

Alpha Epsilon Pi Fraternity

Investigative Summary

Date: April 17, 2020
From: Xavier Shannon, Assistant Director, Office of Student Conduct
To: Michael Gilmer, Director, Office of Student Conduct
Subject: Nu Delta of Fraternity Alpha Epsilon Pi Investigative Summary

Organizational Rules of Conduct: Theft, Disregard for Property, Possessing and/or Providing False and Misleading Information, Harmful Behavior, Hazing, Alcohol Related Misconduct, Drug Related Misconduct, and Disruptive Conduct

Date/Time of alleged incident: Fall 2019

Allegations

February 27, 2020: The Office of Student Conduct received an anonymous incident report regarding Alpha Epsilon Pi Fraternity. The incident report included 18 photos, seven videos and a timeline of events with captions that display drug use, alcohol use, a porn binder and hazing. The anonymous report stated that Alpha Epsilon Pi, *“has not only broken UCF rules, but have also put many of the new pledges through dangerous and harmful activities.”* The dangerous and harmful activities allegedly started *“with rush, potentials and students that signed their bids were influenced by not only members of the fraternity, but with the alcohol and drugs that they would provide them. Members in the fraternity thought that it would be appropriate to give kids alcohol to drink, and marijuana to smoke in order to try and influence them to join the fraternity. Not only did I directly see this but experienced it for myself. After these events myself along with many others became inducted as pledges and began the pledge process. This is when some of the disgusting events and situations members of the fraternity began to put pledges in. Some of the activities that pledges were force to do during their new member education process was: drink bong water, drink multiple shots of vinegar, forcefully down random amounts of certain food, be physical assaulted by brothers, forcefully make pledges consume alcohol, blind food pledges and throw a variety of substances and food on them for hours, and make pledges carry binders full of porn to and from meetings.*

Activities such as hazing were very hard to monitor as pledges were required to meet with brothers on different times at different locations to interview brothers. During these interview brothers were allowed to ask for two favors that the pledge would then have to do, this is when the activities previously listed above would mostly happen. In addition, the AEPI house is filled up with high amounts of drugs and alcohol, this can be also said for brothers living outside of the house in their own apartments. These activities are dangerous and shouldn't be happening at all on UCF campus. These activities were also done at many of unregistered events such as parties, "Pregames" or unregistered brother hood events. "Pregames" would happen all throughout the semester, sometimes brothers would host pregames before new member education meetings, and pledges had to then clean up the mess before the meeting started. New member education meetings would happen on varies occasion happening at different times all throughout the day and night.

On some occasions there would be meetings for pledges on back-to-back occasions where pledges wouldn't be able to leave the house until 2AM or until they completed the task they were assigned to do. On top of that pledges were forced to get up at early hours in the morning to drive to complete tasks for the brotherhood. It came to a point during the pledge process where pledges were barley getting 6 hours- sometimes less- of sleep a night. Pledges were pressured and even times threatened during meeting to participate in certain activities or speak about things. The fraternity made it clear to pledges that if they did anything that would threaten and jeopardize the fraternity that they would be handled with. Of course, they choose the biggest guys in the fraternity to relay this message to pledges in order to physically intimidate them. Some things that they didn't want us talking about were all the things I previously listed above, but the fraternity made it clear that not only pledges, but brothers were to refrain from speaking about a Title IX case that happened at one of their house parties that they were not reporting to the school. The incident was a pledge at this time, possibly intoxicated, began to grab a girls breast during a photo. Brothers and pledges were told that if they were to speak about the case to any outsiders that they would be removed.”

The incident report detailed a meeting with the Executive Board and a national representative from the fraternity. The meeting was stated as “unprofessional, the room looked and smelled like everyone in the room just finished smoking marijuana. Some of the members in the room also seemed to be under the influence.” The correspondent shared the meeting was “disappointing and highly unprofessional that a representative would be sitting in a room with smoke in the air and the odor of marijuana bellowing out of the living room.” The report shared that members of the Executive Board “tend to indulge in the use of alcohol and drugs-many of the pieces of evidence below will help support this and following claims.” A member of the Executive Board was shared as someone who “loved to haze pledges and made a pledge drink bong water after previously smoking marijuana out of it, but also force fed me a “milkshake” to drink as one of his favors, the shake consisted of a whole cup of cooking spray and random mix of canned, refrigerated food, and pre work out.” According to the report the shake was made “with the intent to make it disgusting to drink.”

