

I. Why Rush?

Rush is a period of time for you to come and explore what sorority life is all about. There are many sororities to choose from, and each has something unique to offer. People join sororities for a variety of reasons. What can SAZ offer you? Listed below are some great qualities SAZ prides itself on.

Sisterhood

SAZ has always thrived on its outstanding sisterhood. This has been the cornerstone of our sorority ever since it's founding in 1992. Because of the variety of things you do together, sisters get to know each other really well and on many levels. The close-knit bonds that develop here are truly remarkable. Sigma Sisters form an unbreakable bond that starts the day they choose to pledge and carry it on throughout their lives. We are there for each other, in times of great jubilation and deep sorrow. We are proud and honored to share these times with our sisters, and our loyalty to our sorority will never waiver.

Being a member of Sigma Alpha Zeta means knowing that no matter where you go or what you do, you will have the support of your sisters. Sigma Alpha Zeta is about friendships that last a lifetime.

Academic Achievement

While some people may believe that joining a sorority will harm your grades, the reverse is actually the case. Many sorority sisters assist each other in their studies. Older sisters can advise younger sisters and help them with classes they have already taken. This has led to SAZ chapter's overall GPA to be consistently higher than the all-women's average on each of our campus'. Also, sisters are motivated to do well in school not only by their own personal goals, but also by sorority encouragement and awards. SAZ places great concern on academic performance and provides a positive environment that encourages strong study habits.

Leadership

One of the most common attributes employees look for when hiring is leadership. Since the real goal of any college student is to earn an education to obtain a good job, leadership becomes an important aspect of collegiate development. SAZ offers many internal leadership opportunities such as our executive board and various chair positions. Also, our members are often involved in leadership positions throughout campus. Whether it's through Student Government, the Interfraternity Council, with political groups, or any other academic or social clubs, you can be sure Sigmas are involved.

It has certainly been proven that the social and organizational skills that are learned while being a Sigma has molded our women into more successful and motivated business people.

Networking

Finding a Job: it's all who you know right? It definitely helps, and the more people you know, the better chance of getting a foot in the door. Who better to help you into your first job than a sister? Using Alumnae contacts has proven to be quite helpful to recent graduates in the job market.

Although sorority and fraternity alumni are less than 2% of the population, they make up 52% of the U.S. Senate, 33% of the House Of Representatives and 75% of the top executives of the 500 largest business corporations. With alumni support like this behind any sister, future sisters are sure to succeed in all that they do.

Socials

Many college graduates feel that those years away at school were the best of their life. We feel that they certainly can be. With good time management skills one can easily excel in school and also have a great social life. The sorority supports many social functions throughout the year including parties, tailgates, formals, mixers, socials, road trips, sisterhood events, national conventions, and just hanging with the sisters. SAZ provides many great opportunities to have a good time.

Community Service

Volunteering is at the heart of SAZ's activities. We are always looking for ways to help other individuals, our communities, and our country. There are volunteer opportunities for everyone, including hosting activities that benefit youth, the elderly, and the environment. In 2000, SAZ adopted the fight against Domestic Violence as its official national philanthropy. Since then, we have demonstrated a strong commitment to issues surrounding domestic violence and the rights of abused women and children. Additionally, we strongly support our fellow Greeks and other organizations in their philanthropic efforts, and often join them in their events on campus and in the community.

Participation in community service builds character through the realization of the needs of others. In terms of career growth, many service activities provide students with the opportunity to explore possible careers, experience the "real-world" of their chosen career field, develop professional skills and contacts, build their resume, and put into practice the information they have learned in academic settings.

Diversity

Students come to universities at a critical stage of their development; a time during which they define themselves in relation to others and experiment with different social roles before making permanent commitments to occupations, social groups, and intimate personal relationships. In addition, for many students, college is the first exposure to an environment other than their home communities.

As a multicultural sorority, SAZ sisters promote the benefits of learning in a racially and ethnically diverse environment, both with respect to exposure to new perspectives and in willingness to examine our own personal perspectives. Students learn more and think in deeper, more complex ways in a diverse educational environment. Such diversity promotes racial tolerance, improves academic performance, breaks down barriers among individuals of different races, and contributes to the robust exchange of ideas, which is so essential to a quality system of education.

Having such a broad base of friends like those you will meet in SAZ is truly an advantage in college and throughout your life.

Athletics

SAZ participates in several facets of university athletics. Whether it's competing in intramurals or creating our own tournaments with other organizations, competing in these events not only promotes fitness and sportsmanship but also fosters sisterhood and teamwork. A little friendly competition is also fun, and we enjoy the good times and camaraderie together.

