February 27, 2015

To: Stephanie Knight, Assistant Director, Center for Campus Involvement

From: Laura Blake Jones, Dean of Students

Cc: Susan Pile, Director of the Michigan Union and Center for Campus Involvement

Issuance of Official University Decision for SOAR Complaint #15-100

Receiving the Recommendation of the Greek Activities Review Panel (GARP) from the Center for Campus Involvement (CCI) regarding Student Organization Complaint #15-100 on February 16, 2015, I write to communicate the OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY DECISION on this matter.

Complaint #15-100 was filed against Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity with CCI under the Standards of Conduct for Recognized Student Organizations. The Director of the Michigan Union and Center for Campus Involvement gave the parties notice that a complaint was filed and established a reasonable and mutually agreed upon time for a response and supporting documentation to be submitted. After review of the file, the Director of the Michigan Union and Center for Campus Involvement determined that a hearing conducted by GARP was the most appropriate option for resolution.

The hearing was held February 11, 2015, before a properly convened GARP Hearing Panel. The Accountability Procedure Manual dictates that the Dean of Students has 10 days from receipt of the Panel’s recommendation to issue the Official University Decision to the parties in writing.

Today, I write to inform you that the Official University Decision is De-Recognition of Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity. We are extremely disappointed by the reprehensible behavior and failure of the group to come forward with information regarding the individuals responsible for the incident. We strongly believe that individuals should accept responsibility for their actions.

Details of the Official University Decision follow in four parts:

- Statement of Authority’s Recommendation (Recommendation of the GARP Hearing Panel)
- Statement of the University Decision
- Statement of Sanctions
- Rationale for Changes
I. Statement of Authority’s Recommendation:
(Exact wording of the findings of the GARP Hearing Panel)

“On February 6, 2015, the Center for Campus Involvement (CCI) received an official complaint filed by Alex Krupiak against the primary contact of the Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity, Joshua Kaplan. The complaint was filed in response to a ski trip to Treetops in Gaylord, Michigan with Sigma Delta Tau Sorority over the weekend of January 16. Included in the complaint was a description of the details of the event, including the number of attendees and the reported damages, as well as a list of relevant media coverage of the ski trip. Damages were noted to be estimated at $100k and included “broken windows, thrown furniture, knocked beer cans through the walls, broken glass in rooms, broken ceiling tiles and excessive trash.” A number of additional details were also listed in the complaint, describing egregious public intoxication, use of marijuana, and other public disturbances. The complaint alleged that Sigma Alpha Mu was in violation of the Standards of Conduct for Recognized Student Organizations due to the events of the ski trip.

On February 6, 2015, CCI notified Josh Kaplan, the primary contact of the Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity, of the complaint that was filed against the Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity. CCI also sent notification of an expedited timeline option for both parties at this time. On February 9, 2015, both parties agreed to follow the expedited timeline. On February 10, 2015, Josh Kaplan submitted a response to the complaint to CCI, including documentation of sanctions from the national organization, email correspondence with Detroit Partnership and Habitat for Humanity, and a public apology statement.

On February 11, 2015, a hearing was conducted in response to the complaint. The hearing was adjudicated by the Greek Activities Review Panel and proceeded according to the formal resolution process in the Accountability Procedure Manual.

After deliberation, the GARP Justices have found Sigma Alpha Mu to be in violation of the Standards of Conduct for Recognized Student Organizations. According to the Standards of Conduct for Recognized Student Organizations, Section IV.A.3, a Registered Student Organization is responsible for a violation of the Standards of Conduct if a member’s actions, which contravene the Standards of Conduct, have been explicitly or tacitly approved by the organization. During the hearing, Josh Kaplan acknowledged Sigma Alpha Mu’s association with the event. This constitutes an approval from the organization. The Standards of Conduct for Recognized Student Organizations, Section IV.B addresses contradictions of the values of the University that are subject to corrective action under the Standards of Conduct. Among the various types of action subject to corrective measures, the GARP Justices unanimously find Sigma Alpha Mu’s actions to be in violation of the following provisions:

1. Health and Safety – This provision states that RSOs must not foster, promote, or participate in activities that unreasonably threaten the safety or well-being of their members, other people, or animals. During the hearing, it was noted that the accommodations used by Sigma Alpha Mu and Sigma Delta Tau were well over capacity and that excessive drinking took place over the course of the event. Additional behaviors,
such as throwing a chair through a window that landed in a children’s play area (no children were present), created a dangerous environment that threatened the well-being of both members of the organization and guests at the resort. The GARP Justices therefore find Sigma Alpha Mu in violation of the Health and Safety provision.