Another incident involving an Executive Board member was shared, in which “he forcefully put a bucket of beer in my face and told me to “Start Chugging”. Not only did he do this with me but with many other pledges.” At an Alpha Epsilon Phi (AEPHI) social this Executive Board member “drank to the point of blackout drunk and was almost to the point of going to the hospital.” At the meeting following the social, “pledges were blamed for the actions and consequences that member put on himself.” The reporter felt a need to write this about this Executive Board member since now he is still on the Executive Board and “many pledges and brother have their safety at risk.” The report shared during “this semester alone there has been underage drinking but not only himself and brothers, but also many unregistered pregames and parties that have not been reported to the school.”

The reporter stated, *“I hope this report will protect the safety of other brothers in the fraternity, but more important the pledges. At this time, I believe that the Spring pledge class (Alpha Sigma) is near half way along with their pledge program. This can be a difficult time as they have already been through approximately 4 weeks-in their process and this can be the point in time where brothers start to push things even further. Some will do this because pledges have already been through so much that they are now pushing through anything in order to reach the end goal of becoming a brother, meaning they could be taken advantage of. (Assuming pledges this semester will and have endured the same things I have during my pledge process). I really hope this report will protect my fellow classmates at the University of Central Florida. I am keeping my identity protected for my safety”*

Timeline of Investigation

Due to the severity of the allegations submitted on February 27, 2020, the Office of Student Conduct placed Alpha Epsilon Pi on organizational interim suspension on February 28, 2020.

The Office of Student Conduct conducted an investigation to look further into the allegations referenced in the report. On February 28, 2020, a grouping of 31 new members, pledges and dropped pledges completed written surveys in Neptune Community at the University of Central Florida. The results of the surveys did not support the information shared in the incident report, which led to further investigating by interviewing certain members and pledges of the fraternity. The persons listed below were selected to participate in interviews based off information gathered from surveys and information received in the incident report.

Questioned Associates

Witness One: [REDACTED]
Witness Two: [REDACTED]
Witness Three: [REDACTED]
Witness Four: [REDACTED]
Witness Five: [REDACTED]
Witness Six: [REDACTED]

Witness Seven: [REDACTED]
Witness Eight: [REDACTED]
Witness Nine: [REDACTED]
Witness Ten: [REDACTED]
Witness Eleven: [REDACTED]
Witness Twelve: [REDACTED]

Witness Thirteen: [REDACTED]
Witness Fourteen: [REDACTED]
Witness Fifteen: [REDACTED]
Witness Sixteen: [REDACTED]
Witness Seventeen: [REDACTED]

Witness One

Witness One is a member of the Fall 2019 pledge class, he shared on his survey he “felt at home in the fraternity, it was enlightening and helped him grow as a person.” He spent between 8-9 hours a week in the house fulfilling expectations of the pledge process and had no problem with sharing his pledge process with his family. He “never felt pressured to do something that didn’t align with his values and was unaware of instances in which someone being asked to do something that made them appear uncomfortable.” When asked about the culture of drug and alcohol use in the chapter, he stated “the pledge process is dry, we were not supposed to drink or use ay dry.” **Witness One** shared there are no family traditions and nothing during the pledge process made him feel uncomfortable, embarrassed or unsafe.

During the in-person interview, **Witness One** was asked about the allegation of a pledge drinking bong water and said he “he was aware of the allegation.” **Witness One** explained that “he was the pledge that drank the bong water and he made the story up so he could have a cool story to tell.” **Witness One** shared that the fraternity sponsored a trip Lido’s Cabaret after initiation and no videos or photos were not allowed to be taken. He explained the fraternity provided pledges with money for entertainment at the Cabaret. He explained in the in-person interview pledges had to make a book with photos of their favorite category of porn. The porn book was made to serve as a funny icebreaker which will give pledges and brothers an opportunity to learn about each other. **Witness One** was never forced to use drugs or alcohol and if any pledges did use drugs or drink alcohol, they would be “balled” which means being removed from the fraternity. **Witness One** shared there is marijuana and alcohol use in the house however he has seen the President who is under the age of 21 drink alcohol but never in the house. He stated there was a pool party on February 22nd that about 20 brothers attended in which there was underage drinking. **Witness One** was unsure if the pool party was a sponsored fraternity event.

Witness Two

Witness Two is a member of the Fall 2019 pledge class who shared on his survey, “it would be a wonderful idea to join a fraternity with kids who hold the same values as I do.” He spent between 6-8

hours a week in the house. He “never felt pressured to do anything and has never seen anything during the new member process that made him uncomfortable, embarrassed or unsafe.” When asked about the culture of drug and alcohol use in the chapter, he stated “our pledge process is dry. If a pledge is caught with alcohol or drugs they will be brought up as a risk and will most likely no longer be a part of the pledge process.” **Witness Two** shared there are no family traditions and after being introduced to his Big Brother he “went to hang out with him and my family. We had pizza and watched basketball.”

