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# How 2 former LSU DKE fraternity members' graduation might impact the school's punishments

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MAY 21, 2019 - 3:58 PM



Charles "Chase" Brakenridge II and Alexander Rozas

Provided mugshots

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Andrea Gallo

Two members of LSU's now-closed Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity who were arrested earlier this year on hazing counts graduated this month from the university, despite criminal

cases that remain unresolved, potentially making irrelevant any disciplinary action the university could take against them.



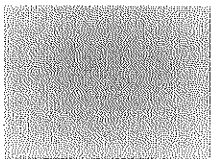
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Charles "Chase" Brakenridge II and Alexander Rozas both graduated this spring. The two were booked earlier this year on identical counts of principal to criminal hazing and representative duty to report criminal hazing, and East Baton Rouge District Attorney Hillar Moore III said Tuesday that he is still screening the criminal cases against them.

When DKE's national organization shut down the fraternity in January and LSU Police arrested nine members the next month, arrest warrants said pledges were forced to lie down on broken glass while being urinated on, doused in gasoline, struck with pipes, burned with cigarettes and more. The warrants also suggested that a code of silence made members too fearful to speak out.

It's unclear when DKE will be allowed to return to campus. LSU is still investigating the extent of DKE's problems and has no set time frame for when the university will make an announcement about their future.



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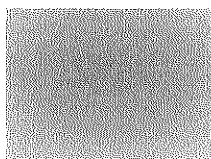
When LSU students are arrested, they generally go through a disciplinary hearing process led by LSU's Office of Student Advocacy and Accountability. Those investigations can result in

a variety of outcomes, from warning letters to expulsion.  
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But LSU did not punish Brakenridge or Rozas in a way that prevented them from graduating. LSU spokesman Ernie Ballard said he could not discuss disciplinary records for students.

J. Michael Small, the Alexandria-based attorney who is representing Brakenridge, said Brakenridge received an April 17 letter after his SAA hearing that said LSU found he violated school rules related to his hazing arrest. The letter said Brakenridge would be suspended for one year -- starting May 12. But Brakenridge was already on track to graduate May 10.

"I can only assume that a decision was made that in view of the rather insignificant nature of the evidence as to Chase, it should not prevent him from graduating," Small said Tuesday. "I'm convinced he has a complete defense to the hazing charges."

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Small said the discipline would still show up on Brakenridge's transcripts, although he plans to appeal it to LSU's University Hearing Panel. The panel can rehear cases and make new determinations on whether students have violated LSU's Code of Conduct.

Brakenridge, a Ferriday native, wants to prove to LSU that he did not break any university rules or do anything illegal, according to Small. Brakenridge graduated with a degree in international trade and finance, Small said.

"I don't feel that the evidence that I'm aware of justifies the conclusion, either at the administrative level, or certainly at the criminal level, that he committed the offense of hazing," Small said.

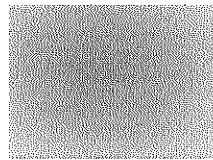
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Thomas Damico, the Baton Rouge attorney who is representing Rozas, said he could not discuss the specifics of Rozas' academic disciplinary record. But he said Rozas was not one of the fraternity's "bad apples."

"I do not believe they have sufficient enough evidence to convict him of any sort of hazing violation," Damico said Tuesday. "The hazing charge that he could possibly face is a very, very small misdemeanor. And I certainly would not expect that to affect him in any long term manner, even if he were to be convicted."

Rozas, who is from Jennings, graduated from LSU's College of Engineering.



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Two of the DKE members arrested in February — Cade Duckworth of Lafayette and Malcolm McNiece — were no longer enrolled at LSU by the end of the spring semester. Both were booked on felony counts related to hazing.

Duckworth was arrested on felony counts of second-degree battery, attempted second-degree battery and false imprisonment, plus three counts of misdemeanor criminal hazing. McNiece was arrested on one felony count of second-degree battery plus four counts of misdemeanor criminal hazing.

The remaining fraternity members who were arrested in February — Blake Chalin, Gaston Eymard, Shakti Gilotra, Joseph Harkrider and Garrett Sanders — remained enrolled at LSU this spring.