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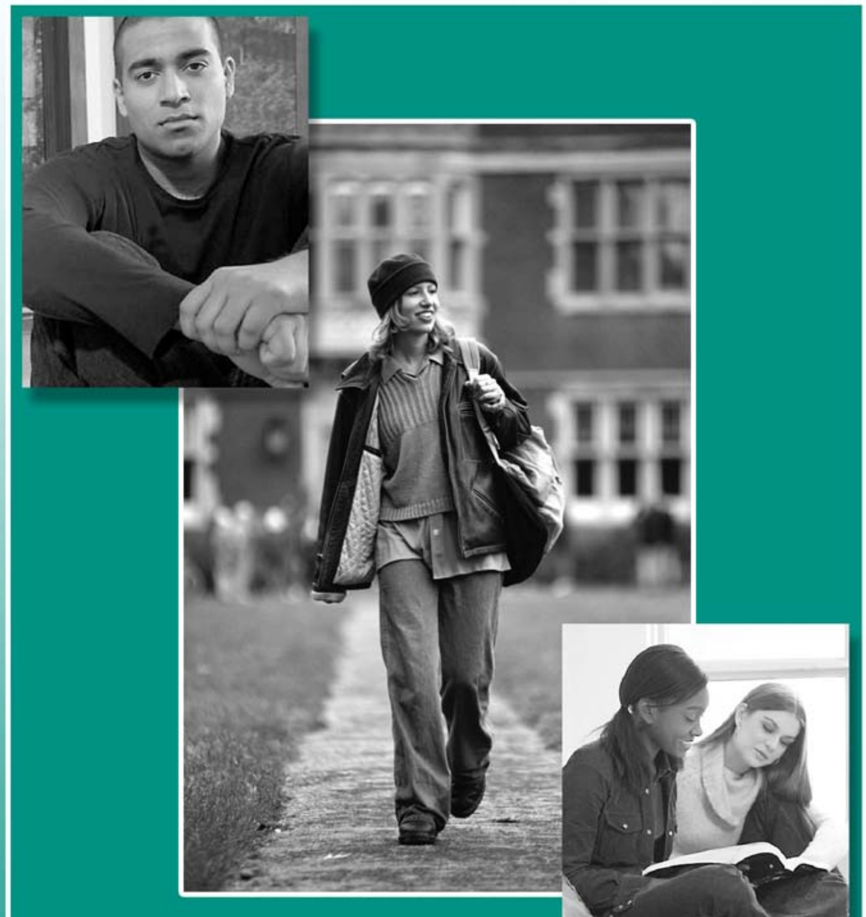

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2008 EDITORIAL TEAM

GENERAL INFORMATION

Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity Advisors advances the study of college fraternities and sororities through a peer reviewed academic journal promoting scholarly discourse among partners invested in the college fraternal movement. The vision of *Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity Advisors* is to serve as the premier forum for academic discourse and scholarly inquiry regarding the college fraternity and sorority movement.

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Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity Advisors accepts submissions focused on articulating research involving fraternity and sorority members at the collegiate, alumni, inter/national organization, and volunteer advisory levels. Manuscripts should be written for the student affairs generalist who has broad responsibility for educational leadership, policy, staff development, and management. Articles on specialized topics should provide the generalist with an understanding of the importance of the program to student affairs overall and fraternity/sorority advising specifically.

Research articles for *Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity Advisors* should stress the underlying issues or problems that stimulated the research; treat the methodology concisely; and, most importantly, offer a full discussion of results, implications, and conclusions. In the belief that AFA readers have much to learn from one another, we also encourage the submission of thoughtful, documented essays or historical perspectives.

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Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity Advisors
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FRAMING THE DIALOGUE: A NEW, COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO THE HAZING DILEMMA

Malinda M. Matney, Ph.D. and Simone Himbeault Taylor, Ph.D.

The University of Michigan's disciplinary process requires bringing charges against individual students. An unexpected situation of nine simultaneous hazing cases during the 2004 fall term magnified the challenge of identifying responsible individuals in such cases. While the institution could have charged the leaders of the fraternities or sororities involved, instead it created and implemented the Community Education and Development Model to change the ingrained behavior and culture of the organizations. The focus was on enlivening the community-building potential of fraternities and sororities. What follows is a discussion of the intervention and subsequent assessment, which illustrates potential challenges and opportunities with this approach.

During the 2004 fall term, nine different fraternities and sororities were identified by members of the campus community as having engaged in hazing. The staff in the Office of Student Conflict Resolution (OSCR) confronted serious barriers to their work when they tried to address this dilemma. Despite evidence of hazing, OSCR's policies required either a victim of hazing to come forward or an individual to confess in order to bring charges and adjudicate the matters, neither of which occurred in these cases. Because OSCR held no jurisdiction over group behavior, OSCR staff explored other strategies to find the facts of the various situations. One option was to separate the groups into individual students in order to determine individual responsibility. While the logistics of distributing over 250 interviews across four staff members would have been overwhelming enough, this was the least of the actual concerns. No particular entity on campus (whether OSCR, or the Office of Greek Life with even less staff, or the student-led Greek Activities Review Panel) were situated to handle this kind of influx. The more pressing concern was how to act quickly, efficiently, and educationally to address community behavior. OSCR staff recognized that they needed creative strategies that remained true to the principles of rights and responsibilities, despite the absence of readily available tools for jurisdiction.

The History of Conduct Codes at the University of Michigan

The University of Michigan's (UM) use of behavioral codes has a unique history among institutions of higher education. While many UM students ascribe to the myth that the institution was code-free until the early 1990s, in reality a variety of behavioral codes has existed on campus since the early 1900s. At all times since then, there has been a mechanism for governing the non-academic behavior of students; however, with the incremental move away from an *in loco parentis* philosophy, UM's behavioral guidelines became less apparent and transparent on campus. Numerous code statements were proposed in the 1980s, resulting in a robust "no code" student movement on campus. UM gained national attention in 1988 when a "hate speech" policy approved by the University of Michigan Board of Regents was deemed unconstitutional by the United States District Court [*Doe v. University of Michigan*, 721 F. Supp. 852 (E.D. Mich. 1989)]. An interim discrimination policy was later put into place in late 1989 (Kawas, 1997).

In 1992, a Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities was implemented on campus, but functioned for only three years before students successfully advocated to the Regents that this statement was too legalistic and punitive in nature, advocating for a more educational tone to this statement. In response, the Regents charged the UM Vice President for Student Affairs to develop an explicit behavioral code that was less legalistic. In partnership with a team of students and staff, the Vice President obtained input from over 1,000 students, faculty, and staff through several channels including town hall meetings. This effort resulted in the largely student-authored Code of Student Conduct (the Code) that defined the expectations of the student community and was grounded in core institutional values. The Code created a complainant-driven process, attending to appropriate due process, while, at the same time, underscoring an educational rather than punitive philosophy. Emerging out of a cautious, student "no code" climate, the resulting document delimited its purview to individual students and specifically excluded group behavior from its oversight. The Regents ratified the Code and requested a comprehensive review after three years.

In 1998, a self-study, University-wide review, student government review, and external review of the Code and the administrating unit, the OSCR, were conducted and presented to the Regents. Based on these findings, the Regents voted to institutionalize the Code. The Regents created a mechanism for amendments to be recommended by students, faculty, and administrators. They empowered the faculty senate committee advisory to Student Affairs to gather and make recommendations to the President for any amendments to the Code. The committee, wishing to respect the student-driven nature of this instrument and to ensure that it remained alive and relevant to students, created a timeline to review amendments to the Code every other year. Over time, students advocated for the name to be changed to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities (the Statement). The most recent review was completed in 2007. At no time has group jurisdiction been suggested as an amendment; in fact there is considerable resistance in the campus community (particularly among faculty and students) to broadening the scope of the Statement beyond individual accountability. OSCR staff took the educational charge seriously, utilizing the Statement as a tool to engender ethical and moral development and to leverage teachable moments regarding the values and behaviors associated with being a fully contributing citizen of an academic community.