During the in-person interview, **Witness Two** shared he “did not hear about a pledge drinking bong water and if it happened, I was not there.” **Witness Two** shared that the fraternity sponsored a trip to Lido’s Cabaret, and he did not drink that night. He also shared he “never drank during his pledge process and it is a possibility that the current president who is under the age of 21 drank.” According to **Witness Two** he had to make a porn book which was an ice breaker he thought was funny. **Witness Two** shared he was never forced to use drugs or drink alcohol, but he has “seen a good amount of underage drinking and marijuana use in the fraternity.” It was explained that his family has no traditions and he heard of families slapping new members in the face but did not see it.

Witness Two detailed a “Trust Activity” in which pledges had to trust that brothers would not have them drink alcohol but rather water. The activity was explained that “members of the fraternity placed water in empty liquor bottles and deceived pledges to think it was alcohol. On the other hand, empty water bottles were filled with salt water or vinegar to make them think it was pure water. The bottles were poured into a line of shot glasses filled with salt water, vinegar or water. The pledges were unaware of what was in the shot glasses, they assumed the content in the glass was from the bottle it was being poured from.

Witness Three

Witness Three is a member of the Fall 2019 pledge class, who shared on his survey, “I believe Alpha Epsilon Pi was a supportive and smart brotherhood that I felt would benefit my career at UCF.” He spent between 8-9 hours a week in the house during his pledge process and he never “felt pressure to do something that did not align with my values.” He felt comfortable through the entire new member process and he could not “remember an instance of anyone appearing uncomfortable during the process.” When asked about the culture of drug and alcohol use in the chapter, he stated “during the new member process all usage of any drugs or alcohol is not allowed. In no instance, was I pressured to participate in using drugs or alcohol.”

During the in-person interview, **Witness Three** shared his family was skeptical about him joining the fraternity because of the stereotypes and things could happen. **Witness Three** confirmed that he has seen underage drinking and marijuana use in the house and he “knew going in it, it was possible that this would be there.” **Witness Three** defined hazing as “doing something that made him uncomfortable” and he never saw that during his time with the fraternity. During the interview, **Witness Three** shared that he “has seen the current president smoke and he heard about a pledge being forced to drink bong water but did not see it.” He explained that pledges were told to make porn books with photos of their favorite type of porn to serve as an icebreaker. **Witness Three** felt the “Trust Activity” related to the values of the fraternity because pledges had to trust their brothers. He shared that “the two fluids used were pure water and vinegar diluted with water.”

Witness Three was unsure if the trip to Lido’s Cabaret was a sponsored event and shared, “they were not allowed to take any photos or videos.” **Witness Three** said “when you meet your Big it is a tradition, everyone is slapped in the face, I was slapped in the face and was shocked by it.” Besides being slapped in the face he mentioned that he “heard stories about families forcing people to drink maple syrup.” **Witness Three** shared that he did not agree with everything he experienced but felt “the process is a

commitment.” **Witness Three** also stated “I had to do things in order to be a member. The overall process was beneficial, I made sure I was safe while going through the process.”

Witness Four

Witness Four is a member of the Fall 2019 pledge class, who stated in his survey he “was already very friendly with all the brothers and felt like I was at home with them” prior to joining the fraternity. He shared during his pledge process and time in the fraternity he “never felt pressured to do something that didn’t align with his values and was never someone being asked to do something that made them appear uncomfortable. When asked about the culture of drug and alcohol use in the chapter, he responded “none at all in the process, certainly nothing even remotely forced.” **Witness Four** shared he spent between “6-8 hours a week in the house and the only family tradition is to hang at the house with the brothers after being introduced to your Big Brother.”

During the in-person interview, **Witness Four** shared he “did not hear about a pledge drinking bong water and he believes the fraternity has respect towards all women.” He described the porn books “as a fun activity and an ice breaker he shared with his mother who did not have a problem with is because it was for the fraternity.” **Witness Four** said the trip to Lido’s Cabaret was not a sponsored fraternity event and all but two new members went. He explained that he has seen drug and alcohol use but never during the time he was in the house. **Witness Four** defines hazing as “forced to do cruel things like drugs, alcohol or something physical and did not feel this had occurred during pledge process.” On the night of the Big Brother reveal he stated, “I did not take a shot because I didn’t want to and was just slapped in the face.” He stated, “during the reveal all other pledges had to take a shot and were slapped in the face as a part of family traditions.” **Witness Four** stated he heard a story about a family within the fraternity forcing new members to drink maple syrup as apart of their tradition but did not know which family.

