



Historical Perspective on the Fraternity & Sorority Community

The history of the community dates back to the early days of the university. Local organizations are the root of the fraternity and sorority community at Florida Tech, as all but three fraternities' (Tau Kappa Epsilon, Pi Lambda Phi and Alpha Tau Omega) and one sorority's (Alpha Phi) currently existing chapters began as local organizations.

The 60's proved to be a building and development phase for the community, as four locals emerged, two locals affiliated with a national organization, and one national organization was founded. The community began in 1965 with the founding of a local organization Alpha Kappa Pi. Shortly after, Alpha Lambda Chi, Delta Delta Tau and Epsilon Delta emerged as local fraternities. From the beginning of the local fraternities, all began the process of affiliating with inter/national organizations; Alpha Kappa Pi was the first local to become affiliated in 1968, with Pi Kappa Alpha International Fraternity. Alpha Epsilon Pi an international Jewish fraternity became the second national group, also in 1968. To finish out the 60's the Chi Phi national fraternity picked up the local Alpha Lambda Chi organization. Greek Week, a competition between the chapters, emerged in this time as well.

The 70's were a busy time in the community. Epsilon Kappa Delta a local group quickly began the process of affiliating with Lambda Chi Alpha International fraternity and became a colony in 1970. The local Delta Delta Tau organization became affiliated with Theta Xi National Fraternity just two years later. Tau Kappa Epsilon International Fraternity emerged at Florida Tech in 1975, being the second group without local roots to begin on campus. In the late 70's the first recorded sorority emerged as a local group with the name Sigma Omicron Phi.

The 80's proved to be a slow period in community development. Delta Sigma Phi was the only international male fraternity to form, and Sigma Omicron Phi, the sole local sorority, became affiliated with Gamma Phi Beta National Sorority after a failed attempt at affiliation with Zeta Tau Alpha International Fraternity. Tau Kappa Epsilon was closed for violation of their single sex status by initiating women into their organization. The disbanded members became the founders of a student organization now known as Squamish. The chapter was re-opened in 1986 after the offending members had graduated. It is believed that a second sorority, Sigma Kappa National Sorority, was founded during this period, however, no information is available at this time.

The 90's were a booming and rapidly changing time for the community. The first International fraternity was closed and not re-opened Delta Sigma Phi for reasons not yet known. Alpha Phi International Fraternity, a women's group, became the first and only women's organization to establish a chapter without a local organization or interest group in 1990; bringing the sororities to a total of three groups. Shortly after Alpha Phi's chartering, Sigma Kappa closed due to low membership numbers. A local sorority, Zeta Chi, may have been formed and closed sometime in the 90's as well. Pi Lambda Phi National fraternity established themselves in 1992. Order of

Omega, a fraternity and sorority honor society, emerged in 1992 to recognize leaders in service, academics and character. The Order of Omega chapter was found in violation of university hazing regulations and closed in 1999.

Up until 2001, the fraternities and sororities were advised by the same Student Life Staff member who advised all student organizations. Very little specialized support, guidance or advisement was provided. In 2001, the first ever Fraternity and Sorority Affairs professional was hired specifically to work with the groups. The creation of this position at Florida Tech was much later than the national norm. Other universities had begun establishing this position as early as 1976 when the Association of Fraternity Advisors Professional Organization was established. This specialized staff member was a welcomed addition to the sorority community and the Panhellenic Association began rapid changes to improve. They started by addressing their judicial process, developing expansion policies, sending officers to local conferences and revising their recruitment. The Interfraternity Council and fraternities, on the other hand, met this addition with some initial resistance and lack of trust. The Panhellenic strengthened to the point that the addition of a third national group became a distinct possibility. This addition makes Delta Psi Sigma, a local sorority the last local organization to date to become affiliated with an international group. Phi Sigma Sigma was selected by the women of Delta Psi Sigma after three groups presented on campus in spring of 2004. Order of Omega was re-established in 2002.

In the fall of 2004, the second fraternity and sorority professional was hired. The Interfraternity Council became the focus of much attention and began the rebuilding process with the creation of the Interfraternity Disciplinary Committee. The council also added additional officers, included fraternity information in a campus wide publication, began exploring expansion opportunities and started the implementation of the North-American Interfraternity Conference Standards. The Disciplinary Committee was created to move the IFC into a self-governing, self-sustaining body that holds member fraternities accountable to the rules and polices of the campus and community. The fall 2004 saw the creation of the Fraternity and Sorority Task Force charged with evaluating the current state of the community, gathering data, reviewing other campuses best practices and conducting focus groups. In addition, the Task Force was charged with creating a 5-10 year plan for the Fraternities and Sororities at Florida Tech. In the spring of 2005, the Rho Lambda Panhellenic Honor Society was created to recognize women who have significantly contributed to the Panhellenic community; the first ever tapping ceremony was held in the Panther Plaza. Finally, in the fall of 2005 Alpha Tau Omega National Fraternity was invited by the Interfraternity Council to do a formal presentation with intent to colonize in the spring of 2006. The IFC member fraternities voted unanimously to approve the expansion on October 3rd, 2005. The community continues to evolve with the addition of a new chapter, and much success is predicted for the future.

This history was created with participation from the current chapter leadership; attempts were made to verify all of the information.