Pledgeship

Sigma Alpha Zeta has an extremely rewarding pledge program. It is a time to grow as an individual while developing lifelong relationships. SAZ allows you to display the true person that you are. We are known for having the most quality pledges, and for displaying leadership, drive and ambition. While participating in our award winning New Member Education program, you will be able to learn about Greek life on your campus, sorority history, and sisterhood, while participating in community service, social events and academic strengthening. These activities provide an easy transition to Active Membership, and once you are a member of SAZ you will undoubtedly become a vital member of our organization.

Personal Growth

SAZ offers a chance to learn the value of teamwork; to learn leadership by doing; to develop a sense of responsibility by taking it on. Fine-tuning your professional and organizational skills, follow-through, speech making, and presentations in front of groups are a big part of your Sigma experience, as are the opportunity to learn from the advice and experience of older sisters and your alumni. The challenge is to hold yourself to a higher standard, to stand out and make the most of the opportunities the college experience presents. Competition, pride and superior organization drive the members of Sigma Alpha Zeta to hold themselves to a higher standard - often, the results are historic. College is what you make of it; the competitive edge drives Sigmas to lead the sorority world, and individuals to accomplish great things.

A Sigma sister lives a balanced life. Read any biography of a successful woman. What you will very quickly discover is a highly motivated, multi-faceted, creative, hardworking and deeply committed individual. Women who achieve greatness are successful in their careers, knowledgeable in matters of science, philosophy, history, and literature, appreciate art and music, and yet are committed to family and friends, work at maintaining physical and mental strength, and live spiritual lives. We recruit well-rounded young women who display great qualities of scholarship, leadership, and maturity.

Benefits of Sorority Membership

- You'll have a support system of friends to help you make the adjustments to college.
- You'll have excellent scholarship resources available.
- You'll learn valuable leadership skills and have the chance to practice them as a chapter officer or committee member.
- You'll be encouraged to get involved in campus organizations such as student government, academic honoraries, and sports clubs.
- You'll get to help others through community service projects.
- When you graduate from college you will be part of a network of women that includes over 500 members!

During rush we invite you to come and see if Sigma Alpha Zeta is the right sorority for you.

II. Tips on Rushing

Rush can be a great deal of fun, as well as informative. Here are some hints to help you consider whether a sorority is right for you...

Determine why you want to join

Depending upon your interests and needs, there may be a few groups in which you would be most interested. Every group will offer social, service, athletic, and alumni events at different levels. Try to list your priorities so you may better match your needs to the offerings a group may have.

Ask questions of those who are not involved

It is important that you find out a group's reputation and how they carry themselves between rush periods. Ask professors, men, women, administrators, or even other sororities. Remember, if Chapters bad-mouth one another, it's usually because they're jealous, not better informed.

Visit as many houses as possible

Even if you've heard they have a bad reputation, it is important to look at all of your options. The rumor-mill is badly flawed and what is rumored to be a poor group one year may be a great group the next. That is why it is important to ask questions of those not involved with the process - Where do they feel comfortable? Which group do they associate with? Give everyone a chance to tell you what they have to offer. You may find that smaller groups have as much or more to offer you as the larger groups.

Meet as many women at each Chapter as possible

Some Chapters may make a great first impression, but they may have some problem members hidden in a back room. If you don't meet a bunch of the members, or continually meet the same ones, you may not be happy joining the organization.

Ask a lot of questions

Your shopping for a group where you'll feel comfortable and be helped to reach your potential. Find out how they're going to help. What are the costs? How long is the pledge program and how much time does it require each week? How will they develop your leadership skills? What is their Chapter GPA?

Make up your own mind

Don't let others tell you what you want. Remember, this is a decision that will affect the rest of your life.

III. Sorority Frequently Asked Questions

What is a sorority?

Sororities are organizations of women with chapters at accredited colleges and universities. They function as extended family units, providing warm, caring atmospheres that encourage individual development. Sororities promote high scholarship, leadership ability, good citizenship, high moral conduct, and lifelong friendships.

Does it cost a lot to be in a sorority?

Sororities are not expensive, particularly Local/Regional sororities, such as Sigma Alpha Zeta. They are self-supported through dues paid by their members, and all of the money put in goes directly to events and programming put on by you. Their costs are competitive with other campus organizations. A complete financial sheet is available for those interested in membership.

I want to succeed academically. How will sorority membership help my grades?