Additional Tools of Accountability
While a comprehensive behavioral code that currently applies to all students has a somewhat recent history on campus, members of various communities within the institution have relied upon similar but self-defined standards. Athletics, the residence halls, and fraternities and sororities have long-established codes of behavior to which members ascribe upon admittance to these communities, and which have varied accountability mechanisms.

Unless a student belonged to one or more of the established groups with defined behavioral expectations, such as those mentioned above, there was no direct method for establishing community guidelines and holding members accountable for behavior in the name of an organization. At the time of the exceptionally large number of hazing cases, the staff of the

Office of Student Activities and Leadership (SAL) provided organizational development support to the over 1,200 student organizations at the UM. SAL provided learning tools, training to group leaders, and an array of organizational supports, but did not hold any jurisdiction over groups. The student government had the role of "registering" organizations; registration involved satisfying minimal guidelines, such as demonstrating that at least five members belonged to the group, but did not provide for group behavioral accountability.

The fraternity and sorority system has a unique relationship with the University. Unlike some institutions where fraternities and sororities are directly integrated into campus life with houses on University property and direct institutional purview and jurisdiction, UM's relationship with fraternities and sororities is more indirect. Houses are situated within the immediate community, but not on University property, and are owned by individual house corporations. Individual fraternities and sororities choose to join one of four collective organizations for male, female, "Divine Nine," and multi-cultural Greek-affiliated groups from which they receive support and services (respectively, Interfraternity Council, Panhellenic Council, National Pan-Hellenic Council, and Multicultural Greek Council). Fraternities and sororities belonging to these councils ascribe to a set of rules provided by the specific council. In turn, the fraternities and sororities provide financial support for a small professional staff dedicated to providing continuity in support (known throughout this article as the Office of Greek Life, or Greek Life). These staff members receive supervision, professional development, benefits, and physical space from the University through the Division of Student Affairs. UM interactions with fraternities and sororities demonstrate a form of influence that relies upon relationships rather than control by direct oversight. Some fraternities and sororities have stronger relationships with their inter/national organizations than others and, in turn, similarly variable relationships with the University.

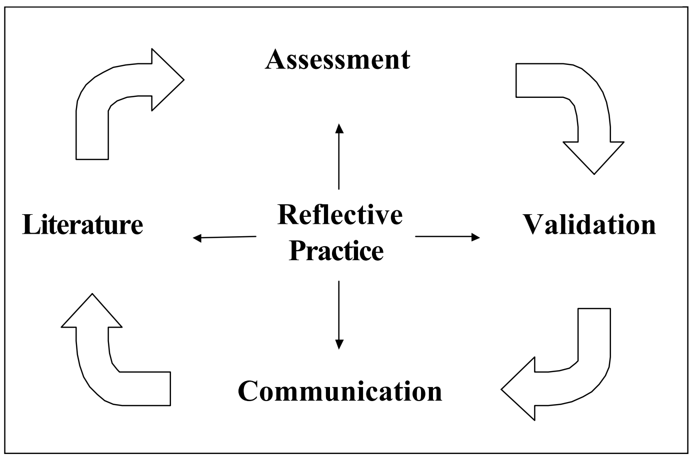
The Confluence of Learning and Managing Risks

As many other institutions have discovered over the years, student groups contribute measurably to defining the culture and climate of a campus. Student groups—especially at their present number—help to shape the on-campus community at UM. To take a *laissez-faire* approach to student groups would be to largely ignore one of the greatest opportunities to influence student learning beyond the classroom (Lowery, 2004).

Concurrently, mounting evidence from national and local developments showed that hazing incidents were becoming more prevalent (Gregory & Associates, 2003). Hazing, by definition, is a strategy for group initiation and socialization (Keating, et al, 2005). Consequently, tools of individual accountability such as the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibility could not be used to meet the campus need as the culture of group membership enables the avoidance of individualized responsibility. Many student affairs professionals became increasingly cognizant that they needed to take a more proactive role with student groups. Taken all together, UM needed to be much clearer about expectations, support, and accountability for and by groups. To that end, in 2004 SAL launched an effort to create a mechanism for "recognizing" student organizations. The concept was that each level of recognition would carry heightened levels of expectations for the student group and enhanced support from the institution. However, before this work was launched, several incidents of substantial hazing required creative intervention absent a mechanism for group jurisdiction. The focus of this article is to describe the pilot experiment intended to test a group-oriented intervention.

The Process and Guidance from the Literature
Utilizing the hazing situations as an opportunity to apply theory and research to inform practice, staff from OSCR, Greek Life, and SAL worked together following a Reflective Strategic Planning Process Model to address the situations. The model, depicted in Figure 1, is informed by the work of Strange and King (1990). It demonstrates an iterative process of becoming informed by the literature, engaging in assessment, validating the learning, and communicating the findings to inform the community at large. This process, in turn, informs future literature.

Figure 1. Reflective Strategic Planning Process



Following this reflective process required the team to be conscious of drawing from the appropriate literature, planning an intervention that was informed by theory and research, and ensuring that assessment mechanisms were in place to establish the efficacy of the intervention. Theory and research regarding students in general and fraternities and sororities in particular informed the approach. The team was also guided by the literature on professional good practice and sought to employ this knowledge in their approach to planning.

The principles guiding the planning approach were drawn chiefly from Blimling and Whitt's *Good Practice in Student Affairs* (1999), in which the authors outlined seven principles of good practice. Of those seven principles, the following were included in the planning:

- Engaging students in active learning;
- Helping students develop coherent values;
- Using systematic inquiry to improve performance;
- Forging educational partnerships that advance student learning;
- Creating inclusive communities; and
- Using principles to improve practice.

The theoretical grounding for the intervention derived from fundamental student development research. For example, Chickering and Reisser's (1993) work on the vectors and stages of psychosocial development were used, particularly because the participants in the intervention were largely underclass men and women in the early stages of their developmental journey. Among the most relevant vectors were Moving through Autonomy toward Interdependence and Developing Mature Interpersonal Relationships. This study was also mindful of Sanford's (1962) commonly used advice about the importance of balancing challenge and support. The need to build a healthy community was addressed utilizing Astin's (1984) concept of involvement that requires the combination of both physical and psychological energy.

Perhaps one of the most helpful frameworks guiding this approach was Schlossberg's (1989) conceptualization of marginality and mattering in building community. Schlossberg posited when students are in transition, they seek places where they matter and are less marginalized—they seek places where they "belong." She wrote, "mattering refers to our belief, whether right or wrong, that we matter to someone else" (p. 9). This theory helped explain why certain students might elect to participate in the fraternity or sorority experience and also linked well with Chickering and Reisser's (1993) vectors. This powerful urge to "belong" might potentially skew healthy communities by fostering a cloak of secrecy to protect community members from being held accountable for their behaviors. The Schlossberg model continues to be a compelling framework for considering the dynamics of the fraternity or sorority experience.

However, the theory and research literature that focused specifically on fraternity or sorority participation were somewhat minimal. A literature review by Danielson, Taylor, and Hartford (2001) examined the relationship between fraternity or sorority participation and alcohol use, which revealed that the research in this area fell largely within six key categories: drinking frequency, motivation/reasons to drink, predicting fraternal membership, culture of fraternities and sororities, perception biases, and consequences of drinking. After an extensive review of this literature they concluded that, "to be successful, intervention efforts must focus not only on individuals but also on organizational and institutional layers" (p. 451).

Findings from studies focusing on the culture of fraternities and sororities were particularly informative. For example, Kuh and Arnold's (1993) innovative ethnological study of the socialization of pledges revealed, "alcohol is a key element in a complicated system of rewards and sanctions used by Greek organizations to socialize newcomers" (p. 34).

Taken together, the literature helped clarify the work ahead. In short, staff members recognized that any intervention would need to address:

- Holding students accountable for their behavior;
- Garnering individual growth and development; and
- Identifying and addressing unhealthy patterns so that healthy communities could flourish.