Witness Five

Witness Five is a member of the Fall 2019 pledge class, who stated in his survey, he “liked the values of the members and what the fraternity stood for” prior to joining the fraternity. He shared he enjoyed the beginning of the pledge process but after the third week he realized they were being treated unfairly and the tasks that were being asked of brothers became overwhelming. According to **Witness Five**, pledges were supposed to interview fraternity brothers to learn about them and the fraternity. **Witness Five** verified that pledges had to make a porn binder and “the purpose is to hold information gathered from interviews with fraternity brothers.” He explained that after interviews, pledges were told they needed to complete tasks which varied from: purchasing food, drinking liquor and smoking marijuana. Another favor that was completed was a pledge “drinking a blended shake with canned foods and other random items for the purpose of getting pledges sick.”

Witness Five shared that **Witness Fifteen** forced **Witness One** to drink bong water after he finished smoking marijuana out of it. According to **Witness Five**, “about 75% of the brotherhood forced pledges to do things he would define as hazing and the entire pledge class experience some sort of hazing.” **Witness Five** defined hazing as “forcing or pressuring someone to do something they didn’t want to do.” He explained that pledges spent “25 or more hours a week in the house which led to the grades of pledges dropping and even put some at risk of losing scholarships due to low GPAs.” **Witness Five** explained that his pledge process was “a lot of labor work and pledges were basically slaves” due to all the expectations by fraternity brothers. **Witness Five** explained that Alpha Epsilon Pi had several unregistered events and pledges were told not to post about these events on social media so it can go unnoticed. He shared that most of the unregistered events were wet events that took place before rush events. According to **Witness Five**, the only registered wet event the fraternity had was a house party in which a pledge inappropriately

touched a female. As a result of the incident “that pledge was removed from the pledge process and the fraternity tried to cover up the incident.”

Witness Five shared that the evening he found out who his Big Brother was, he “was slapped in the face and forced to chug alcohol.” He explained that being slapped in the face was “unexpected and caught him off guard but all pledges were slapped in the face, some even to the point he didn’t think they were going to get up.” **Witness Five** was able to confirm family traditions in which new members had to drink a family drink after being slapped in the face. Other family traditions included a family called “Pimps 954” “forcing someone to chug maple syrup and other brothers being forced to smoke marijuana as a part of family traditions.” **Witness Five** verified the fraternity trip to Lido’s Cabaret and was unsure if it was a sponsored fraternity event because they were picked up from the parking lot by Knights Pub. Despite being inducted into Alpha Epsilon Pi, he shared “it is the expectation that you still do what they say.” **Witness Five** compared the fraternity to “dirty salesman” because “they will say anything and do anything to make you feel welcomed, then everything changes.” He felt “misled by the fraternity with the drug and alcohol use in the fraternity.” He also shared, “during the pledge process, things didn’t get bad until week four, so pledges decided to stay because it was only three weeks left to become a member.”

Witness Six

Witness Six is a member of the Fall 2019 pledge class, who stated in his survey he “felt like AEPI was the right choice for me it also has a history of smart hardworking members that I wanted to be a part of.” He spent 10+ hours a week in the house in which he “never felt pressured to do anything that didn’t align with his value system.” He did not see any instances in which someone was asked to do something that made them appear uncomfortable. When asked about the culture of drug and alcohol use in the chapter, he stated “there is a normal amount of drug and alcohol use from the older brothers. Nothing excessive or dangerous.” **Witness Six** shared after he was introduced to his Big Brother “he went back to his apartment and watched television to get to know each other.”

During the in-person interview, **Witness Six** was asked about the allegation of a pledge drinking bong water and he said he “was unaware of the allegation.” **Witness Six** did not have a problem with doing the porn book because it was an ice breaker for the pledges to get to know brothers. According to **Witness Six**, hazing is “when someone is being forced to do something they don’t want to do.” He shared that “no one has ever put hands on me, and I would drop if they did.” He shared that he was not slapped and did not see others slapped during his Big Brother reveal but he did have to drink at his Big’s house. He shared that “one family tradition is to make someone drink a bottle of maple syrup” but he was unsure of which family. **Witness Six**, stated the fraternity sponsored a trip to Lido’s Cabaret and pledges were given money to use at the Cabaret. When asked about to “Trust Activity” he shared he chose the wrong shot glass and drank vinegar. **Witness Six** explained that “pledges felt they needed to complete tasks and do things for fraternity brothers to avoid from being balled.” Being “balled” means to be removed from the fraternity.

Witness Seven

Witness Seven pledged during the Spring 2020 semester but was dropped from the fraternity because he “didn’t see eye to eye with brothers.” He shared the differences he had with the fraternity stemmed from a fraternity event and which they did not agree with his interaction with a female. **Witness Seven** said he was “to forthcoming with the female and the fraternity voted to remove him on a Sunday.” During his pledge process he “never felt pressured to do anything and saw lessons in every task a pledge had to complete.” He shared that he “bought fruit snacks for brothers to meetings to show his loyalty and dedication.” **Witness Seven** also shared that pledges had to clean the fraternity house and they felt it showed they would be beneficial to the fraternity. According to **Witness Seven**, brothers often joked with

pledges that if they didn't complete tasks that could not be members. The porn book was described as a fun joke that pledges were asked to do. **Witness Seven** pledge process lasted for 3-4 weeks, during that time he has seen underage drinking and marijuana use in the house.

