125 this year?), so it ONLY saves the Fraternity money if we do 2+ mailings in a year. (You can do the math for the specifics.) I will be happy to help set up/transfer our permit to my successor's local post office if he is committed to doing at least that many mailings. If the price HAS gone up, it may not be worth the little extra hassle of a permit for two mailings. Inquire to your post office.

I've tried to fill each newsletter with as many alumni updates as possible. Next, I try to include articles/devotions written by chapters or National Officers. If there is space available, I might write an article myself, or put in something fun for alumni (e.g. crossword puzzle of Fraternity words). Alumni have expressed tremendous appreciation for keeping them informed (a) that we still exist, (b) of what we're doing these days, and (c) of what their long, lost fellow-alumni are doing these days. Lastly, I include a request for donations and address updates, along with a return envelope addressed to the Financial Director. I believed in the beginning that if alumni find the newsletters to have value, they will return something of financial value to the Fraternity. I believe that even more after testing that theory with five mailings.

I believe that two newsletters per year is about right. It doesn't tax the Alumni Director heavily at that frequency, there's more "meat" per newsletter, and the requests for financial gifts don't get too diluted by arriving too closely together.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve as Alumni Director. I have enjoyed it. The mailings weren't difficult to do, so don't be intimidated by the thought. It's just a matter of follow-through. Ask questions of your local post office. Ask questions of me - steve.scholl@juno.com. Hopefully I have conditioned the alumni to expect mailings. As I "retire" into alumni-hood, I will be expecting these mailings myself, so expect to hear from me if I don't!

Bro's in Christ,
Steve Scholl
STE Natl Alumni Director, 1999-2001

Alpha Gamma Chapter

Several things have happened at Alpha Gamma Chapter recently. First off we recently passed a by-law that solidifies the date for dues to be due each semester. We have very strong officers this semester that I am very proud of. This strong cabinet has made it possible for us to have the first annual Chill and Grill, which was held on Feb. 24. It was open to the entire campus, we grilled hotdogs and hamburgers and had one of our alumni, Craig Guido, do a concert. Halfway through we had a devotion as well, the Chill and Grill was successful for a first time event. We can easily fix the mistakes and make next year's incredible. Alpha Gamma has also become active with a youth group at a local church, we recently painted the kitchen of a local school that could possibly be the victim of consolidation in the coming months. The children "helped" us paint (most of the paint ended up on the children) and we ended up with a great service project. In addition to our weekly floor hockey games, we have added a "fellowship meeting" prior to hockey where we sit down and have a bible study. It has become a nice addition to a great deal of the brothers' weeks. As the year is winding down we hope for a large pledge class because of the number of seniors leaving at the end of this school year. Judging by the events of this semester I foresee a strong conclusion of this semester and a great semester next year. Keep us in your prayers...

~Micah Snyder
President, Alpha Gamma Chapter

Beta Alpha Chapter Report

Greetings from the brothers of Beta Alpha! This has been a powerful new year for our brotherhood, as we are more involved than ever on campus at Oklahoma City University, and our religious and service projects are more and more frequent on and off campus.

Our chapter is growing. Last Conclave, we were 30 members strong, after our first successful Spring Pledge Class in a few years. I am proud to say that we have continued that tradition as 10 people pledged in the Fall and 9 people are pledging in the Spring as we speak. We have inducted one sweetheart, had one member come back to OCU, and we have enjoyed the support of Beta Alpha alumni who have come back to work at OCU, and are involved with us as often as possible. Four brothers have DKRed, and gone on to live lives of Christian Service.

For those of you doing the math, that brings our total membership up to 47 members. Larger chapters have no doubt experienced what Beta Alpha is going through right now: growing pains. None of us were prepared for almost 30 members to join us in the past three pledge classes, and we are struggling with the transition from “that one Christian fraternity” to “THE Christian Fraternity.” We are learning that it is the brothers that give the fraternity our best image, and as long as we act with Christian hearts and minds, others will come to our fellowship as well.

However, increased numbers only make our projects bigger and better. We have weekly meetings, complete with devotions, “brother-to-go” brotherhood interviews, prayer, announcements, joys and concerns, brotherhood benediction, and our Beta Alpha porch chant, of course. Our chaplain challenges us every week, and he redefines what devotions are for the brothers’ spiritual lives.

On the Religious and Ritual side of Sigma Theta Epsilon, we have undergone some changes and tried out some new ways of doing things. Last year’s chaplain took Secret Meeting of the Saints, a semesterly ritual, and made it more meaningful and personal to each of the brothers’ spiritual lives. This past pledge class also experimented with a new kind of initiation ritual. While the original initiation ritual is still whole and intact, the other activities Beta Alpha incorporated made the ritual more personal, and some professed to feeling God very distinctly that night. God does powerful things for our Chapter, and we know without Him, we wouldn’t be what we are today.