Getting good grades in college can be tough. It takes hard work, commitment, and the right resources. In a sorority you can use the network of members to find out about classes, campus resources available to you, and for tutoring. Sororities maintain GPA requirements and have formal programs in place that encourage members to excel and offer academic assistance. Financial scholarships and other rewards are available to students who do well and members with strong scholarship have the opportunity to join honorary organizations such as Order of Omega.

What do sorority members do?

Sorority members meet weekly for programs that cover all aspects of a woman's life. In addition to academics, topics covered include career planning, self-development, and interpersonal communication. Community service is also an important part of the sorority experience. Whether raising funds for a particular charitable organization or volunteering your time to help others in the community, helping others will make you feel good about yourself and your sorority.

What's all this about community service? I thought fraternities and sororities are social organizations?

Community service is very much a part of Greek-letter social organizations. The word social does not necessarily mean party. These organizations give back to the communities in which they operate. On any given day, you'll find members

of fraternities and sororities raising funds for charitable organizations, volunteering at a local elementary school, servicing a blood drive, passing out condoms, and participating in new students. Community service is a vital part of fraternity and sorority life.

What types of people join fraternities and sororities?

All types. While many students join their first and second years, many transfers and juniors also join. It's a great way to connect with others regardless of your year at the university. Students from various backgrounds join fraternities and sororities. Each individual is able to offer his or her own talents toward the betterment of all individuals within the organization.

How much time will be expected of me?

This depends upon your willingness to get involved and make a difference. Like any organization, the fraternity or sorority will have general expectations of you. Most importantly, you will be expected to attend meetings and events. Through your fraternity or sorority involvement, you'll learn to manage your time and balance your academic load, work, and social commitments.

I go to school and work, so I don't have time to be in a sorority.

About 90% of our girls work and go to school. Many of us have 2 jobs, or work full time. We understand busy schedules, and we make an effort to compromise with all of our girls.

What happens once I join?

You are going to make many new friends. It will be exciting for you... electing new officers... planning socials... doing community service... studying with partners... going on retreats... learning sorority history... discovering facts about the members of the organization... and finding out more about yourself and how you function in a group. You'll be as busy as you choose - learning, having fun, and growing during your college years.

IV. Sigma Alpha Zeta Frequently Asked Questions

What does it mean to "pledge?"

The pledge process is a time that allows new members to become acquainted with what is involved in being a Sigma Alpha Zeta sister. New members are called little sisters. Little sisters take part in weekly classes where they learn about the rich tradition and history of Sigma Alpha Zeta.

During weekly meetings, little sisters not only learn about Sigma Alpha Zeta's history, but also learn about our sisterhood and our bond with each other. Little sisters will learn about the many service opportunities and leadership roles that Sigma Alpha Zeta has to offer, and also have the chance to plan service and social activities for the entire chapter.

The pledge program is also an opportunity for little sisters to get to know the initiated members, alumnae, and advisors on a more personal level and to learn about their roles. Each little sister receives a Big Sister during her pledge program. Big Sisters are there if little sisters have questions, or if they need guidance at any time. The Big Sister relationship is a special one in Sigma Alpha Zeta that extends far beyond the pledge program.

In a more serious sense, little sisters will experience meaningful occasions in our sorority that lead to greater understanding of our traditions and goals as they prepare for assuming full membership as an initiated member. Sigma Alpha Zeta has many beautiful rituals in which little sisters take part, including our pledging and initiation services.

Sigma Alpha Zeta does not believe hazing has any part in the sorority experience. Little sisters are not expected to do anything demeaning or belittling to "earn" their membership in Sigma Alpha Zeta. We believe our little sisters are the chapter's future and we treat them with respect and caring.

The pledge program is a time for learning, a time for having fun, but most importantly it is a time for joining and strengthening the bond of our sisterhood.

What is Rush and when is it?

Rush is a time where those who are interested in joining Sigma Alpha Zeta get the chance to learn about our members and our organization. Rush begins at different times on our various campuses, so contact the individual Rush chairs for information. At San Diego State, Rush usually begins the second week of the semester and ends the following week.

What are the financial obligations of being a member?

This information varies from chapter to chapter, and will be explained in depth to you during Rush. Just ask one of the chapter members for these details.

My sister was a Sigma Alpha Zeta at another school. Does that make me a legacy? Do I need to do anything?

Yes, you are considered a legacy by our national board. Sigma Alpha Zeta considers you a legacy if your mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, or stepmother was an initiated member of Sigma Alpha Zeta. If you are planning on going through recruitment, please have your relation (i.e. your grandmother or mother) contact the local chapter president.

I keep hearing about philanthropies. What is Sigma Alpha Zeta's philanthropy?

