

April 12, 2005

Gentlemen,

As you know we are at a crossroads in the history of the fraternity. Both the actives and the alumni will be deciding the future of the house and in some ways, the future of the chapter. I come before you tonight not as the Alumni Association President, not as a former chapter e-board member. I come before you simply as what I am above all else, a brother of Sigma Tau Gamma who wishes for this chapter to remain strong, to always be a home to those who have come before and for those yet to come. People say this chapter has changed, and yes, it has changed as all things change, but at its heart one thing has remained constant, the love of what it is to be a Sig Tau.

As you all know the future of the chapter house on station road is in jeopardy. The house has fallen on hard times and most likely will not be a viable housing option in the very near future due to costs. This does NOT have to mean the chapter itself is in trouble, it simply means like all things, the chapter has to go through change. Yes we will temporarily lose our own chapter house, for a time. Yes this will affect the chapter in ways that few brothers can even imagine. Things will change; things will become harder in some ways but that is what life is and what being a member of Sigma Tau Gamma is about, overcoming adversity. The changes will require far more than simple financial contributions to overcome the obstacles laid out before us. The chapter as a whole is going to go through changes that in the end will make each of you, and this chapter stronger than before.

What will need to change? Obviously the costs will change and increase. More revenue will be needed to maintain any future chapter house and the chapter must be run in some ways like a business, as it is supposed to be. As a result your views on fund raising, rush and maybe even the brotherhood itself will change too. This chapter has gone through some very tough times in the past and most likely some of the same issues will come up again. Collections, Rent, Parlor and what it means to be a brother will be tested. Trust me when I say that being a brother does not simply mean a place to party on a Friday night. It does not mean having the biggest and baddest parties each week or having the most members. When I pledged there were over 50 active members, we paid for all parties ourselves, we did not always have open parties to the public but just as many people wanted to come and talked about the parties the next day as they do today about yours. Even more fought to be on the list for the next party. What makes people talk about, respect, or want to be a part of it all is not the ability to spend the most money or be the wildest. It is the character that brothers of Sigma Tau Gamma bring to any event they attend that makes those times memorable. I am not saying you will party less or am I asking you to, but most likely the ways in which you party and who you want to continue to party with and rush may change. You will no longer have the luxury of being lax with your payments to the chapter and still party it up carefree. You still owe money for this semester's rent on the chapter house. Everyone must participate equally in all areas of the fraternity or it will be very hard to continue on. Yes we have had brothers in the past who simply wanted to hang out and party but were unable or unwilling to contribute to

the social and financial responsibilities of the fraternity and those now ex-brothers are not here anymore. But yet the fraternity endured as it will now.

For a time you may not have ownership in a house to use as a rush tool, so be it. Rush should not be simply about a house or a place to party anyway. Did the founding fathers at Behrend own a house? Did the National founding fathers own property when they got together all those years ago? NO. They relied on what brought each of them together in the first place, brotherhood, and grew and rushed from that. The ways you seek future members may change slightly but the core belief is still there, to find men whom you wish to call brother. Anyone can be a drinking buddy; all it takes is a tab at the local tavern. It takes work and commitment to be a brother. I refuse to believe that I joined this place for simply a house. I also refuse to let this chapter fall because we need a new one. I refuse to think that this may have been one of our last formals as some have commented when they learn the battle we all have before us. I refuse to believe that this is the last time we piss off the Avalon, break a chair and table, jump on a mattress or get some brothers escorted out of the building in the middle of the night by security. Most importantly, I refuse to think it will be the last time I have to call brothers to see if they need bail money the next day, some of whom are on my very alumni E-board mind you. I don't know about all of you but I plan on being at the 20th, 25th and hopefully the 50th anniversary formal of the Delta Upsilon chapter.

Some of you may be scared about leaving the house behind, don't be. When we originally bought the house the plan was to always move on to a nicer place and location in time. Originally we were shooting for 10-15 years after our final payment in 1999 but things change. Yes, we were hoping to stay in our current house until a new house could be built and use the station road location as either rental revenue or collateral on a new place but circumstances have changed that. But we can still follow the original dream and eventually build a new house to make all the other fraternities and rental property in the area stand up and take notice of us. Yes the house is in serious trouble but No it is not your fault. That house has been falling down in one way or another for 10 years and it was a matter of time before we had to move on. So do not feel bad about moving on too.

People have referred to the house as the 'heart' of the fraternity, and maybe it is to some people. But the heart of Sigma Tau Gamma is not in a structure of wood and concrete. It is not contained by four walls and a roof. The true heart of Sigma Tau Gamma lies in this very room with its members and their actions, and the chapter's soul is the potential each brother brings to the fraternity. When I look out in to this room I do not see actives or alumni. I do not see pledge classes; induction dates or roll numbers past my own. I do not see left or right sides of issues, old or young, new blood or old ways. I look out into this room and see those who have proven themselves simply by being here. I see fighters. I see the future leaders. I see what once was and what is now again for this chapter. Gentlemen, when I look out into this room I see nothing but potential. I see the potential to truly make this chapter great and the potential to survive those dark days to come by taking the challenges head on. What I see in this room is the alumni association of 2010 who will be looking back on these days and helping those future actives continue to strive to be the best they can be. This is the time when we will be setting the course for our chapter at Penn State for the 21st century. Let this be our chance to finally tell everyone

who has ever doubted this chapter or any Greek organization that we matter and we are not going away so easily like they want us to.

Now can I tell you that the next few days, weeks, or years are going to be easy. No, it will be hard. You will be making decisions that will affect the next generation of Sigma Tau Gamma and that is never easy. Can I tell you that all alumni, or even all of you will totally support the ideas and choices laid out over the next few weeks and months or want to make the hard decisions over the next few years? That all brothers will support you in the ways you truly need to be, to give you actual mature adult advice and guidance. No I can not. I will not lie to you. Some past brothers see this fraternity as simply a big kegger to come back to party at and behave poorly. Some people never learned the respect that this chapter deserves and are not willing to do what is needed now to keep it going and others may have left the chapter behind after graduation. But that is not everyone and I will do everything in my power to change that. When you look for guidance or help do not only look to those who come back to party; to those who still ignore the rules and disrespect the house or the current chapter. Seek out the best this fraternity has to offer because they are out there. In the end you will be a stronger organization and stronger men for it.

All I can assure you of is that I will be here in whatever way the chapter needs of me. I can assure you that my e-board will do what we can to guide you. I can assure you that there are those out there who DO want this place to succeed and survive, they simply just need to be reminded of why they joined and loved Sigma Tau Gamma in the first place. There are those who simply want to be shown that you can handle the mantel of leadership of the chapter passed on to you as it once was to them **BUT** that you have nothing to prove to anyone, as you are already here and you are already brothers. Together we all can keep this chapter alive and I look forward to working with all of you on your goals whatever they may be.

The fraternity is bigger than any one of us here tonight and it is even bigger than our chapter as a whole. The fraternity is the living organization of thousands of members and we all have been entrusted to keep it alive.

Gentlemen, the future is up to you. The legacy of the Sigma Tau Gamma is out there before you. All you have to do is take it! It is already yours.

Fraternally
Brian Lindner
Pi Class