

**Sigma Tau Gamma Fraternity**  
**Board of Directors Candidate**  
**2022 – 2024 Term**  
Christian Ely, Southern Indiana  
Gamma Phi Chapter



1. Over the past decade, Sig Tau has taken many steps to build a strong foundation for a successful future. What action(s) by the Fraternity in recent years do you believe is (are) the most critical to it building a strong, successful future? What are the implications of that action? Explain why.

**Response:** While there are many steps Sigma Tau Gamma has undertaken in the past decade that have lead to our success within the fraternity and sorority community, I believe there are 2 major actions the fraternity has undertaken that have stood out above the rest that truly make us an industry leader. The first is our commitment to undergraduate leadership and development programing. I have had the privilege to serve as a facilitator at several of these national programs alongside several other leaders in the fraternity and sorority world, and is it no secret that what we do sets the standard for other organizations. These programs allow the men that participate to develop and refine the skills they need to be leaders and make their chapters, communities, and country for all men. The second action Sigma Tau Gamma has taken to build a strong foundation for a successful future was to grow and invest in our professional staff. Having a staff of industry leading professionals has allowed Sigma Tau Gamma to reach several of its lofty goals and dreams set out by the membership, including forming a National Housing Company, growing our overall collegiate membership to record numbers, and working to develop industry leading colligate programming opportunities.

2. What do you believe is the most critical external challenge faced by the Fraternity? Explain why. How should Sig Tau position itself to successfully deal with this challenge?

**Response:** It is my personal belief that the most critical external challenge faced by our fraternity is 2022 is the high risk for and attitude of "Burn Out" and "Apathy" coming off of nearly 2 and a half years of an International Pandemic. More than this, the mental health of the membership as a whole has suffered the past few years. As a professional, I can say that this is not a problem unique to the membership of Sigma Tau Gamma but is one that business and organizational leadership are struggling with this issue. For several years, organizations, companies, and even individuals have been operating in "survival" state of mind. This is so different for Sigma Tau Gamma, who has always prided itself on being an organization that "Thrives", not just survives. It is my belief that Sigma Tau Gamma should position itself first and foremost as an organization that provides meaningful opportunities for both its undergraduate and alumni members to engage in activities they find meaningful. This is something Sigma Tau Gamma has done very well in the past and I believe can draw upon to meet this latest challenge. Now more than ever we are seeing the importance of men building genuine relationships and engaging in activities that provide opportunities for meaningful engagement. By returning to in person programming, investing in emotional support services, and developing creative opportunities for undergraduate and alumni to engage with each other will allow Sigma Tau Gamma to not only deal with this challenge, but be an example for other organizations n how to overcome it as well.

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**3. What career or life experiences you have had that would most beneficially contribute to the deliberations and decisions of the Board?**

**Response:** I believe I have several career and life experiences that I can draw upon to beneficially contribute to the deliberations and decisions of the Board. As I explained in the previous question, I feel a major challenge Sigma Tau Gamma will have to overcome the high risk for and attitude of "Burn Out" and "Apathy" coming off of nearly 2 and a half years of a Pandemic. As an Occupational Therapy professional, it is my job every day to help individuals engage in activities they find meaningful. My graduate level training is specifically involved helping both individuals as well as corporations find ways to ensure that members are able to identify activities that are meaningful, and work to overcome barriers to engage in them. These skills also would allow me to provide insight to board on ways to ensure Sigma Tau Gamma remains an inclusive and welcoming environment to all of its members. In my current role as a senior therapist and faculty member of the Hand Therapy Fellowship, part of my responsibility is to help work with other senior therapists to help set the mission and goals of the rehab department, which I feel will be skills that will serve me well on the board of directors. Finally, as leader of the wound care department at a large rehab hospital, I am used to having to present and deal with large budgets and budget items, another skill I feel will serve me well if elected to the Board of Directors.

**4. What item(s) in the 2025 Strategic Plan do you think is (are) most important? What item(s) would you change? Explain why.**

**Response:** While reviewing the 2025 Strategic Plan, there were several key points that I feel are very important for Sigma Tau Gamma to strive towards meeting, and several I know we have already met. However, there were two items I identified that stood out above the rest as absolutely vital for the continued success of our fraternity. Both points, can be found under Member Safety and Wellness "Achieve zero incidences of hazing violations, annually" and "Achieve zero incidences of violations of university policies related to alcohol and chapter activities, annually". It is my belief that first and foremost Sigma Tau Gamma should be a home to its members. The safety, well-being, and inclusion of all of our members must be the most important focus of our fraternity. Along those lines, while there may not be much I would change about the strategic plan, I would love to see Sigma Tau Gamma add a focus on the mental health of the membership. I believe this could be accomplished by focusing on additional training for the professional staff, formation of a mental health task force made up of qualified alumni to advise the professional staff, and add additional chapter officer training at Webb to deal with brothers in need.

**5. If you could ask a candidate for the Board any one question, what would it be? Please provide your own answer to that question.**

**My Question:** What is it about Sigma Tau Gamma that keeps you involved and wanting to serve as a leader in the Organization?

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**Response:** There are many reasons why I have chosen to stay involved with Sigma Tau Gamma as a leader and national volunteer since graduation. First and foremost, I truly believe that there are men out there that are in desperate need in the meaningful opportunities and relationships offered by the membership of Sigma Tau Gamma. I know that I am the man I am today because of the opportunities, and most importantly, the relationships I developed through my undergraduate career. These relationships helped sustain me while I was starting out in my professional life. I choose to stay involved because I know how vital the services and opportunities the fraternity has to offer are, and I want to do my part to help young men experience this for themselves through the skills I have developed. Now, with the high risk for and attitude of “Burn Out” and “Apathy” coming off of nearly 2 and a half years of an International Pandemic, I feel I have a unique set of professional skills to help guide and advise the fraternity in helping re-engage the membership in meaningful relationships and experiences.