On a lighter note, Beta Alpha’s Social events are wild and crazy. In the past year, we have gone to the basketball games, hayrides, bowling, Midnight Volleyball, and more activities than I can recall. We also had a great Fall Formal with our brothers being the deejays. And a week from this weekend is our wildest social event yet: Ramen Noodle Wrestling: Smackdown. I think the name in itself is all I have to say about that.

Service has been almost the focal point for this past year, as the new pledges demanded service, and our service chairs were up to the task. We’ve gone out to help with Tornado relief, the Oklahoma Food Bank, and the Salvation Army, all of these places we’ve been twice or more. We’ve also kept up our relationship with our past service recipients, such as Positive Tomorrow’s and Gatewood Elementary’s after school programs. The secret to good service is to honor our traditions while also branching out to new places and serving Christ in as many ways as possible.

The Beta Alpha Chapter is growing, in membership, scope, depth, and in acceptance of new ideas from people of many walks of faith. But our organization will continue to be what it always has been: A Christian Men’s Service Fraternity, and we will continue to endeavor to be a moral and ethical influence on campus life, and our community as a whole.

Philo,

Jeremy Smith
Beta Alpha President

Beta Delta Chapter Report

Things are going good for the Beta Delta chapter, and it seems like they are only getting better. This spring semester has started off good, and we have been working hard. Our meetings have been great, and all the guys are opening up and talking. We meet every week at 9:30 p.m. We go through business first, and then we have a devotional. Our chaplain has been doing a great job considering the fact that most of us don't know the Bible that well, however, we are all learning. It is always interesting to hear translations from other people, especially from those who have never heard a certain passage from the Bible.

Our religious projects: devotionals, bible studies, and trying to figure out how we see God in our service projects and socials. Our Service projects: well we have only had one, the OLLU/LIFE Walk for Literacy, but we are looking to help out more. Hopefully we will finish this semester strong. Our Socials: we went to a NBA game, Spurs vs. Lakers, we had a Little Brother/Big Brother Dinner where the Big Brothers cooked spaghetti, and we had a social at brother Michael's house where he cooked Mexican food for us and we played games.

Things we are working on:

- VOLLUnteer Impact (March 30-31) (Service Project sponsored by OLLU)
- Fundraiser: Easter Basket Drawing
- A school-wide Lovefeast (April 9)
- A camping Retreat for all the brothers (to meet and discuss what we need to work on and where we see STE Beta Delta going) April 28
- Possible service project: Helping new students move their stuff into the dorms. Beginning of school (TBA)
- Service project in Laredo, TX (Sept. 15) passing out school supplies and talking to kids about saying no to drugs and yes to God.

Highlights of the spring semester so far:

- Rush-Epsilon class-8 guys signed up, but 4 ended up rushing. They are currently still going through the pledge process.
- Fundraisers
- Valentine Basket Drawing-raised \$356
- Bake Sale-raised \$112
- Socials
- Spurs vs. Lakers-Of course this was an exciting social for all of us, however, it was very special for our brother Jose. Jose came in with the Delta class and he is in a wheelchair, so it is sometimes difficult when we are planning things because we have to take into consideration Jose's special needs. Our tickets were in the upper level, including Jose's ticket. The handicapped section was away from the rest of the group, so several of the brothers carried Jose to our section so that he could enjoy the game with his brothers. He had a great time, and I know it meant a lot to him to be able to share this experience with his brothers. The whole experience was uplifting to the group and showed us the influence we can have on one person by the things we do.
- Devotionals-everyone has begun to open up and share their problems with each other. A lot of us are amazed by the common problems we share, and are learning to be there for each other.

Francisco Lozano
Sigma Theta Epsilon
Beta Delta Chapter
El Presidente

Beta Epsilon Chapter Report

This semester, we've had a few social activities that have continued to bring our group together. Not having a central location on campus that we can call our own is difficult. However, we have made do. We have been

holding a weekly bible study in the campus crusade office. We hold weekly chapter meetings in the student center as well as pledge meetings. We pick meeting places around campus to meet for social activities. As of

next semester, this will all change. We will finally have a place to call home.

In regards to service activities, we have helped out at Harvest, a packing and shipping truck dock designed to gather vegetables and day old items from Illinois groceries and restaurants. As well, all of us will be tutoring children and adults struggling with illiteracy at Common Place, Central Illinois Center for Illiteracy. We were fingerprinted a couple weeks ago and our background checks are being processed.

Looking towards next semester, we have planned a semi-formal outing, a weekend camping and ropes course retreat, and a religious project. We are in the process of working with other Christian organizations on campus to bring in a Christian speaker or band for next fall.

Lastly, we are very excited about our spring pledge class. These four pledges will add greatly to the diverse aspects of the Beta Epsilon Chapter in regards to service and leadership. We look forward to their initiation.

Michael Orr