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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

January 22, 1996

ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA SORORITY PLACED ON INTERIM SUSPENSION

CHARLESTON -- Eastern Illinois University's Office of Student Life has placed Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, Eta Gamma chapter, on interim suspension.

The sorority was placed on interim suspension Friday (Jan. 19) following an investigation by the Office of Student Life and the University Police into alleged chapter activities involving hazing.

"The Office of Student Life has reasonable cause to believe that members of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority have been engaged in improprieties of hazing, unauthorized recruitment/membership intake and pledging," said Assistant Director of Student Life Cecilia Brinker in a letter to the chapter president.

Eastern Vice President for Student Affairs Lou Hencken said, "The university does not condone or tolerate any acts of hazing, harassment or humiliation. This type of behavior is detrimental to the individuals involved, the sorority and the university. We will continue to deal with and take serious action against any group that participates in activities that are a threat to others. The safety of our students is our utmost concern."

Eastern has a hazing policy for all recognized student organizations.

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ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA

The policy defines hazing as "any act or action taken, however communicated, involving or resulting in abusive physical contact or mental harassment to a member or prospective member, whether on or off the organization/fraternity/sorority premises, campus, or place where chapters or prospective members meet, designed to or the result of which is to produce excessive mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment or harassment."

The interim suspension for Alpha Kappa Alpha will include, but is not limited to, the following restrictions:

- official status as a recognized student organization has been suspended;
- all campus scheduling privileges have been suspended;
- sponsorship of all social events/programs have been suspended; and
- all other organized group activity participation has been suspended.

The interim suspension will remain in effect pending the outcome of the investigation. The findings may be referred to judicial affairs for a possible university hearing, Brinker said.

This is the second time Alpha Kappa Alpha has been placed on interim suspension, having been reprimanded for similar violations in April 1994. "The sorority was reinstated this fall semester and was in the process of building its membership back up," Brinker said.

She said university officials are keeping the chapter adviser, who is based at Western Illinois University in Macomb, apprised of the situation.

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ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA

"We are still in the process of interviewing sorority members and others who may have been involved to determine the specific nature of the alleged hazing," Brinker said.

The sorority is affiliated with the Black Greek Council and operates through the Office of Student Life on campus. It does not have a chapter house.