



PHI SIGMA PHI NATIONAL FRATERNITY

P.O. Box 307
Kingmont, WV 26578

<http://phisigmaphi.org>



*A Member Fraternity of The
North-American Inter-Fraternity Conference*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Travis Steinke
National President

Phone: (952) 452-6108

Email: travis.steinke@phisigmaphi.org

Phi Sigma Phi National Fraternity, Inc.'s Response to CMU Removing Phi Sigma Phi as Registered Student Organization

Mt. Pleasant, Michigan, October 9, 2018— Phi Sigma Phi National Fraternity, Inc. learned this afternoon that Central Michigan University revoked the Xi Chapter of Phi Sigma Phi's status as a registered student organization.

For several months, Phi Sigma Phi has been told by the University that its CMU Chapter was under "investigation" and accused of violating certain University procedures and policies. Yet, despite multiple requests from the local Chapter, from members of the National Staff, and from attorneys representing the Fraternity, CMU has refused to share any details related to the purported allegations of misconduct. For example, while CMU has stated that the Chapter had been charged with violating the University's Alcohol Policy, and it made such a declaration to the press, it failed to explain how the policy was allegedly violated, who the accusers were, or what evidence it had to support the charges. Instead of disclosing the purported allegations and conducting a hearing in accordance with the University's published Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities and Disciplinary Procedures (where CMU would be forced to present evidence), the University chose to revoke the Chapter's recognition based on secret and unproven "allegations."

For nearly two months, the Chapter has been “temporarily suspended,” and promised a hearing to confront and defend the accusations against it. The University even provided a list of members and former members that it wanted to speak to as part of its “investigation,” and asked those students to schedule interviews with University officials. Despite several attempts to meet, CMU refused to participate in the investigation in good faith, caused delays to the process, and cancelled multiple scheduled interviews with the students.

For the first time today, Phi Sigma Phi learned from a news article that CMU had “investigated accusations” of sexual misconduct and hazing. Again, without any specific allegations whatsoever. Phi Sigma Phi does not permit or condone sexual misconduct or hazing of any nature. And Phi Sigma Phi is unable to investigate or respond to secret, undisclosed allegations. Additionally, despite significant evidence to the contrary, CMU has wrongfully insinuated that the tragic accidental death of a member was somehow the fault of the local Chapter.

Vice President Steven Johnson’s words today were chilling. In a CMU news article, he stated, “[O]ur concerns have been affirmed multiple times by the *inability to find witnesses willing to discuss allegations*.” In other words, he was willing to take the drastic step of removing a Chapter’s recognition *without evidence* of the secret allegations. Again, several members and former members of the CMU Chapter of Phi Sigma Phi repeatedly tried to schedule interviews with the Office of Student Conduct, but the University would not cooperate to schedule and complete those interviews.

The fact that CMU has warned students to “stay away from [Phi Sigma Phi’s] gatherings and events” is unjustified, unproven, and potentially actionable. Phi Sigma Phi is committed to the safety and security of all its members and guests. We hope that the University will retract its reckless statements that are apparently based on secret and yet-to-be-proven “allegations.”

Since Central Michigan University has chosen to take such drastic action based only on secret, undisclosed allegations, Phi Sigma Phi National Fraternity, Inc. has chosen to support its Xi Chapter unless and until evidence of specific allegations of misconduct are revealed. The Xi Chapter of Phi Sigma Phi is a non-profit corporation in the State of Michigan, and CMU cannot legally infringe on its ability to operate.

Phi Sigma Phi Fraternity is disappointed with the fact that Central Michigan University acted contrary to its published Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities and Disciplinary Procedures by removing recognition of a registered student organization without a hearing, and without an official finding of misconduct. The University has chosen to disregard some of the key tenets of law and due process – the rights of the Chapter to hear the

accusations against it, confront the accusers, and the right to the presumption of being innocent until *proven* guilty. If a public university is willing to take such drastic action without a hearing, and based solely on secret allegations of misconduct, it should make all students wonder what other students' rights the university is willing to violate? Who will be next?