Witness Eight

Witness Eight pledged during the Spring 2020 semester and said, "it was a good experience in which I learned about brothers doing interviews." He felt joining the fraternity would help him in meeting new people on campus. **Witness Eight** felt making the porn book was meant to be a fun joke and he did not have a problem completing it. According to **Witness Eight**, pledges had to complete favors and do things around the house in order to continue in the pledge process. He shared pledges had to bring bananas or a five-gallon jug of water to the fraternity house. **Witness Eight** did not know the purpose of the banana but the water was for the brothers to drink. He also explained that cleaning the fraternity house was a part of the pledge process and it was the pledge class responsibility to clean the house. **Witness Eight**, shared during his three weeks in the house that he has seen alcohol used in occasionally drug use among members. He never saw pledges drink alcohol or use drugs during the pledge process.

Witness Nine

Witness Nine was a member of the Fall 2019 pledge class, who eventually left because he felt disrespected by the fraternity. He shared that he was nervous for the first meeting because "frats are known for hazing and I didn't know what to expect." **Witness Nine** felt disrespected by fraternity brothers because they would "yell, scream and curse in his face if a mistake was made." He explained if one pledge made a mistake the entire class would suffer the consequences which was being belittled and disrespected. **Witness Nine** shared that pledges were required to do tasks in order to become members and if they did not complete tasks, they would be removed from the pledge process. Some of the tasks pledges needed to complete were cleaning cars, cleaning the fraternity house and helping with repairs on the house. **Witness Nine** shared that the drug and alcohol use in the house was "coerced by the fraternity on pledges as well as brothers." **Witness Nine** was unaware if any pledge had to drink bong water but did confirm that making a porn book was a requirement. He explained an incident in which a pledges' porn book was not adequate or up to the standards of the fraternity and was ripped by members of the fraternity. Two other pledges had their porn books ripped because one pledges' book did not meet the standards. According to **Witness Nine**, pledges were not given standards just to include photos of their favorite porn category.

Witness Ten

Witness Ten is a member of the Fall 2019 pledge class who stated in his survey he spent seven hours a week in the house during his pledge process and never felt pressured to do anything during his pledge process that didn't align with his value system. He shared pledges were "asked to set up different events as well as help them keep the house relatively clean." According to **Witness Ten** there were no activities that made him feel "uncomfortable, embarrassed or unsafe" and he "never observed anyone doing something that them made appear uncomfortable." When asked about the culture of drug and alcohol use in the chapter, he stated "we had a completely dry new member process with no drugs or alcohol." **Witness Ten** shared there are "no family traditions and after big brother introductions, we just went back to their apartment and hung out."

During the in-person interview, **Witness Ten** shared that he was in the house two or three times and he never saw any smoking in the house and all activities during the pledge process were free will. He explained the porn book was an activity that was not forced but pledges decided to complete it. **Witness Ten** was aware of rumors of a pledge drinking bong water but was unsure of who drank the bong water. According to **Witness Ten**, members of the fraternity were picked up from the fraternity house to attend

Lido's Cabaret and were given money to use at the cabaret. He was unsure if the trip was sponsored by the fraternity or approved by the university. When questioned about family traditions, he shared "I was slapped in the face when I met my big, but I considered it to be a love tap." **Witness Ten** also shared that his "family drink is Grey Goose and after meeting my Big everyone took a shot of alcohol." He stated that "one family tradition is to drink maple syrup" but he is unsure of which family made pledges drink it.

Witness Eleven

Witness Eleven pledged during the Spring 2020 semester and shared on his survey he initially considered AEPi because he "met some members of the fraternity and instantly clicked with them." He spent between 8-10 hours in the house and has never felt pressured to do something that didn't align with his value system. During his pledge process he learned about Alpha Epsilon Pi history, organization and values. **Witness Eleven** never felt uncomfortable, embarrassed, or unsafe during the pledge process and he has never seen someone being asked to do something that made them appear uncomfortable. When asked about the culture of drug and alcohol use in the chapter, he stated "it is nonexistent." **Witness Eleven** shared after being introduced to his Big Brother a celebration ensued and he went to dinner with his Big. According to **Witness Eleven** there was no alcohol or drugs during his Big Brother reveal. He described the porn book as a funny thing to do and did not see an issue with completing it. **Witness Eleven** describes hazing as "something that can put you in danger" and he has never seen anyone in danger.