9. Violation of the Student Organization Constitution – This provision states that RSOs are bound by the constitution submitted during the recognition process. Any organization that violates their published constitution, is in violation of these Standards of Conduct, even if an amendment has been made and submitted, but has not yet been approved. The preamble of the submitted constitution states that the purpose of the organization is “...to inculcate among its sons such ideals as will result in actions worthy of the highest precepts of true manhood, democracy, and humanity.” The events of the ski trip, such as the excessive damages and other dangerous behaviors, constitute a failure of the organization to uphold its given standards. The GARP Justices maintain that this therefore violates the Violation of the Student Organization Constitution provision.

11. Adherence to Law – This provision states that RSOs must adhere to federal, state, and local laws. It was noted that underage drinking, marijuana use, bulk quantities of alcohol leading to distribution of alcohol, and destruction of property took place over the course of the ski trip and therefore violate the law. The GARP Justices maintain that this therefore violates the Adherence to Law provision.

In accordance with the above findings, the GARP Justices recommend the following sanctions:

1. Sigma Alpha Mu is to follow any and all recommendations from their national organization.
   a. It is important that the chapter maintains strong bonds with the national organization and complies with all rules and recommendations set forth by the national organization. The GARP Justices feel that the national organization recommendations will complement the recommendations of the panel.

2. Any and all individuals are to be held accountable by the University of Michigan, the national organization of Sigma Alpha Mu, and the Michigan State Police, where applicable.
   a. This will act as a deterrent effect for any subsequent similar behavior. Individuals must understand that their actions will carry repercussions for not just the organization at large but for themselves as well.

3. Sigma Alpha Mu is not to participate in any more off campus overnight joint fraternity/sorority events indefinitely.
   a. The GARP Justices believe that these types of events are major risk factors and have great potential for dangerous behavior, as demonstrated by the actions of Sigma Alpha Mu. Prohibiting these types of events will reduce these risks. This provision does not apply to formals, but rather explicitly or implicitly co-sponsored off campus overnight events.

4. Sigma Alpha Mu will be suspended from the Interfraternity Council until the beginning of the Winter 2016 semester.
a. Suspension will include all of the details included from the IFC bylaws. Suspension entails the following: social probation; no participation in Greek Week; no members can hold IFC office including IFC executive board, SRC, GARP, HTF, RTF; no participation in IM sports; no recruitment in the Fall of 2015; no voting rights at IFC meetings. Additionally, Sigma Alpha Mu must complete the following remedial resolutions before returning to active status:

i. Sigma Alpha Mu is to complete three different types of educational sessions during the Winter 2015 and Fall 2015 semesters: bystander intervention, risk management and sexual misconduct prevention.

1. It is clear that the incidents from the ski trip resulted from lack of proper risk management and the failure of individuals to intervene with the dangerous behaviors that caused the damages. It is the hope of the GARP Justices that by having Sigma Alpha Mu participate in these educational sessions its members will be better equipped to deal with similar situations in the future and prevent negative outcomes. We expect Sigma Alpha Mu to seek out sessions facilitated by the university. No less than 60% of the chapter must attend these sessions as well as all attendees of the ski trip. Completion of the sessions must be confirmed by Alex Krupiak, the President of the Interfraternity Council.

ii. Sigma Alpha Mu is to complete 15 hours of community service per member this semester and next semester.

1. The actions of the organization tarnished the Greek community as well as the greater University community. By completing these community service requirements, the organization will begin to mend its relationship with the community and make it an overall better place. If Sigma Alpha Mu already has requirements for its members in this regard, this condition of 15 hours will be concurrently satisfied (one hour of service as per chapter requirements counts towards one hour of the 15 required by this sanction). Community Service hours must be confirmed by Michael Kubik, the Judicial Vice President of the Interfraternity Council and presiding justice of the panel.

iii. Sigma Alpha Mu is to make an apology at all four Greek council meetings by April 1.

1. The actions of the organization affected not just the Interfraternity Council, but the entire Greek community. The GARP Justices maintain that an apology to all Greek councils will help mend the relationships between the organization and the councils. This must be confirmed by Alex Krupiak.

iv. Contingent on Treetops approval, Sigma Alpha Mu is to complete a volunteer project that benefits Treetops.

1. Financial restitution only covers the physical damages incurred over the course of the ski trip. If Treetops will allow it, a volunteer project would help to mend the relationship between the
organization and the resort as well as improve the resort on the whole. Completion of this project or notice that Treetops does not wish to proceed must be confirmed by Michael Kubik.

v. Sigma Alpha Mu is to complete an internal membership review by the national organization.
   1. A membership review will allow the chapter to identify individuals who are not fit to continue membership with Sigma Alpha Mu because of their lack of adherence to the stated values and standards of the organization. It was noted in the response documents that a membership review was to take place. Confirmation of the completion of this review is to be provided to Michael Kubik.

vi. Sigma Alpha Mu is to make an educational presentation at the Fall 2015 Social Meeting of Interfraternity Council and PanHellenic Association Chapter Officers in collaboration with Sigma Delta Tau.
   1. At the beginning of each semester, members of the IFC and PanHellenic Executive Boards host a meeting regarding social policy and risk management within the Greek community. This meeting is mandatory for the president, risk manager(s), and social chair(s) of every IFC and PanHellenic chapter. Sigma Alpha Mu and Sigma Delta Tau will design an educational program on risk management specific to off campus trips and bystander intervention within Greek life. The completed program must be submitted to the Office of Greek Life for review. Through designing and presenting the educational program, the organizations will continue to consider the damaging nature of its actions and initiate the process of eradicating actions of similar nature from the Greek community.”