The goal was to channel efforts toward the purposeful design of an educational intervention with intended learning outcomes that would not only impact the affected individuals, but the culture of the organizations to which they belonged.

Institutional Response

The purpose of the intervention was to craft lasting organizational change. Rather than focusing only on those issues that brought the organizations to the attention of the University, the intervention also sought to help all those involved reach an ideal. At the same time, the Division of Student Affairs aimed to build communities that were more interconnected with other university resources, as well as with their inter/national organizations. In this case, the goal was to build a strong network that would promote student learning and development at the center – goals that were already part of the mission of almost all fraternities and sororities. Through these goals, the intervention aimed to reducing high-risk behaviors, such as hazing and alcohol abuse, that can take hold in the absence of a centralized mission in fraternity or sorority life. Throughout, the role of students as authors or co-authors of the organization's existence was considered vital to the success of lasting change in these specific organizations.

To structure the implementation of this organizational change, the works of three particular authors were used. Astin's (1984) focus on involvement as the combination of physical and psychological energy guided the development of the intervention itself. In particular, students were asked to contribute a large amount of concentrated time in order to be invested in and to learn from an educational intervention. This process was designed to radiate beyond student leaders to include students throughout the groups. This radiating model of inclusion melded with Schlossberg's (1989) theories of "marginality and mattering" in building community. The concept of mattering argues that when students are in transition, they seek places where they matter and are less marginalized, where they belong. Coupled with this is the "belief, whether right or wrong, that we matter to someone else" (p. xx). Finally, Blimling and Whitt's (1999) *Good Practice in Student Affairs* articulated several elements of good practice that were adopted, including engaging students in active learning, helping students develop coherent values, using systematic inquiry to improve performance, forging educational partnerships that advance learning, creating inclusive communities, and using principles to improve practice. These principles of good practice aligned with most of the mission statements authored by the various inter/national organizations represented, which focused on justice, personal and intellectual growth, and integration into a longer-term community. The University mission (University of Michigan, 1992) stated similar aspirations:

> The mission of the University of Michigan is to serve the people of Michigan and the world through preeminence in creating, communicating, preserving and applying knowledge, art, and academic values, and in developing leaders and citizens who will challenge the present and enrich the future. (1 ¶)

This confluence of student affairs good practice statements, fraternity/sorority missions, and the University mission articulated the ideal to which this intervention sought to guide fraternities and sororities at Michigan.

Theory to Practice: Getting Started

Two approaches to the University's dilemma were launched simultaneously. One approach, to be briefly described later in this paper, was to create guidelines and expectations for student group recognition. The second approach, which is the primary focus of this paper, was to launch a Community Education and Development Model (CEDM) on an experimental basis. While group recognition was a proactive plan designed as a preventative measure to educate student groups about standards before any possible issues arose, the CEDM was designed as an intervention or reaction following negative situations, such as allegations of hazing.

The CEDM was designed at UM by Amber Garrison, then the Investigations Coordinator for the OSCR. The purpose was to locate teaching and learning within a broad coalition of stakeholders, including students, university staff members, local alumni, and inter/national fraternity/sorority leadership. This was a well-structured group focused on its founding mission and tied closely to well-trained leaders and surrounding communities. Its goal was to be a group focused on a set of core values and attentive to the needs of its members. The CEDM was in many ways an Individualized Educational Plan at an organizational level; the needs evident in behavior, as well as stated by stakeholders, shaped the content and direction of tasks for each organization's plan.

Meetings were held with each fraternity and sorority to discuss the reports of hazing and the behavior concerns that brought each to the attention of the University. Students were given two options. One option was to continue with what would be the standard practice, having an OSCR investigation of individual members (including the officers of each fraternity and sorority) and a subsequent judicial process as appropriate. The other option was to engage with the CEDM and focus on revitalizing the fraternity or sorority. All organizations involved chose the CEDM. The CEDM was not intended as a substitute for liability concerns, but rather an educational plan to change the organizations culture.

Each stakeholder had a clearly defined role. The role of the University was to facilitate the process used to create individual organizational plans. The University and the inter/national fraternity/sorority sought to coordinate resources as organizational needs were identified. The officers of the given fraternity or sorority were to attend each meeting and actively engage in developing the organization's plan. Local alumni who advised chapters were invited to attend each meeting and to develop plans to mentor members. Each week, meetings would take place with all stakeholders, including chapter members, officers, and advisors. Earlier meetings were focused on identifying goal areas where improvements could be made, while subsequent meetings were focused on providing education and identifying tasks that would complement goal areas.

At a typical first meeting, a strong focus was placed on creating a collaborative tone and an environment for honest conversations about the variety of causes of the current situation. The stakeholders would introduce themselves and the group would discuss each of their roles. Everyone would then take part in a group activity focused on eliciting individual reflections on the current state of the local chapter and the potential for the group. After the activity, the group would identify gaps between current state and potential.

As gaps were identified, a theme that emerged in almost every group highlighted students' lack of clarity of their organizational mission, values, and policies. The following gaps were identified across groups:

- Recruitment and retention;
- Community involvement;
- Membership and leadership development;
- Chapter development;

- Risk management; and
- Alumni involvement.

While each organization had its own self-sustaining culture, it often had little to do with organization mission and values. Each was grounded in a set of assumptions, beliefs, and behaviors that focused almost exclusively on a cycle of hazing, rather than a pattern of growth and healthy community development.

Throughout the CEDM, each gap area was a focus of one meeting. This allowed for assumptions and beliefs to be challenged through dialogue, with students actively engaging in exploring how assumptions came to be. Specific tasks were identified for completion for each goal area, both in the short and long term. The students created timelines, identified steps to complete specific tasks, and determined who should be involved in each task. These tasks included:

- Discussing their inter/national mission and values, as well as their basic operational directives, including risk management policies;
- Offering hazing and alcohol prevention and awareness programming for members and the fraternal community as a whole;
- Training an entire chapter in risk management;
- Developing non-hazing, group-building activities for fall 2005 new members with the help of alumni, the Office of Greek Life, and other leaders in the fraternal community;
- Holding informal focus groups for freshmen members and encouraging their feedback on their new member experience and comfort level;
- Identifying ways to retain senior members by providing a meaningful membership experience beyond the new member period;
- Creating avenues for participation in the leadership and activity of the chapter (i.e. committees, well-run chapter meetings);
- Specifying ways to be involved in the campus community;
- Identifying and securing a faculty advisor;
- Programming leadership development and officer training;
- Developing alumni involvement/mentoring programs;
- Recognizing members for academic involvement and community service each semester;
- Choosing new members based on interest in service and in the organization's values;
- Creating clearer bylaws with member standards and a member review process to prevent group harm from individual misbehavior; and
- Encouraging individuality by spotlighting the achievements of graduating seniors each year at a dinner for their families and friends.

Through these tasks, the goal was to align the local chapters more closely with their inter/national organizational missions and values, which would complement the expectations of students in the UM community.

Incorporation of Assessment

Remaining true to the Reflective Practice Process Model (Strange & King, 1990), the Division of Student Affairs designed an assessment strategy to correlate with all phases of the CEDM. Assessment was necessary to see how much, and in what ways, participating fraternities and sororities changed throughout the course of this program. There were substantial barriers to the measurement of change, such as the students' willingness to be honest, their investment in the change process, and the depth of the inter/national organizations' involvement in the intervention.

Since the CEDM was customized to each fraternity or sorority, a qualitative strategy was utilized to allow student voices to drive the analysis. In the initial design, three focus groups were planned. The first focus group sessions would be at the beginning (winter 2005), just as fraternities and sororities were starting to participate; the second set of focus group sessions would take place at the end of the program itself (fall 2005); and the third set of focus group sessions would take place at the beginning of the next semester (early winter 2006), allowing the possibility to see more medium-term effects of the intervention.