Witness Twelve

Witness Twelve pledged during the Spring 2020 semester and shared on his survey he wanted to join the fraternity because "I admired the reputation and wanted to get involved with my school more." **Witness Twelve** never felt pressured to do anything that didn't align with his value system and he never encountered activities that would make him uncomfortable, embarrassed or unsafe during his pledge process. He spent eight hours a week in the house and is unaware of any family traditions. **Witness Twelve** did not see a culture of drug and alcohol use in the fraternity and the brothers of the fraternity "were very welcoming and understanding."

During the in-person interview, **Witness Twelve** defined hazing as "making someone do something that they felt uncomfortable or in danger." During his pledge process he had to interview pledges to learn about them and the fraternity. **Witness Twelve** stated he did not have to do any favors for brothers, but he did hear from alumni that pledges sometimes do favors. He explained that all the pledges made porn books and there were no consequences if they did not complete a book. According to **Witness Twelve**, the porn book "showed dedication and devotion to the fraternity." He never seen drug or alcohol use in the house but did share that between 5-10 pledges and members of the fraternity have medical marijuana cards. He has never seen brothers or pledges ask for marijuana from those with medical marijuana cards.

Witness Thirteen

Witness Thirteen pledged during the Spring 2020 semester and shared on his survey he wanted to join the fraternity because "friends from home were in it and their Jewish values stood out to me." **Witness Thirteen** never felt pressured to do anything that didn't align with his value system and he never encountered activities that would make him uncomfortable, embarrassed or unsafe during his pledge process. He spent 10 hours a week in the house and the only event that took place after his Big Brother reveal was "playing football in the backyard." When asked about the culture of drug and alcohol use in the chapter, he stated "brothers won't allow new members or anyone under the 21 to consume alcohol, nor do I participate or any brothers in drugs." During the in-person interview, **Witness Thirteen** shared that "some brothers have medical marijuana cards, but I never go around them because I have asthma."

According to **Witness Thirteen**, pledges are never forced to do anything, and everything is optional. The porn book was explained as something fun to do during the pledge process and he was fine completing it.

Witness Fourteen

Witness Fourteen was a member of the Executive Board during the Fall 2019 semester who believed Alpha Epsilon Pi helped with bridging the gap between high school and college from him. **Witness Fourteen** said he wanted to be an apart of the Executive Board “to fix issues going on in the chapter and to be involved in the pledge process to ensure everything was going as planned.” He shared the fraternity “got away from favors due to them being misused.” **Witness Fourteen** stated that pledges are never forced to do anything, and everything is optional. He explained that having pledges do a porn book could be viewed in a negative way due to the content in the binder. According to **Witness Fourteen** during the Big Brother reveal, pledges were in a room with the rest of the fraternity and met their Big in front of the group. During the reveal no pledges were physically abused, forced to drink alcohol or use drugs. He shared he “had worries about things going bad during the family functions but made certainty that repercussions were clear if someone did not follow his orders.” **Witness Fourteen** doesn’t believe there is a drug problem in the fraternity, but brothers do use marijuana and some brothers do have medical marijuana cards. He said he has never been around brothers when they are smoking marijuana and has never seen any drug use in the house. If there is drug use in the house, he has never seen it and he “doesn’t believe brothers who don’t live in the house would bring drugs in the house.” **Witness Fourteen** is aware of the allegation of a pledge being forced to drink bong water and said, “it was addressed and found not to be a real issue because no one drank bong water.” He explained the fraternity trip to Lido’s Cabaret as a celebration for the pledge class after becoming members. There were no rules broken during the trip because everyone who attended was of legal age and it was optional. **Witness Fourteen** expressed how the fraternity is currently working on ways to change the reputation and fix issues they may have during the pledge process.

Witness Fifteen

Witness Fifteen was a member of the Executive Board during the Fall 2019 semester and felt the pledge process was a good one in which they had a good group of pledges. He explained that he did not attend Lido’s Cabaret but was aware of the trip. **Witness Fifteen** shared pledges were never forced to do anything they did not want to during the pledge process. He denied the allegation in which a pledge was forced to drink bong water. **Witness Fifteen** stated “at the time the porn binders were not a bad idea because it had been in the chapter for some time but looking back on it, it was a terrible decision.” He shared he has been working very hard to remove some of the traditions and activities that occur during the pledge process. **Witness Fifteen** stated the “Trust Activity” did occur in the Fall semester and pledges were deceived in thinking they were drinking one substance, but it was something else. According to **Witness Fifteen**, the two substances were Pedialyte and water used in the “Trust Activity.” He reassured that vinegar and salt water were not used, and pledges could have been confused if they never had Pedialyte. **Witness Fifteen** stated he never smoked marijuana in the house and has never seen marijuana use in the house. He shared that he along with some members may use tobacco and nicotine. **Witness Fifteen** shared that brothers who live in the house do have alcohol, but it is stored in their room and not in the common area. According to **Witness Fifteen**, the only alcohol he has consumed in the house was wine which is a part of the Jewish culture. He shared that the fraternity had a sponsored “Fight Night” at a UFC gym which was completely optional, and it was a bonding experience and not used to beat on new members or pledges. **Witness Fifteen** stated he is “currently working to clean up some of the issues in the fraternity and change the culture of Alpha Epsilon Pi.” He shared he wants to remove alcohol out of the house as well as the “Trust Activity” and porn binders from the pledge process.