Rationale for Sanctions Recommended by the GARP was provided by the panel as follows:

“These recommended sanctions are the product of considerable deliberation by the GARP Justices. The GARP Justices believe these sanctions to be appropriate for the violations. We also believe that the sanctions and resolutions are a start in mending the tarnished reputation of the both the Michigan Greek community and the University of Michigan’s reputation as well. We hope these incidents not only will start a conversation on risk management and alcohol awareness, but that we will learn from these incidents and prevent them from occurring in the future.”

(Conclusion of the exact wording of the GARP Hearing Panel)
II. Statement of University Decision

The University accepts the findings of the GARP Hearing Panel under the Standards of Conduct for Recognized Student Organizations which determined that Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity was found to be in violation of: #1 – Health and Safety; #9 – Violation of the Student Organization Constitution; and, #11 Adherence to Law. The University finds the decision rendered by the GARP Hearing Panel to be thoughtful, well-reasoned and consistent with well-established expectations and practices within Greek Life at the University of Michigan that outline behavioral expectations of community members and define co-sponsored events.

III. Statement of Sanctions

The findings of the GARP Hearing Panel under the Standards of Conduct for Recognized Student Organizations underscore the importance of individual and collective accountability for this incident. While the sanctions GARP outlined may have been sufficient and appropriate in a situation where the individuals involved were taking responsibility or, where chapter officers were providing information about individual accountability to the University, this is not true in this instance. Further, it is significant to note that Sigma Alpha Mu increased the amount of its security deposit after the first night at Treetops, which establishes the Chapter’s knowledge of risky behavior and failure to take appropriate action with that knowledge.

Given the extreme nature of the behaviors in this incident, the Official University Sanction in this matter is: De-Recognition of Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity and Restorative Measures. De-Recognition of a student organization calls for “Permanent separation of a student organization from the University. Student organizations that are de-recognized are not eligible to apply to be a recognized student organization for at least four years.” As part of this sanction, the University also recommends that the National Organization of Sigma Alpha Mu take immediate steps to remove the chapter’s charter. Finally, the University requires the current officers/other members of the organization (as defined below) to attend meetings scheduled by the Dean of Students with the Dean and/or Associate/Assistant Deans of their respective schools and colleges to discuss University expectations of leadership and accountability. These educational conversations will occur no later than April 21, 2015. Officers and other members included in these conversations are: president, vice president, treasurer, philanthropy/service chair, risk manager, social chairs 1 and 2, recruitment chair, new member educator, scholarship chair and trip organizer.

The University directs CCI to remove Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity from recognition as a voluntary student organization. Stemming from this University action, Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity will not be eligible for membership in IFC. Before Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity can be considered for future recognition as a student organization, the University also expects the fraternity to have complied with the following conditions. Further, the University may be willing to consider an application for recognition from Sigma Alpha Mu sooner than the specified four years only under the following circumstances and provisions:
1. Members of Sigma Alpha Mu must take full responsibility for implementation of the proposed sanctions outlined by their national organization in a letter dated February 5, 2015 (attached at the end of this decision.) This good-faith effort would include the implementation of the full range of: educational activities, chapter discipline, and individual discipline outlined in this document. In completing the individual discipline, it is the University’s expectation that the national organization would supply a post-membership-review list of names of active members.

2. Full and complete restitution to Treetops Resort for damages, confirmed by Treetops Resort.

3. The chapter would outline significant progress to enact change in the culture of their organization where inappropriate individual behavior has been allowed to occur without active intervention on the part of members.

4. The chapter would voluntarily participate in restorative measures, including community impact dialogue and a significant community service project designed and implemented within the resort area community as conceptualized by the Office of Student Conflict Resolution.

5. All chapter members would participate in extensive alcohol and other drug abuse prevention education, expanded bystander intervention training, risk management education and sexual misconduct prevention education. The content of each of these training programs would be reviewed and approved in advance of implementation by specified campus subject matter experts as determined by the Dean of Students.

6. Off-campus residential addresses of all chapter members would be supplied to the Dean of Students and updated each semester during the period of separation to allow for independent confirmation of any calls for service at these locations to the Ann Arbor Police Department.