Each focus group session lasted one hour and included first year students, sophomores, or a combined group of juniors and seniors representing each fraternity or sorority. Each session was conducted by the same researcher from the Division of Student Affairs and included a scribe to make notes of the conversation. This research design created three focus groups for each fraternity and sorority at each assessment point, for a total of 12 focus groups each time (representing the four fraternities/sororities participating in the CEDM). The Institutional Review Board of the University of Michigan and the representatives of each fraternity and sorority, including their advisors and inter/national organization, approved this protocol.

The focus group questions for each fraternity or sorority member were as follows:

- What were student expectations of the fraternity/sorority before joining?
- What do they like most about fraternity/sorority experience?
- In what ways has the chapter discussed the ongoing work with OSCR?
- What chapter activities have been directly linked to the plan?
- In what ways has the chapter changed in the past year?

Many assessment challenges throughout this process provided important information about the organizational structure of these groups. Few juniors or seniors participated in focus groups; only one organization was able to convene such a group. This was reflective of the lack of junior and senior involvement in most fraternities and sororities at the University. Simply put, once they departed the house (where they lived during sophomore year), older members detached themselves from most business of the fraternity or sorority. A general level of disorganization on the part of most of these fraternities and sororities also hampered the focus group scheduling and attendance. This situation was complicated by the fact that some groups were closed by their inter/national organizations before participating in the intervention, with one group being closed during the intervention process. Finally, during the focus group meetings, chapter leaders would often dominate the conversation. This happened with less frequency with first-year groups, but with greater frequency with sophomore groups. This tendency to dominate conversation was especially notable when these students were markedly late for the group and made a "dramatic entrance" during the focus group time. This could have reflected some of the structural weaknesses in the leadership of these organizations; chapter leaders were not particularly accountable to their membership, yet they were capable of exercising substantial control over the culture of communication within their organization. Being able to examine the conversation before and after the entrance helped to understand the chapter dynamics in a way that the actual answers do not fully illustrate.

On the other hand, there were also structural supports for assessment inherent to these fraternities and sororities. The inter/national organization support for the assessment was generally strong, counter to what is reported in many studies of fraternities and sororities. The collaboration with the educational intervention effort from the beginning was essential to success, both in terms of the content of the assessment (removing the need to "retrofit" a preliminary assessment or instrument) and in terms of integrating the assessment as a necessary part of the educational plan in the eyes of the students. This was true of interactions both with the OSCR and Greek Life.

Results from Assessment

The results from the assessment revealed several key issues had a substantial impact on the educational value of the organizations and their foundation for success as lasting groups. These were issues of organizational structure, characteristics of members, usage of support systems, self-perception of individuals in relation to the larger fraternity or sorority, and the incorporation of a perpetual hazing system that went beyond pledgeship.

Organizational Structure. The organizational structure of all fraternities and sororities at UM can be described in one-year phases. In the first year new students become *pledges* and are selected and led through a series of activities (both educational and hazing) in their quest for membership. During the sophomore year, members become *officers*. Many of these officers are actually tapped by the previous class during their pledgeship, with only nominal elections by the whole fraternity or sorority ratifying this result. The sophomore year is also the year that members spend in residence, living in the fraternity or sorority house. The junior year for many is largely an *absent* year, with many members choosing to participate in study abroad, internships, or other activities. For many juniors remaining on campus, it is also the first year of coursework in the academic major as they get their bearings in their professional schools. The senior year is a year for *detached membership*, with most interaction with the fraternity or sorority being in the form of party attendance or other visits in which younger members entertain them. The fact that these four separate cultures operate as part of one common organization creates and encourages fissures in the common culture.

Member Characteristics. Members of these fraternities and sororities believed that they came from diverse backgrounds. When pressed on what made them diverse, members pointed to their majors and their geographic backgrounds, being inclusive of "someone from Michigan and someone from California and someone from Chicago (a refrain heard frequently). " In reality, an examination of their records indicated that most fraternities and sororities at UM drew from a specific zip code, high school, or summer camp experience before attending the University. Rather than being diverse, members were actually replicating their home neighborhoods while at UM. While they had learned to speak a language of diversity at the University (and state "diversity of membership" as one of the things they liked best about their fraternity or sorority experience), the reality was that they created self-segregated organizations at UM that buffered the diversity offered by the rest of the campus.

Support Systems. Throughout the focus group sessions, fraternity and sorority members expressed little connection with their inter/national organizations. They might send one member to an inter/national event with required attendance, but there was no guarantee that this person would implement sponsored programs when he or she returned to campus. The fraternity or sorority members also reported little alumni or faculty advisor presence in the regular operations of their groups. If these elements were in place, they could ease the difficulty of membership transitions in an organization where membership effectively exists in an active way in student lives for only two years. Without these elements, there was little organizational memory or knowledge transfer. Instead, it was assumed that what one sees once as a new member is the "tradition" of the fraternity or sorority. As an example, students expressed surprise at hearing from friends at other universities that juniors and seniors lived in the houses and participated in activities. They could not understand what they perceived to be a violation of "tradition" by these campuses (even though they themselves were the outliers).

Self-Perception. The challenges created by the organizational structure caused problems in self-perception among the members. It would seem that removing two classes from the fraternity or sorority and having only first year and sophomore students would not reduce the self-perceived age by much. By contrast, the outcomes of discussion often revealed how young the members considered themselves to be. The following student self-descriptions describe individuals who were little removed from high school, and who had not yet fully embraced university life or a more mature set of adult responsibilities:

- "We're here to help kids blow off steam."
- "Our grade is cleaning up after last year's kids."
- "We're creating a smaller group in the university."
- "We need a chance to learn the lesson."

This last comment was a frequent refrain – a desire to have a "second chance" to correct what students perceived to be a one-time problem. This was one of the ways a lack of organizational memory was harmful. At the same time, students perceived all activities to be "traditions," but all violations to be "one time mistakes." In the extreme cases, students were avoiding responsibility for actions by not having multiple years of students together, not interacting with the inter/national organizations at a high level, and not studying the history of their own organizations. This was one example of the harm caused by a lack of organizational memory.

Perpetual Hazing. One of the detrimental outgrowths of this organizational structure, the lack of engagement with support systems, and the memberships' self-perception was a state of perpetual hazing. While it was easy to infer that others haze pledges, sophomores were also enduring hazing even while serving as fraternity or sorority officers. The seniors and few juniors who returned to engage with the group issued their own demands and expectations on these officers. Effectively, this created a culture that was not one multi-aged group. Instead, it was four groups who competed against each other (with a hierarchy very similar to class year) under the umbrella of one group name.

Where Are They Now?

It is instructive to look at the specific fraternity and sorority chapters that were scheduled to start the CEDM (although only two fraternities and two sororities actually participated in the assessment). Their paths were illustrative of the foundations they had in place before trouble arose and the CEDM process began.

Fraternity Chapter 1 (CEDM participant). This chapter is no longer in the IFC, having been removed by the student membership after multiple, continued issues of hazing, social policy violations, and terms of previous IFC suspension. This fraternity continues to operate on campus without university support, but with the support of its inter/national fraternity. The inter/national fraternity declares this action by the University and by the peer fraternities to be "unconstitutional."

Fraternity Chapter 2 (CEDM participant). Greek Life characterizes this chapter as generally a success. It is still operating with the action plan devised through the CEDM, and the only activity not satisfied in the plan is a retreat with alumni leaders. However, all parties agree that this is because the organization of alumni is in disarray, and that the students have made a good faith effort to complete all elements of the plan. The students are in conversation with their inter/national fraternity about this aspect of their plan, and the inter/national fraternity is also trying to reorganize the housing corporation (the group that owns and manages the physical property), although the alumni situation complicates this goal.

Fraternity Chapter 3. This chapter is characterized by Greek Life as doing better, although it continues to operate under suspension from the IFC. It operates under supervision of an alumni probation committee, and must do all activities under alumni supervision. The IFC's primary complaint is that this chapter continues to hold parties with alcohol at a satellite house, in violation of its inter/national fraternity's alcohol free policy.