Witness Sixteen

Witness Sixteen was a member of the Executive Board during the Fall 2019 semester and shared he “did not have much involvement in the pledge process and was only around for payment for fraternity sponsored events.” **Witness Sixteen** shared “he didn’t assign tasks to complete and was unaware if brothers had pledges complete tasks.” According to **Witness Sixteen**, there were “no repercussions for messing things up such as not having the right amount of interviews.” He was unaware of any drug or alcohol use during the pledge process because he was not around. He shared that “family traditions were mostly getting dinner and getting know each other.” **Witness Sixteen** was unaware of any other family traditions that occurred. He did have knowledge of the “Trust Activity” and shared water was used and “the other substance could have been vinegar but confidently believes it was salt water.” **Witness Sixteen** stated his lack of participation in the fraternity centered around his job and the hours he works.

Witness Seventeen

Witness Seventeen was a member of the Executive Board during the Fall 2019 semester and shared he “never experienced anything negative as a new member.” He stated that the president during the fall semester “had done a good job at wiping the slate clean after the last executive board was removed.” **Witness Seventeen** felt “the fraternity needed a culture change because the fraternity wasn’t living up to the standards, but he believes in the last year there has been a drastic change.” He shared pledges “don’t do favors anymore because brother don’t know how to behave.” During the Fall 2019 semester, he stated “everything that I witnessed has been consensual and the fraternity doesn’t force pledges to do anything.” **Witness Seventeen** said he “didn’t slap his little, didn’t make him drink, didn’t drink with him and all they did was play Super Smash Brothers after Big/Little reveal.” He shared that all families have alcoholic drinks, but they are not allowed to drink them until they are 21. **Witness Seventeen** said he doesn’t go to the house much because it is not as fun when he first joined the fraternity. He believes the “porn binders aren’t ideal to show to a rabbi or family but there was no harm or foul in making them.” He was “confused by the binders and felt that making them were immature.” **Witness Seventeen** shared that the “Fight Night” event was not a fraternity sponsored event and it was organized as a self defense course. He stated that he “never saw a brother force a pledge to drink bong water and doesn’t think it is true.”

Conclusion

Based upon the review of the information gathered and inconsistencies shared during the investigation, it is recommended that the case move forward to the formal review process for resolution. Through the investigation, the Office of Student Conduct believes that based upon the preponderance of the evidence that a hazing event did occur as well as other organizational rules of conduct during the fall 2019 semester.

Through the investigation, members shared they saw marijuana use and underage drinking in the house. One member shared he “seen a good amount of underage drinking and marijuana use in the fraternity.” During investigative interviews members of the Fall 2019 pledge class shared they were slapped in the face during the Big/Little reveal. A member of the pledge class stated, “when you meet your big it is a tradition, everyone is slapped in the face, I was slapped in the face and was shocked it.” Another member said “I did not take a shot because I didn’t want to and was just slapped in the face.”

The Investigator was also made aware that Alpha Epsilon Pi has pledges participate in a “Trust Activity” in which they are misled to think they have an option to drink liquor or water, but the liquids are salt water, vinegar or Pedialyte. During the investigation members and pledges confirmed that the fraternity has pledges make a porn book with photos of their favorite porn category. Many of those interviewed shared the porn book was fun and was used as an ice breaker. The Investigator received conflicting information regarding a pledge being forced to drink bong water. Some members heard of the incident, while others denied it and one member of the Fall 2019 pledge class confirmed it did occur. One of the

members of the Fall 2019 pledge class said that “he was the pledge that drank the bong water and he made the story up so he could have a cool story to tell.”

During the investigation, members of the fraternity has knowledge of families within the fraternity having members drink maple syrup, drink alcohol and use drugs as part of family traditions. Other family traditions that were shared was playing video games, handing out at the house and having an alcoholic drink designated to the family. During the Spring 2020 pledge process it was shared that members of the fraternity would “yell, scream and curse in his face if a mistake was made.” Throughout the pledge process some pledges felt they needed to complete and do activities to avoid from being removed the fraternity. In some instances, pledges had to bring fruit snacks, bananas or gallons of water to meetings. The time that pledges spent in the house varied as well as the activities they completed. Some pledges cleaned the house, bought members food or helped with projects around the house. One member considered it “a lot of labor work and pledges were basically slaves” due to all the expectations by fraternity brothers. It was disclosed in several interviews that fraternity had a sponsored trip to Lido’s Cabaret and pledges were giving money to use while at the establishment. During the investigation there was confusion on what events were sponsored fraternity events and which events were not.

