

A History of Greek-Letter Social Organizations at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

Greek-letter organizations at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi have their roots in the very early days of University of Corpus Christi (UCC). UCC, an institution affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas, was opened in 1947 on Ward Island. Before the UCC campus was established, it was used by the U.S. Navy as a radar training facility. Within the first year of the establishment of UCC student organizations began to develop, including Baptist Student Ministry (BSM), Pi Omikron Sigma (a business fraternity), Aggies, the Silver King, and Pre-law Club. These organizations provided social activities for students at UCC.

In 1960, the student population continued its growth with an increase in buildings constructed on the UCC campus. This influx in the student population spawned the formation of many new organizations and the first Greek-letter societies, Kappa Lambda, Tau Delta Delta, and Zeta Chi, all for women. The first Greek-letter societies for men, The Anchormen, as well as The Sigma Fraternity formed in 1966. In 1968, there was a “go national” movement that brought on 4 national fraternities that absorbed three local fraternities at UCC. Kappa Sigma Kappa, who was not recognized by the North-American Interfraternity Conference, was the first national fraternity to come to the UCC campus. Following Kappa Sigma Kappa were 3 NIC recognized fraternities: Tau Kappa Epsilon, Sigma Pi, and Tau Delta Phi. This initial development led to the formation of many additional Greek organizations by the end of the 1960’s.

In 1970 Hurricane Celia severely damaged campus. The following year, UCC and the Baptist General Convention took steps to end their affiliation. Concerned about higher education in Corpus Christi, a coalition of civic leaders sought local support as well as state legislation to convert the campus of UCC to a state-supported institution with an expanded curriculum.

In 1971, the Texas Legislature authorized the creation of a state-supported institution of higher education in Corpus Christi. The Board of Directors of the Texas A&I University System was authorized to establish an upper-level university and courses for the new institution at the junior, senior, and graduate levels leading to both bachelors and masters degrees.

In 1973, funding was approved by the legislature to initiate planning for the university. The citizens of Corpus Christi approved a bond issue to purchase the campus of the University of Corpus Christi. Subsequently, the campus was given to the State of Texas as a site for the new state supported school. At the end of classes in 1973, there were 2 sororities and 4 fraternities. With the closing of UCC, the members either went their separate ways or enrolled when classes began on September 4, 1973 at Texas A&I University at Corpus Christi.

In 1977, the legislature changed the name of the institution to Corpus Christi State University (CCSU). The Texas A&I University System name was also changed to University System of South Texas (USST).

In 1989, the Texas Legislature abolished the University System of South Texas and merged Corpus Christi State University into the Texas A&M University System. In the same year, the legislature approved the expansion of Corpus Christi State University to a four-year comprehensive university. In 1993, the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents renamed the institution to Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. The arrival of freshmen and sophomore students in 1994 marked the transformation of the institution to a four-year university.

When CCSU became a four-year comprehensive university, Greek-letter organizations were once again formed on Ward Island. In 1995, one year after the transformation of CCSU, the first Greek-letter society was formed for men, Phi Sigma Chi. In 1996, the first female interest group for a Greek-letter organization was formed: S.I.S.T.E.R.S. (Simply Intelligent Sisters Talented and Eager to Render Service).

In 1998, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi (TAMUCC) chose to “go national” and invite national fraternities and sororities to campus. In 1998, 3 NIC inter/national fraternities, Beta Theta Pi, Phi Delta Theta, and Sigma Phi Epsilon colonized on campus. The first to receive it’s inter/national charter was Phi Delta Theta in Fall 1999. In 1998, the Interfraternity Council, which consisted of the 3 fraternities, formed as the governing body for Fraternity Life.

A similar development occurred with the founding of 3 National Panhellenic Conference (NPC) inter/national sororities, including Alpha Gamma Delta, Delta Delta Delta, and Gamma Phi Beta colonizing in 1998. The first to receive it’s inter/national charter was Delta Delta Delta in Fall 1998. Also in that year, the Panhellenic Council formed to govern the 3 sororities that colonized in 1998.

This growth period for Greek-letter organizations was not just limited to the traditional fraternities and sororities. The first historically African-American sorority at TAMUCC, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. absorbed S.I.S.T.E.R.S. and was chartered in 2000. In addition, the first African American fraternity chartered in 2003, Alpha Phi Alpha International Fraternity, Inc. Included in this growth was Latino/a fraternities and sororities. Kappa Delta Chi Sorority, a Latina sorority, was the first to form an interest group at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi in 1999. Following the interest group the first Latina sorority who was chartered was Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority, Inc. in 2002. Later in the same year, Sigma Lambda Beta, the first Latino fraternity colonized at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. Later they became a member of the Interfraternity Council in 2005.

Currently, at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, there are 3 North-American Interfraternity Conference fraternities and 3 National Panhellenic Conference sororities. In addition, there are 2 National Association of Latino Fraternal Organizations sororities

and 1 National Pan-Hellenic Council chapter – making a total of 9 recognized social fraternities and sororities (this total does not include the co-educational departmental fraternities, such as the band and business fraternities).

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