Sigma Alpha Zeta supports advocacy against Domestic Violence as our national philanthropy. Chapters also sponsor several local charity organizations. Depending on the needs of the philanthropy, each chapter holds various events to raise money for them or to work closely one-on-one with them.

What are some other basic facts about Sigma Alpha Zeta?

Sigma Alpha Zeta is a Local Regional Sorority established at California State Fresno in 1992. Our colors are Navy Blue, Hunter Green and White. Our mascot is the Dolphin. Our flowers are the Red and White Rose, and our open motto is Sisterhood Through Education.

Will I have time to be involved in other campus organizations or have a job?

Yes. As a matter of fact, Sigma Alpha Zeta highly encourages our women to be involved in other organizations on campus, and many of our sisters have jobs working 2-3 nights a week.

My parents are really worried about my grades. Will they suffer if I join a sorority?

That's a good question. In most cases, grades will go up. Sigma Alpha Zeta has a GPA requirement to join their chapter and stay active. Sigma Alpha Zeta also has a scholarship program, which helps to maintain grades. Sigma Alpha Zeta has held a 95% graduation rate since it was founded in 1992.

What are some of the qualities I'll gain from joining Sigma Alpha Zeta?

There are so many things you can gain from being in our sorority during your collegiate years. Some of the main ones though are leadership, time management, service, teamwork, and the list goes on and on. During Rush don't be afraid to ask the ladies what they have gained from being in their respective chapters.

Who do I contact if I'm interested in joining?

Contact the Sigma Alpha Zeta rush chair of your campus.

- Alpha Chapter @ Fresno State Rush Chair
- Beta Chapter @ San Jose State Rush Chair
- Gamma Chapter @ UC Santa Barbara Rush Chair
- Delta Chapter @ San Diego State Rush Chair
- Epsilon Chapter @ UC Davis Rush Chair
- Zeta Chapter @ Los Angeles Rush Chair

V. A Special Note for Parents & Family

You may be wondering, "What is all this sorority stuff about?" or even be concerned by the images of Greek life that you see in the media - parting, hazing, and generally irresponsible behavior. We want to assure you that the reality of membership in Sigma Alpha Zeta is different.

Membership in a sorority is not about parties and uncontrolled bad behavior. Sororities were formed, and exist to this day, to provide a supportive atmosphere where college women can work on joint projects that benefit the campus and community, have opportunities for leadership and personal growth, and enjoy the friendship of other women. Membership is for a lifetime, not just college, and Sigma Alpha Zeta women can look forward to having connections with their sorority sisters throughout their lifetimes.

Sigma Alpha Zeta chapters focus on academic excellence for its members, and each chapter has a scholarship chairman to monitor chapter progress. All Sigma Alpha Zeta members are expected to maintain a minimum 2.3 cumulative GPA, and Sigmas consistently rank above the all women's average. In fact, our Gamma Chapter at UCSB recently won the most improved scholarship award on their campus, highlighting their excellent track record in the area of academics.

Sigma Alpha Zeta is a leader in the sorority world in the education of its women about irresponsible drinking, behavior, and other unsafe lifestyle issues. At Sigma Alpha Zeta, most of our events are alcohol-free, and usually consist of getting together for evenings of dinner, movies, miniature golf, going to the zoo or a play, or attending a university sporting event.

Sigma Alpha Zeta has special programming for its chapter members that have won recognition by university officials. Such programs include workshops on alcohol awareness, time management, dinner etiquette, and financial planning.

Sigma Alpha Zeta chapters have a special emphasis on philanthropy, especially those projects which benefit women and children. Nationally, Sigma Alpha Zeta is an advocate for the prevention of Domestic Violence. This year alone, Sigma Alpha Zeta volunteered over 400 hours to shelters across California. Each chapter is involved with local community groups to help aid in this fight.

Many Sigma Alpha Zeta events, including weekly chapter developments, are open to you, and you may attend if you like - contact us for details on locations and topics. If you have further questions or concerns, please contact one of the chapter's members. We want you to feel comfortable that you know exactly what Sigma Alpha Zeta is all about!

APPLICATION FOR SIGMA ALPHA ZETA

First Name _____ Last Name _____ MI _____

Address _____ Apt. # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone # _____ College _____

Age _____ Birthday _____ Ethnicity _____

Education Level _____ Major _____ GPA _____

Why would you like to be a part of Sigma Alpha Zeta? *(use back if needed)*

Signature _____ Date _____

*****Sigma Alpha Zeta*****

Dean of Pledges:

Accepted or Declined (*circle one*)

Reason:

Signature _____ Date _____