Fraternity Chapter 4. This chapter, still a colony with its inter/national fraternity at the time of the intervention, lost recognition of its inter/national fraternity. The new members of this colony petitioned the Fraternity to continue to operate under its name, and the Fraternity declined to grant this permission. This group operates under a different name (and has incorporated under this name with the financial and legal support of the members' parents). This group lives in another fraternity's former residence, funded by members' parents. They continue to socialize within the University's fraternity and sorority community. The fraternity whose house this group uses is ending the lease next year to renovate for its own return to campus, leaving this group with housing issues to address.

Sorority Chapter 1 (CEDM Participant). This chapter, which had minor issues originally, is doing well. It is well represented within the Panhellenic executive board. There is no awareness of any lingering problems.

Sorority Chapter 2 (CEDM Participant). This chapter was removed from campus in the winter of 2005 by its inter/national staff. After substantial issues with termination of activities, risk-related or not, the inter/national sorority may be ready to return to the University in the immediate future. However, this return will be under the condition that the underground groups that are acting in the name (or similar name) cease to exist.

The Future: Student Organizations and Recognition (SOAR)

This paper made reference to an effort launched by the Office of Student Activities and SAL to establish community guidelines for student organizations. Following a highly inclusive process that actively engaged students in problem-solving and decision-making (employing the Blimling and Whitt Principles of Good Practice, 1999), a model was created to not simply register, but to "recognize" student groups. A mechanism now exists, drawing on best practices nationally and sensitive to the unique culture of the institution, that places the responsibility of seeking a desired level of institutional recognition in the control of individual student organizations. As the level of recognition increases, so do the rights and responsibilities. The lowest level of recognition offers the least institutional support and requires the most modest accountability; and, indeed, some student groups may choose not to be recognized at all. However, for those seeking space, financial support, accounting assistance, and other benefits of recognition, the expectations are clearly delineated. Organizations not only need to demonstrate membership, but also need to abide by the Standards of Conduct (2006), which include but are not limited to:

1. The adoption of a mission consistent with the University's mission and the goals and objectives of the sponsoring unit;
2. Not fostering, promoting, or participating in activities that unreasonably threaten the safety or well-being of organization members, other people, or animals;
3. Compliance with the University of Michigan policy on hazing;
4. The proper use of funds (which preclude their use for political campaigning, lobbying, staff salaries, business activity, donations to non-UM charities, purchasing tobacco or alcohol, and any other illegal activity);
5. Not improperly discriminating in recruiting, membership, hiring, or group activities because of race, sex (includes gender identity and gender expression), color, religion, creed, national origin or ancestry, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, or Vietnam-era veteran status;
6. Compliance with the constitution submitted during the registration process;
7. Compliance with other University policies and all Federal, State, and local laws; and
8. Not intentionally interfering with other registered student organization or University units;

In effect, a model has now been put into place by students and for students. It holds groups accountable for their behavior and consequently is a valuable group-based complement to the individually oriented Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities. It can also be understood as an institutional tool that encourages the development and maintenance of healthy student community groups, following on the work of Boyer (1990) in advocating for the concept of community to pervade all aspects of campus life. This model is critically needed, as Kuh & Arnold (1993) indicated that organizational-level interventions such as this represent one of the primary ways to effect cultural change within an organization.

Conclusion

The work ahead for the University Of Michigan Division Of Student Affairs is daunting, but much clearer as a result of this experience. What came most to the fore as a result of this assessment was that the CEDM had potential for success with fraternities or sororities (or other student organizations) that were not in the final stages of decay. The level of unawareness of mission or purpose for some organizations proved to be an insurmountable obstacle. By contrast, those organizations with greater clarity about why they existed were more likely to benefit, and in fact prosper, from CEDM participation.

Bandura (1977) described social learning theory as not just an exchange of cause and effect, but rather as a continuous reciprocal interaction that creates learning. That is, rather than the exchange of one action and one consequence, it is the series of reactions to events that creates learning. When students are only actively engaged with an organization for 18-24 months (as is typical of participation in UM fraternities and sororities), this type of learning does not have an opportunity to become completely established. While administrators and the greater community react to a series of events, students are oriented toward reacting to a single event without understanding the history of interaction. The frequent absence of advisors from the central actions of the fraternity or sorority extends the problem, since no one is present to provide and transmit "institutional memory."

In addition to the content knowledge this study provided, it also demonstrated the viability of the Reflective Practice Process Model (Strange & King, 1990) as a planning tool. The approach to the work was systematic and informed, with consideration for the literature at the front end. The intervention was designed with the desired outcomes in mind and was intended primarily as an educational initiative. This approach would not be utilized if there were any immediate threats to the health, safety, and welfare of those involved. Finally, an assessment model provided for intentionally capturing the learning along the way. This approach models good practice to conducting student affairs work.

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EXPLORING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN FRATERNITY AND SORORITY MEMBERSHIP AND SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP

John P. Dugan, Ph.D.

Membership in social fraternities and sororities provides a powerful platform for developing college students' capacity for leadership. The existing knowledge regarding the extent to which it fulfills this goal, however, is relatively sparse. Much of the research on college student leadership relies on definitions that are inconsistent with contemporary conceptualizations. This study addresses this gap by looking at the leadership development of fraternity and sorority members using data from a national study grounded in the social change model. Results indicated fraternity and sorority members scored highest on the leadership value of commitment and lowest on the capacity to navigate change. Findings also revealed statistically significant differences across seven of eight leadership measures based on membership in sororities versus fraternities.

Social fraternities and sororities have a long history in American higher education and were formed as a means to create community and a sense of affiliation while promoting leadership, service, and scholarship (Owen, 1991). Leadership development in particular has served as an instrumental dimension of the fraternity and sorority experience, with membership serving as a platform to learn and practice skills (Harms, Woods, Roberts, Bureau, & Green, 2006; Kelley, 2008; Strange, 1986). A substantial amount of research examines the relationship between membership in fraternities and sororities and leadership development. However, much of this research relies on atheoretical conceptualizations or those that are inconsistent with contemporary interpretations (Dugan & Komives, 2007).

Leadership Research and Fraternity and Sorority Involvement

Early research exploring undergraduate leadership development was conducted by Astin (1993), who found that the greatest gains were associated with high degrees of peer interaction, particularly in experiences such as social fraternity and sorority membership. Follow-up research by Kezar and Moriarty (2000) found membership in a sorority to be a significant predictor of leadership ability among White women. Membership did not emerge as a predictor among African American women or White or African American men. Antonio (2001) examined the influence of cross-racial interactions on leadership development by splitting his sample to compare students reporting significant cross-racial friendships from those that reported more racially homogenous friendship groups. Membership in fraternities and sororities emerged as a significant predictor of leadership development for students with racially homogenous friendships, but not for those with racially heterogeneous friendships.

The work of the above researchers suffers, however, from definitional and measurement limitations. Classification of students as leaders was reliant on variables reflecting more leader-centric assumptions and behaviors (e.g., leadership as positional role attainment). More recent research attempted to compensate for limitations by supplementing analyses with leadership-related outcomes consistent with contemporary conceptualizations (e.g., multicultural awareness, civic responsibility, self-confidence). However, the research designs still relied heavily on leader-centric measurements (e.g., positional role attainment, popularity, social self-confidence, drive to achieve), further perpetuating a hierarchical and power-structured approach.

Contemporary research is often limited by the size and diversity of the student sample. A single-campus study using an instrument designed to examine students' perceptions towards leadership based on a hierarchical or systemic orientation collapsed social fraternities and sororities with political organizations and found students were just as likely to identify a hierarchical orientation as a systemic, process-oriented orientation (Thompson, 2006). In another single-site, correlational study examining perceptions of leadership among members of fraternities and sororities, researchers defined three forms of leadership (social influence, transformational, and positional) and examined them using predictors related to key personality traits, which included extraversion, agreeability, dominance, and hope for power (Harms et al., 2006). Predictors of positional role attainment were associated with more industrial paradigm values of hope for power and dominance, while both social influence and transformational leadership were related to more post-industrial values such as agreeableness and conscientiousness (Harms et al., 2006).

