



## **Patterson Court: The fraternity and eating-house community of Davidson College**

### **Introduction:**

Throughout its history, the Davidson College campus has, at various times, served as host to more than seventeen different fraternal organizations. Beta Theta Pi became the first fraternity at the College when it opened its doors to Davidson students in 1858 and Rusk House became the first eating-house when it was established in 1977.

The fraternity and eating-house community has grown steadily over the years. In 1958, the College built Patterson Court at a cost of \$500,000 to move fraternal organizations from their existing homes on Jackson Court. A major renovation program for Patterson Court began in 2002.

Today, seven inter/national fraternities, four women's eating-houses and a co-ed eating-house are active. The history of these organizations is a dynamic one; with an evolution reflecting the changing milieu of the campus. Today, fraternities and eating-houses are an active part of the Davidson College community with membership numbers exceeding 58 percent of the undergraduate population.

### **The Fraternal and House System at Davidson College: a Historical Perspective**

1837	Davidson College founded
April 1837	Polemic Debating Society founded
June 1837	Philanthropic Society founded as a rival organization
1838	Polemic Debating Society changes name to Eumenean Society
1849	Phi and Eu Halls built as meeting rooms and libraries
1858	<i>Beta Theta Pi founded as first fraternity at Davidson College</i>
1860	Old Chambers completed
1861-65	Civil War
1861	<i>Beta Theta Pi constitution hidden in Chambers columns during Civil War</i>
1866	Faculty forbids students to join any secret organization except the literary societies Phi and Eu, fraternities no longer "underground"
1869	<i>Pi Kappa Alpha founded at Davidson College (only the second chapter in the country)</i>
1870	Tuition and fees \$200/year
1880s	Fraternities have "elegant halls" in Old Chambers
1880	<i>Kappa Alpha Order founded at Davidson College</i>
1883	<i>Sigma Alpha Epsilon founded at Davidson College</i>
1890	<i>Kappa Sigma founded at Davidson College</i>
1918	Concord Presbyterian Church condemns dancing as "moral and spiritual evil"; Davidson Trustees agree
1920s	<i>Fraternities hold dances in Charlotte anyway</i>
1921	Faculty approves policy to increase number of Greek letter organizations
1921	Old Chambers burns

- 1922 Phi Beta Kappa installed at Davidson College  
 1923 *Phi Gamma Delta (FIJI) founded from "Bachelor's Club"*  
 1924 *Fraternities told they had to move off campus*  
 1927 New Chambers completed  
 1928 *Phi Delta Theta founded from local Delta Theta Chi*  
 Plans for Jackson Court finalized  
 1930 *Sigma Phi Epsilon founded at Davidson College*  
 1937 Dean Sentelle leads effort to control drinking at the Charlotte fraternity dances  
 1938 Movement to build a new gym to hold dances on campus in order to control drinking at the events  
 1958 *Patterson Court built for \$500,000*  
 Rush was during the first week of classes  
 12 fraternities on campus (therefore 12 PC houses were built)  
 85% of men belonged to inter/national fraternities  
 1965 Faculty ban all pledging for 1965-66 and incite a "riot" on campus  
 Compromise moved all pledging to spring  
 1968 All but 35 freshman of the Class of 1971 join fraternities  
 1971 Self-Selection introduced to transform fraternities into organizations "formed not by invitation but by personal choice."

Kappa Sigma, Sigma Nu, Beta Theta Pi and Pi Kappa Phi have their charters withdrawn in response to Self-Selection; their houses eventually become co-ed eating-houses. Kappa Sigma became "Fannie & Mable," Sigma Nu became "Random House," Beta Theta Pi became the precursor of Rusk House, and Pi Kappa Phi became "Emanon."

Sigma Phi Epsilon and Phi Gamma Delta move off campus; their houses become Richards House and Bailey House, dining halls for independent students.

Kappa Alpha, Phi Delta Theta, Pi Kappa Alpha and Sigma Alpha Epsilon remain on Patterson Court and accept Self-Selection.

Sigma Chi disbands and its house becomes PAX co-ed house; Alpha Tau Omega becomes the co-ed eating-house "ATO" or "Apple Turn-Over."

