



To Whom It May Concern:

The Panhellenic community would like to publicly provide clarity to our stance on the issue of sexual violence in our community. It is no secret that sexual violence is and has been a serious issue within the Greek system. This is not an independent issue. It stems from a culture of toxic masculinity and misogyny that has festered in fraternities across the country, including chapters on this campus. Our Panhellenic and Interfraternity Councils have been leaders nationally in risk management initiatives including mandated consent talks, standardized event protocols, and strong and active affinity organizations like the CalGreeks Alcohol Taskforce and Greeks Against Sexual Assault. However, as long as issues related to sexual violence pervade our community, we will know that our best efforts have not been enough.

The culture that we are working so hard to deconstruct has especially manifested itself in one of the fraternities in the CalGreeks community, the Alpha Beta Chapter of Sigma Chi. Just this semester, one account of drugging has been brought to the attention of the Panhellenic Executive Council.

This year, the Panhellenic Council is taking a strong stance against sexual violence and is giving agency to the women in our community to fight against it. Rather than leaving this to individual chapters to handle on their own, we are standing unified. We recognize that our power to influence the behavior of fraternities largely comes from our participation in their events. Therefore, the Panhellenic Council has decided to abstain from participating in Sigma Chi's annual event, Derby Days. This event is a week-long competition between sororities to raise money for their associated philanthropy, and is a well-known and highly anticipated event in our community.

We have chosen to abstain from this event for a number of reasons, including but not limited to:

1. This chapter is not holding itself to the CalGreeks standards and Sigma Chi values that have been deemed necessary for the well-being of our members. We do not condone this indecent behavior and we will not risk the safety of Panhellenic women at this event.
2. Due to the close-knit nature of this community and its hierarchical structure, survivors of sexual violence and/or drugging incidents often face social pressures against speaking out and/or reporting. This decision has been made to give a voice to survivors everywhere. We believe you, and we stand with you.
3. Communicating solely with chapter leadership has not been enough. To instigate cultural change, this issue needs to be addressed by all chapter members. We are hopeful that our stance is the catalyst towards that change.
4. The notoriety of Derby Days gives Sigma Chi social capital that we fear has worked to exempt them from the ramifications of their behavior. By revoking our participation, we deny them this social capital.

With these objectives at the forefront of our actions, we acknowledge that a facet of Derby Days is its philanthropic contributions to Camp Kesem. We wish to continue contributing to the positive impact of this organization. Therefore, the Panhellenic community will still be donating to Camp Kesem on a chapter-by-chapter basis, rather than through Sigma Chi.

We are taking this measure to support our stance against sexual violence in all chapters with concrete actions and appreciate the full support of all Panhellenic chapters. Further inquiry can be directed to Kimberly Cowderoy, the President of the Panhellenic Council.

Signed,
Kimberly Cowderoy, Panhellenic President

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