Theoretically grounded research on fraternity and sorority leadership is limited and typically uses the model posited by Kouzes and Posner (1987), which suggests five behaviors that individuals practice at times when they achieve their personal best as leaders. These include: challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart. The authors later adapted this model for specific use by college students and added an assessment instrument designed for measurement purposes (Kouzes & Posner, 1998). Researchers have consistently found that perceptions of leader effectiveness within social fraternities and sororities is a function of the extent to which the individual exhibits the behaviors associated with the model and that there are not significant differences based on membership in fraternities versus sororities (Adams & Keim, 2002; Posner, 2004; Posner & Brodsky, 1992, 1994). The lack of significant differences based on gender is inconsistent with research on gender differences in leadership development outside of the fraternity and sorority context (Astin & Leland, 1991; Dugan, 2006a; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003).

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between fraternity and sorority membership and socially responsible leadership; a measure theoretically grounded using the social change model of leadership development (Higher Education Research Institute [HERI], 1996). The social change model was selected for its recognition as the most commonly employed theoretical model on college campuses and its congruence with contemporary conceptualizations of leadership (Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin, 2006). The model takes a values-based and process-oriented approach grounded in collaboration and a desire for positive social change (HERI). This is accomplished through the development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes across three domains: individual (consciousness of self, congruence, commitment), group (collaboration, common purpose, controversy with civility), and societal (citizenship). Interactions across the values in each domain lead to an eighth critical value of change.

The primary research questions in this study were:
1. How do fraternity and sorority members score nationally on eight, theoretically grounded measures of leadership?
2. Are there significant differences between sorority and fraternity members' scores across the eight leadership measures?

Method

Data reported in this article were collected as part of the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL), a national research project examining influences on college student leadership development. A cross-sectional, quantitative research design was used in combination with standard survey research techniques (Groves et al., 2004).

Sampling Strategy

A multi-level sampling process enhanced the ability to generalize the data across other populations. Purposeful sampling was used to select a group of 55 schools that best represented the diversity of higher education institutions in the United States. Schools were selected from over 150 that responded to a call for participation. Selection was based on criteria established by the research team including size, control, Carnegie classification, geographic location, and theoretical approach to leadership. Of the 55 schools, 52 completed data collection according to the parameters established for the study. Schools with less than 4,000 students submitted full population samples, while institutions with over 4,000 students drew a simple, random sample. The final sample size was 155,716 surveys. A total of 56,854 usable surveys were submitted, resulting in a 37% return rate, which exceeded the 30% typical for web-based research (Crawford, Couper, & Lamais, 2001). Standard data cleaning techniques resulted in the removal of 6,476 cases in which data were purposefully manipulated or the respondent did not complete at least 90% of the primary instrument (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). These cases did not differ statistically from those in the retained sample. The final number of cases was 50,378.

The sample was further reduced for this study by selecting only those cases in which the student identified as a member of a social fraternity or sorority. This resulted in a total of 8,700 cases with the following distribution across Carnegie classifications: 63% research institutions, 24% masters institutions, 12% baccalaureate institutions, and 1% associates colleges. Fourteen percent of institutions were classified as small based on their total undergraduate enrollment (under 3,000), 44% were medium (3,001 – 10,000), and 42% were large (over 10,000). A total of 45% of schools were public and 55% were private. The average age of fraternity and sorority respondents was 21. Slightly more seniors (31%) responded than juniors (26%), sophomores (23%), and freshman (20%). More women (60%) responded than men (40%). The racial composition of the sample was: 79% White, 7 % Multiracial, 5% Asian American, 3% African American/Black, 3% Latino, 2% Race not listed, and .2% Native American.

Instrument

The core of the MSL instrument consisted of the Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (SRLS), a measure designed to examine each of the values associated with the social change model (Tyree, 1998). Respondents indicated their level of agreement with 68 Likert-like items using a response continuum ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Reliability levels for the SRLS were previously established in a number of studies (Dugan, 2006a, 2006b; Rubin, 2000). Chronbach alpha levels for the overall MSL sample ranged from .83 on Commitment to .76 on Controversy with Civility. Reliability reflects the use of an instrument with a specific population and not the instrument itself (Krathwohl, 1998). Therefore, alpha levels were calculated for the fraternity and sorority sample and ranged from a low of .75 on Controversy with Civility to a high of .84 on Commitment. See Dugan and Komives (2007) for further details on the MSL instrument and research design.

Results

Descriptive statistics were used to examine normative scores for fraternity and sorority members across the eight leadership measures. Table 1 provides the means and standard deviations for each leadership measure as well as a breakdown by sorority versus fraternity membership.

Table 1
Means and standard deviations for fraternity and sorority members across socially responsible leadership measures

Outcome Measure	N	Mean	*SD*
Consciousness of Self	8,685	3.98	.50
Fraternity Member	3,444	3.95	.52
Sorority Member	5,143	4.01	.48
Congruence	8,686	4.16	.47
Fraternity Member	3,444	4.09	.50
Sorority Member	5,143	4.22	.43
Commitment	8,691	4.24	.48
Fraternity Member	3,444	4.16	.51
Sorority Member	5,143	4.30	.44
Collaboration	8,692	4.01	.45
Fraternity Member	3,444	3.96	.48
Sorority Member	5,143	4.06	.43
Common Purpose	8,693	4.07	.43
Fraternity Member	3,444	4.01	.46
Sorority Member	5,143	4.11	.40
Controversy with Civility	8,678	3.84	.42
Fraternity Member	3,444	3.79	.45
Sorority Member	5,143	3.88	.39
Citizenship	8,689	3.88	.45
Fraternity Member	3,444	3.86	.49
Sorority Member	5,143	3.90	.42
Change	8,687	3.76	.46
Fraternity Member	3,444	3.79	.47
Sorority Member	5,143	3.75	.46

The presence of eight correlated (r = .49 to .80), dependent variables required the use of multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA). A MANOVA with gender as the independent variable identified statistically significant mean differences with a moderate effect size (Pillai-Bartlett trace = .06, F = 63.44, p < .001, n_p^2 = .06). Follow-up analyses using independent sample *t* tests indicated statistically significant mean differences on each of the dependent variables except for Change. Women reported higher mean scores than men across each of the statistically significant measures. Effect sizes suggested that the meaningfulness of differences between fraternity and sorority members' scores was most noteworthy for the following: Congruence ($F = 151.14$, $p < .001$, $n_p^2 = .02$), Commitment ($F = 174.39$, $p < .001$, $n_p^2 = .02$), Collaboration ($F = 94.42$, $p < .001$, $n_p^2 = .01$), Common Purpose ($F = 129.11$, $p < .001$, $n_p^2 = .02$), and Controversy with Civility ($F = 92.42$, $p < .001$, $n_p^2 = .01$).

Discussion

An examination of mean scores indicated students are at or approaching a general level of agreement regarding their capacities across the social change model measures. They do not, however, feel strongly about their abilities in these areas. The fraternity and sorority experience, then, may play an important developmental role given scholars' identification of affiliation as a context for leadership learning (Antonio, 2001; Astin, 1993; Harms et al., 2006; Kezar & Moriarty, 2000).

Fraternity and sorority members scored highest on the value of Commitment ($M = 3.84$) and lowest on the value of Change ($M = 3.76$). These scores are generally consistent with norms reported for the total sample of college students in the national dataset (Dugan & Komives, 2007). Additionally, that fraternity and sorority members' capacities for engaging in Controversy with Civility, Citizenship, and Navigating Change were lowest was consistent with findings from the national sample.

Results from the second research question identified significant and meaningful differences across the leadership measures of Congruence, Commitment, Collaboration, Common Purpose, and Controversy with Civility based on fraternity versus sorority membership. These results differed from previous research that examined potential gender differences using the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) (Adams & Keim, 2000; Posner & Brodsky, 1992, 1994). The findings were consistent with research outside the context of fraternities and sororities that identified gender-based differences in leadership capacity, with higher abilities reported by women (Astin & Leland, 1991; Dugan, 2006a; Dugan & Komives, 2007; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003).