- 1973 Women fully admitted at Davidson College  
 1977 *Rusk House founded as first all-women's eating-house*  
 1981 Two Houses moved to make way for Vail Commons  
 BSC granted a house on Patterson Court  
 1982 *Warner Hall founded (in today's Outpost building until 1991)*  
 1985 *Sigma Phi Epsilon moves back to Patterson Court*  
*Spencer House founded as an all-women's eating-house*  
 1989 *Kappa Sigma recolonizes and returns to Patterson Court*  
 1990 *PAX House closes as last of the co-ed eating-houses, becomes a residence hall*  
 1991 Major renovation of all Patterson Court houses  
 1992 *Connor House founded (in Outpost building for 1992, SAE House for 1992-93)*

- Kurt Holmes – first Patterson Court Advisor hired  
Alcohol Monitors introduced for parties
- 1992-93 *SAE off campus*
- 1993 *Spencer House closes and Connor moves into its house*  
First PCC by-laws drafted  
Risk Managers and Sober Monitors replace “Alcohol Monitors”
- 1994 Judicial Board established  
First student-adjudicated Patterson Court case  
Quota system established for eating-houses  
PCC receives an office in the Union  
First “New Member Series” for freshmen and pledges
- 1995 *Order of Omega founded*  
Beth Bell – second Patterson Court Advisor
- 1996 Kegs banned from campus
- 1997 Jim Barber – third Patterson Court Advisor  
Sorority Membership is debated on campus
- 1998 *Turner House founded and constructed (first new house built in 40 years)*
- 1999 Patterson Court Standards Program adopted
- 2000 Craig Rinker – fourth Patterson Court Advisor  
*Phi Delta Theta, Phi Gamma Delta and others mandate alcohol-free houses nationally*  
Risk Management continues to tighten up nationally  
CoHo House founded (becoming first co-ed house on campus in over 10 years)
- 2001 First review cycle of Patterson Court Standards completed  
Sorority Membership is debated on campus again  
Grahaeme Hesp – fifth Patterson Court Advisor
- 2002 Plans developed for major Patterson Court renovations  
Process to bring NPHC fraternity set in motion
- 2003 *Kappa Sigma Fraternity loses recognition*  
*Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity (Fiji) returns to the Court in the Former Outpost*  
Joy Hamm – sixth Patterson Court Advisor  
Self-Selection policies updated, name changed to Court Selection  
*Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. chartered*

## **Patterson Court Office**

The Patterson Court Office is responsible for the day-to-day advising of all registered Patterson Court organizations, including fraternities, eating-houses, the Patterson Court Council, the Patterson Court Judicial Board and Order of Omega (the national Greek honorary.)

The Patterson Court Office is a part of the Residence Life Office and is located in the basement of Belk Hall.

Patterson Court Advisor:

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## **Patterson Court Office Mission Statement**

Patterson Court organizations at Davidson College are recognized for the purposes of providing students an opportunity to learn and interact in small-group situations while facilitating personal growth in the areas of scholarship, social and leadership development, campus and community service involvement, and values clarification.

In pursuit of these aims, the Patterson Court Office seeks to create and promote a safe environment for the productive exchange of ideas where healthy lifestyle decisions can be made and supported. The Patterson Court Office serves as a liaison between the eating-house and fraternity members, alumni, inter/national organizations (where applicable) and the College, to provide educational programs, services and resources toward holistic growth, and to support the concepts of the Davidson College eating-house/fraternity model by promoting Court Selection, community-based responsibility, and servant leadership.

### **Primary functions:**

- Advise Patterson Court Council;
- Advise Patterson Court Judicial Board;
- Coordinate risk management process; monitor the registration of on-campus events; conduct TIPS training;
- Coordinate membership intake (Court Selection) process and orientation;
- Communicate with other College offices or outside constituents (e.g. headquarters staff, vendors, police, accountant, physical plant, cooks, etc) pertaining to Court operations;
- Support programming efforts and ideas via participation in leadership conferences;
- Support organization officers in their self-governing efforts (e.g. social chair, treasurer, house manager, president, new member educator)
- Monitor facility usage; maintain maintenance records and plan renovations;
- Monitor Patterson Court Council fiscal activity.

## **Patterson Court Governance**

### **Patterson Court Council:**

The Patterson Court Council (PCC) is recognized by the College as the governing body for the fraternities and eating-houses on campus. The council elects an Executive Board responsible for presiding, standardizing, and programming a variety of activities for fraternities and eating-houses including educational and social events and sponsorship of the Court Selection process.

### **Patterson Court Judicial Board:**

The Patterson Court Judicial Board, under the aegis of the Dean of Students, is the College recognized body that is responsible for reviewing reported behavioral problems within the Patterson Court community. It reviews all reported incidents of fraternity and eating-house misconduct, determining if College policy has been violated, and where appropriate, recommends sanctions.

The full board consists of representatives of the PCC, faculty, and staff. The Patterson Court Advisor provides the primary support for the Patterson Court Judicial Board and serves as the first contact for reported problems.