7. Regular meetings to occur between the national organization and the Dean of Students prior to consideration for return to recognition status.

8. All sanctions outlined by GARP in this decision letter would be implemented and those unable to be implemented during the period of de-recognition would be implemented upon the group’s return to recognized student organization status during a to be specified probationary period.

IV. Rationale for Changes

The behavior of members of Sigma Alpha Mu fraternity over the weekend of January 16-18, 2015, at Treetops Resort was reprehensible and has caused extensive harm to the communities of Gaylord, to the University of Michigan and to the Greek Life community as a whole. The behavior was clearly outside the boundaries of the values and expectations of the University of Michigan and simultaneously violated the Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity mission statement published as:

“To guide each undergraduate member toward a more meaningful life, to prepare members for responsible fraternity and community involvement, and to create social and service opportunities for its alumni.”

Equally reprehensible, is the failure of Sigma Alpha Mu bystanders to officially report or stop the vandalism. This egregious behavior and failure to act are inconsistent with the University of Michigan’s standards of conduct for student organizations and for members of the student body. We expect more
of our students who have the privilege of associating with the University of Michigan and are deeply disappointed by the collective failure of these students to live up to our community values and expectations.

We remain committed to using all means available to hold individuals accountable.

I would like to thank the members of the GARP panel comprised of representatives from all four Greek Life councils, who served as the Justices in this case; and, the President of IFC who served as the complainant in this matter for the unwavering leadership they have demonstrated in responding to this unprecedented and extensive harm by members of Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity. Your collective leadership in self-governance and accountability serves as the foundation for the future of Greek Life at the University of Michigan.

Submitted February 27, 2015

Laura Blake Jones, Ph.D.
Dean of Students
The following list consists of educational and disciplinary sanctions that will be imposed on the Sigma Alpha Mu Chapter at the University of Michigan, as a result of members’ actions over the weekend of January 17-18, 2015 in Gaylord, MI, in which extensive vandalism and improper behavior occurred. The chapter members have accepted responsibility for their actions and recognize that significant changes must be made in their operation as well as in the culture of the chapter.

This comprehensive list was developed by a group of Sigma Alpha Mu professional staff and volunteer leaders, with the goal of intensively educating our members about risky behavior and improving community service involvement, which is intended to help the chapter rehabilitate their public and university reputation. The chapter recognizes that this reputational rehabilitation will take time. Further, the chapter members accept that there is a punitive component to this rehabilitative process; some of the components are permanent internal rules changes and some are temporary. Deadlines for completion are indicated where possible.

This list is a “proposed” list and has not yet been formally adopted by the Sigma Alpha Mu Fraternity International Board of Directors. Pending the findings of the GARP hearing, we are certainly willing to adopt modifications that you may recommend.

A. Educational:
   1) The Chapter shall plan and present (at their cost) an alcohol abuse and awareness speaker series to be open to the entire UM student body. At least two events must be held. Complete before 12/1/15.
   2) All chapter members must participate in two Fraternity Health and Safety Initiative modules consisting of alcohol abuse awareness/bystander behavior, and sexual misconduct awareness. FHSI is an educational program that is currently being implemented by fraternity clients of the James R. Favor Co. (liability insurance underwriter). Complete by September 30, 2015.
   3) All chapter members must successfully complete GreekLife-edu Part 2 (online webinar) before March 31.
   4) At least four chapter members must attend the Sigma Alpha Mu Leadership Conference and Convention in August 2015 (at least two of the attendees must be chapter officers).

B. Discipline – Chapter Level:
   1) Chapter shall make full restitution to resort owner or their insurer (via subrogation efforts) within one month of presentation of invoice.
      a. Chapter shall remain under full suspension until financial restitution is made.
   2) Chapter shall publish a full page ad in the Michigan Daily, apologizing for their behavior and the embarrassment caused to the UM community. Must be placed before March 31, 2015.
   3) Chapter shall hold no social events through the end of the current academic year.
4) Chapter shall host no social events through 12/31/15. Events must be held at third-party locations.
5) The Chapter house shall be alcohol-free indefinitely, effective immediately.

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6) The Chapter (or its housing corporation) shall hire a live-in House Director (job description to be prepared), and this director shall begin working before the beginning of Fall semester, 2015.
7) Chapter members shall perform community service hours in Ann Arbor and in Gaylord, MI. Minimum of 10 hrs per member per semester until end of Spring Semester, 2016. (Equivalent of 1200 hours per semester for the whole chapter.) This may include work with Habitat for Humanity.
8) The Chapter shall participate in Adopt A Block program in Ann Arbor for a minimum of five years.

C. Discipline – Individuals:
   1) The Chapter will continue cooperating with investigation to determine who the provocateurs and worst offenders were on the weekend in question.
      a. Work with national Fraternity Board to expel or suspend the worst offenders from membership.