Divergent findings could be a function of the different theoretical groundings employed in the research. The behaviors associated with the LPI, while consistent with the contemporary leadership paradigm, reflect transformational leadership theory (Northouse, 2007). This theoretical framework was among the first to differentiate between management and leadership, but is often criticized for retaining leader-centric elements (Northouse). The social change model, however, is grounded more in the family of reciprocal leadership theories that are often cited as being highly congruent with women's leadership approaches (Eagly & Carli, 2003; Kezar et al., 2006). What is unknown from this research is whether the differences in these scores are a function of gender or organizational context (i.e., participation in a sorority versus a fraternity).

Implications

Fraternity and sorority members' general levels of agreement in their capacities across the eight values associated with the social change model suggest there is substantial room for improvement should institutions wish to graduate students demonstrating strong levels of agreement in their abilities across these outcomes. Furthermore, the significant importance of developing students' capacities in this area cannot be understated. According to Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, and Burkhardt (2001):

> If institutions are serious about developing lifelong competencies in their students; if they value connecting academic learning with community concerns; and if they desire to graduate a legacy of leaders in businesses, organizations, governments, schools, and neighborhoods, then leadership development programs and activities must be given priority. (p. 23)

Fraternities and sororities have been cited as potentially powerful vehicles in shaping student leadership development (Antonio, 2001; Astin, 1993; Harms et al., 2006; Kezar & Moriarty, 2000), and as such should take a proactive and purposeful role in this process. This begins with the clear articulation of the importance of leadership development to fraternity and sorority missions. Furthermore, leadership development must be supported with intentionally structured experiences that promote leadership development and operate from a clear, theoretical foundation (Cress et al.; Dugan & Owen, 2007).

Educational interventions should target deficiencies in fraternity and sorority members' leadership development. Data from this study indicate these areas include Controversy with Civility, Citizenship, and Change. Students would benefit from training in which conflict is presented as potentially beneficial to learning when navigated in healthy and constructive ways. Positional leaders and older peers within organizations should be trained in how to structure situations in these ways and model behaviors that support and sustain meaningful dialogues across differences. These skills include social perspective taking, active listening, and the ability to demonstrate empathic concern.

The service orientation of fraternities and sororities should also be stressed and connected more directly to leadership. Educators should help chapters to understand the differences between philanthropy and community service, while pressing students to personalize their individual commitments to broader society. Previous research situates service as a powerful vehicle for achieving student leadership gains (Cress et al., 2001; Dugan, 2006b; Kezar & Moriarty, 2000), while theory positions it as an integral component of contemporary leadership (Greenleaf, 2002; HERI, 1996). When leadership and service are treated as two separate dimensions of the fraternity and sorority experience, students suffer. A disconnected approach fails to capitalize on the mutually beneficial and influential learning that can occur from an integrated pedagogy. Therefore, educators should assist students in engaging in meaningful service opportunities and interpreting experiences in the context of their leadership development.

Finally, fraternity and sorority members scored lowest in their abilities to successfully navigate and understand change processes. Educators are encouraged to establish structures that support student transitions and aid them in their ability to navigate ambiguity. Training in these areas should not be reserved just for those in positional leadership roles, but for all members.

The significant, positive relationship between sorority membership and leadership also has implications for practice. Findings can be used to combat persistent negative stereotypes associated with women's leadership abilities (Eagly & Carli, 2003) and enhance women's aspirations for leadership (Boatwright & Egidio, 2003). Educators are encouraged to use this information as an educative tool to bolster women's self-efficacy to engage in leadership processes and positions. In situations where sorority women work directly with fraternity men, women's approaches to leadership, when reflective of the values associated with the social change model, should be validated. Women demonstrating these skills should also be positioned as role models and peer mentors within the fraternity and sorority system as a means to train and reinforce the importance of reciprocal leadership.

Limitations and Future Research

The analyses conducted in this study provide important baseline data. Results, however, are not causal, which contributes to uncertainty regarding whether they would persist in the presence of additional variables. Future research should expand on this work and examine the extent to which gender maintains an influence when studied in conjunction with other demographic variables and students' pre-college and collegiate experiences. This type of research could also point to important predictors that shape fraternity and sorority members' leadership development.

Further research on this topic is critical to develop a more comprehensive understanding of socially responsible leadership in the context of fraternity and sorority involvement. Analyses in this study treated fraternity and sorority members as a relatively homogenous population and did not differentiate between outcomes based on membership in historically White versus multicultural organizations. Multicultural fraternities and sororities differ across a number of key dimensions including a focus on community service and cultural heritage (Kimbrough, 1995; McKenzie, 1990). These organizations are relatively understudied, having traditionally been examined in the aggregate with traditionally White groups (Sutton & Kimbrough, 2001). Future research should examine whether membership in these organizations produces different influences on student leadership development. Similarly, this study did not directly compare members of fraternities and sororities with unaffiliated students. This type of analysis could contribute to a deeper understanding of the unique contributions of membership on leadership outcomes.

Conclusion

The education and development of college students' leadership potential remains a critically important element of the social fraternity and sorority experience (Harms et al., 2006; Kelley, 2008; Strange, 1986). Membership in these organizations can provide an important developmental foundation and laboratory for practicing key leadership skills. This study addressed calls for an increased understanding of norms related to student leadership development as well as theoretically grounded research on the subject matter. Results provide important benchmarks from which to interpret student development, as well as areas professionals working directly with students in fraternities and sororities might target for educational interventions. Findings also provide information useful in furthering sorority women's self-concepts as capable leaders.

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FRATERNITY AS "ENABLING ENVIRONMENT:" DOES MEMBERSHIP LEAD TO GAMBLING PROBLEMS?

J. Patrick Biddix, Ph.D. and Thomas W. Hardy, Ed.D.

Researchers have suggested that fraternity membership is the most reliable predictor of gambling and gambling problems on campus. The purpose of this study was to determine if problematic gambling could be linked to specific aspects of fraternity membership. Though the null hypothesis (no enabling environment) failed to be rejected, descriptive analysis confirms that moderate rates of problem gambling are exhibited by subsets of fraternity members (officers, younger members, those who live with other members). Further, predictive analysis revealed that gambling online and betting on skill games, such as golf or pool, increased the likelihood of problem gambling among fraternity members. Recommendations included a discussion of initiatives at another campus, as well as action steps for developing education and awareness programs.

Introduction

Gambling has long been regarded a harmless diversion in the continuum of maladaptive fraternity behaviors, largely populated by cases related to hazing, alcohol, and sexual assault. Anecdotes of harmless card playing and sport betting dot the historical accounts of fraternity life. However, a recent wave in the popularity of gambling among college students (Hardy, 2006; McClellan & Winters, 2006), due in part to ESPN's broadcast of the *World Series of Poker* (Lovell, 2005, July) as well as to the proliferation of online poker sites (Swartz, 2005, February 8) suggests reconsideration of gambling's potentially harmful effects. Until recently, few empirical studies have targeted aspects of fraternity membership as a predictive variable in problematic gambling. Nonetheless, both *Sports Illustrated* (Layden, 1995, April 3) and *Playboy Magazine* (Zammett, 2000, September) have published exposés of college gambling, implicating fraternity members as the core of the problem.

Studies of fraternity gambling treat membership as a dichotomous variable, rarely accounting for specific organizational characteristics, such as affiliation status, residence, or peer perceptions. The purpose of this study is to consider multiple demographic membership aspects in an attempt to determine if problematic gambling is pervasive among all members, or whether a more precise population can be determined for targeting intervention. A long-term goal of this study, outside of the scope of this article, was to share the results with undergraduate fraternity members to build a shared educational program focused on preventing problematic gambling behavior.

Background

In 1980, the American Psychological Association (DSM-III) recognized pathological gambling as an impulse control psychological disorder. Pathological gambling is the persistent and recurrent maladaptive gambling behavior that disrupts personal, family, or vocational pursuits.

The individual may be preoccupied with gambling (e.g., reliving past gambling experiences, planning the next gambling venture, or thinking of ways to get money with which to gamble). A problem gambler displays some signs of pathological gambling, but not to the severity to be classified with the disorder.