Upon conclusion of the investigation, The Investigator has concerns with the organization, including but not limited to the following:

- alleged forced hazing related activities; and
- alcohol and drug allegations; and
- pledges stating, they were “basically slaves” and
- pledges participating in a “Trust Activity” in which pledges are deceived; and
- pledges creating a book with photos of their favorite porn category; and
- the fraternity members being unsure if events are registered; and
- the strain and stress the pledge process can have on pledges; and
- multiple inconsistencies and misleading information provided throughout the investigation

The Investigator recommends for the Office of Student Conduct to proceed with the formal review process for Alpha Epsilon Pi Fraternity on the following charges:

Theft, Disregard for Property (1c): Misuse or mishandling of organizational funds by any officer, member, or other individual.

Possessing and/or Providing False and Misleading Information and/or Falsification of University Records (2a): Withholding related information, or furnishing false, misleading, incomplete, or incorrect information (oral or written) to University Officials, non-university law enforcement officers, faculty or staff.

Possessing and/or Providing False and Misleading Information and/or Falsification of University Records (2d): Deliberately and purposefully providing false or misleading verbal or written information about another person.

Possessing and/or Providing False and Misleading Information and/or Falsification of University Records (2e): Falsification, distortion, or misrepresentation of information during an investigation, the student conduct review process, including knowingly initiating a false complaint.

Disruptive Conduct (3a): Engaging in obscene or indecent conduct.

Disruptive Conduct (3c): Bullying: Defined as behavior of any sort (including communicative behavior) directed at another, that is severe, pervasive, or persistent, and is of a nature that would cause a reasonable person or group in the target's position substantial emotional distress and undermine his or her ability to work, study, or participate in University life or regular activities, or which would place a reasonable person in fear of injury or death.

Disruptive Conduct (3d): Failure to comply with the administrative policies as enacted by the University.

Disruptive Conduct (3g): Condoning or encouraging acts of harmful behavior as defined above or failing to intervene on an act of harmful behavior while it is occurring.

Harmful Behavior (4a): Physical violence towards another person or group.

Harmful Behavior (4d): Verbal, digital, or written abuse, threats, intimidation, coercion and/or other conduct that endangers the health, safety or well-being of another person or group, or which would place a reasonable person in fear of bodily injury or death.

Alcohol Related Misconduct (6a): Use and/or possession of alcoholic beverages, except as expressly permitted by law and University regulations/policies.

Alcohol Related Misconduct (6c): Furnishing or causing to be furnished any alcoholic beverage to any person under the legal drinking age.

Alcohol Related Misconduct (6d): Behavior under the influence of alcohol.

Alcohol Related Misconduct (6e): Furnishing or causing to be furnished any alcoholic beverage to any person in a state of noticeable intoxication.

Alcohol Related Misconduct (6f): Failure of a registered student organization to take all necessary steps to see that no person under the legal drinking age possesses alcoholic beverages at functions it sponsors or within any property or transportation it owns, operates, and/or rents.

Drug Related Misconduct (7a): Unlawful use and/or possession of any narcotic or other controlled substances, and possession and/or use of drug paraphernalia.

Hazing (10a): Hazing is any action or situation that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health and/or safety of a student for purposes including but not limited to initiation or admission into, or association with, any organization operating under registration with or official sanction of the University. Hazing may result in felony charges.

Hazing (10b): Hazing includes brutality of a physical nature such as whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the elements; forced consumption of any food, liquor, liquid, drug, or other substances; or other forced elements; or other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental or physical health or safety of the individual.

Hazing (10c): Hazing includes any activity that could subject the individual to extreme mental or physical stress such as sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, forced conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment, or any other activity that could adversely affect the mental or physical health or dignity of the individual.

Hazing (10d): Hazing includes forcing, pressuring, coercing, or requiring the violation of University policies, federal, state, or local law.

Hazing (10e): Hazing includes soliciting a person to commit or being actively involved in the planning of any act of hazing as defined above where the act of hazing creates a substantial risk of physical injury or death to the person(s) hazed.

Hazing (10f): It is not a defense to an allegation of hazing that:

1. the consent of the victim had been obtained;
2. the conduct or activity that resulted in the death or injury of a person was not part of any official organizational event or otherwise sanctioned or approved by the student organization; or
3. the conduct or activity that resulted in the death or injury of a person was not done as a condition of membership into a student organization.