To identify this impulse control behavior, Lesieur and Blume (1987) developed the South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS). Lesieur et al. (1991) conducted the first multi-institutional comprehensive study on gambling among college students. Using the SOGS, the researchers found that males gambled more than females (90% to 82%), 15% demonstrated problem gambling, and 5.5% were classified as pathological gamblers. The rates of problem and pathological gamblers among college students were 4 to 8 times higher than in the general population.

Review of Literature

Fraternity Gambling

Among several variables that were significantly associated with the decision to gamble during the previous school year, LaBrie, Shaffer, LaPlante, and Wechsler (2003) reported that fraternity or sorority membership (Odds Ratio or OR = 1.66) (i.e., the ratio of the relative risk of being a gambler versus not a gambler), as well as male residence in fraternity houses (OR = 1.89) were correlated with the decision to gamble during the previous school year. In their predictive model, members of a fraternity or sorority were more likely to gamble in the past year than non-affiliated students (OR = 1.17), while fraternity house residence did not remain a significant predictor.

Using the SOGS, D. Rockey, Beason, Howington, C. Rockey, & Gilbert (2005) examined fraternity and sorority membership as a predictor of prevalence rates of gambling. The researchers found that gender impacts prevalence rates of gambling as well as probable problem and pathological gambling. Further, fraternity members were found to have higher prevalence rates of probable pathologic gambling (12.3%), as well as probable problem gambling (14.8%) versus non-members (5.8% and 5.4%, respectively).

While the Rockey et al. (2005) study suggests an important consideration for gambling prevalence among college students, linking fraternity membership to the highest rates, the results are limited by a small sample (n = 81), as well as the lack of important distinctions. For example, the researchers fail to disaggregate those that live in the house from those that visit, live with other fraternity brothers in alternate housing, or live elsewhere (residential life, with parents, other friends). Further, the researchers fail to distinguish between fraternity brothers, friends from other fraternities, or non-affiliated friends, making a peer effect based on community among fraternity and sorority affiliated students an unsubstantiated leap. Empirical evidence suggests that aspects of the fraternity environment contribute to a gambling culture. To further explore this idea, related research on alcohol behaviors is considered.

Common to the discussion from both studies, as well as to the aforementioned media accounts is the perception that fraternities validate, promote, and at times, reward gambling behavior. Rockey et al. (2005) identify this as “an enabling environment.” While little empirical evidence from gambling studies explores this concept, related research on alcohol behaviors provides a framework.

An "Enabling Environment"

From a policy standpoint, the Association of Fraternity Advisors (AFA), in the reaffirmed (1999) *Position Statement on Risk Management Practices and Education Regarding Alcohol and Drug Use*, addresses peer norms and environmental influences within the fraternity and sorority community.

> Fraternities and sororities may serve as powerful learning communities, providing an environment which presents the reality of peer pressure to follow the norm of alcohol use in both formal and causal settings. As peer pressure to drink and/or use illegal drugs is certainly a reality, peer pressure provides strong moderating forces as well. (2 ¶)

Related literature on fraternity member alcohol and other drug abuse suggests three adaptive behavior correlates, 1) self-selection (Baer, 1994; Klein, 1992), 2) inaccurate perceptions (Berkowitz, 2005; Carter & Kahnweiler, 2000; Haines, 1996), and 3) socialization/fraternity culture (Faulkner, Alcorn, & Garvin, 1989; Kuh & Arnold, 1993). While general studies of fraternity alcohol consumption indicate an overall trend toward heavier patterns of drinking and abuse (for comprehensive reviews, see Caudill et al., 2006; Saltz & Elandt, 1986; Wilder & McKeegan, 1999), few studies examine within-group characteristics.

Researchers suggest that three organizational cultures – individual, chapter, and community – affect the prevalence of heavy drinking among fraternity members (Sher, Bartholow, & Nanda, 2001). Specifically, Wilder and McKeegan (1999) found that the fraternity community's effect on the behavior of individual members may be most detrimental to adverse behavior, echoing Rockey et al.'s (2005) enabling environment hypothesis.

Studies of within-group demographics lean toward membership characteristics as most problematic. In a study focused on new members, Faulkner, Alcorn, and Garvin (1989) found that the more new members perceived alcohol to be important in socializing, the greater the consumption. In a cultural analysis of alcohol use in pledgeship, Kuh and Arnold (2006) discovered that consumption of alcohol by fraternity members taught new members how alcohol is to be used as part of the fraternity experience. Members saw themselves as their own norm group, subject to the culture of the group itself rather than that of the institution or of external groups, even the inter/national organization. Perhaps most disturbingly, fraternity and sorority leadership exhibited binge drinking behavior at least as high and in some cases higher, than members (Cashin, Presley, & Meilman, 1998).

Wechsler et al.'s (2002) research was among the first to account for the residential environment as affecting alcohol consumption among fraternity members. In the four survey years (1993, 1997, 1999, 2001), an average of 80% of members living in a fraternity house exhibited patterns of binge drinking, nearly double that of any other residential subpopulation during that same time frame. Similarly, Presley, Meilman, and Leichliter (2002) found that those members who live in the chapter house drink more than members who live elsewhere.

Method

Purpose, Hypothesis, and Research Question

The purpose of this study was to determine prevalence rates of problem and pathological gambling among fraternity members, based on an enabling environment hypothesis. As suggested by prior research, an enabling environment is indicated by the following characteristics:

1. Membership status (officers exhibit behavior, often at higher rates)
2. Years of membership (younger members adapt behavior)
3. Place of residence (behavior is praised and encouraged at the chapter house)
4. Others with a gambling problem (group and community peer effects)

To evaluate, the null hypothesis was tested:

> H_o: Aspects of an "enabling environment" are not significantly associated with problem gambling among fraternity members.

Questions related to gambling behavior (largest amount of money spent, types of gambling) were also added to the survey. The following research question informed a predictive analysis.

> Which aspects of an enabling environment, demographic questions, or questions related to gambling activities predict problem gambling among fraternity members?

Participants

The data for this investigation were obtained from fraternity members at a medium-sized, regional university in the southeast. Of the 9,584 students attending the university under study, 10.72% of men (365/3914) belonged to one of the twelve fraternities represented on campus. Participants in this study were nearly evenly split between members (28) and officers (23), though those who lived with fraternity brothers (34) was double that of those who lived elsewhere (17).

Instrument

The SOGS was used to assess pathological and problem gambling in this study. The SOGS was found to have concurrent validity ($r=.86$, $p < .001$) and reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .97, $p < .001$) by the original researchers (Lesieur & Blume, 1987). Recently, Stinchfield (2003) reported slightly lower, though consistent, results (validity, $r=0.77$, $p < 0.01$; reliability, Cronbach's alpha = 0.81). The SOGS allows additional demographic questions without affecting reliability or validity (Lesieur & Blume, 1993). A score of 5 and above represents the tendency to be in the range of scores for a pathological gambler and a score of 2 to 4 represents the tendency to be in the range of the scores for a problem gambler.

Procedure

The SOGS was administered via Web survey, hyperlinked in an email. Emails were sent to the university addresses of 363 (of 365) fraternity members. The text of the email served as an informed consent, as requested by the institutional review board, detailing the purpose of the study and assuring anonymity and confidentiality. According to basic descriptive data available through the Web survey, the instrument was viewed 90 times. Fifty one members responded, for an overall reply ratio of 56.66%. The overall survey response rate was 14%, slightly higher than the expected male response rate (12.3%) for web-based surveys (Sax, Gilmartin, & Bryant, 2003).

Data Analysis

SPSS version 15 was used for analysis. Descriptive statistics were calculated to assess the frequency of gambling among the subcategories of participants. Data were screened prior to analysis. No missing cases were evident. The complete data file was checked against the detail summary provided by the Web survey and found to be identical.

Results

Enabling Environment Hypothesis

The null hypothesis was tested using chi-squares analysis for each subcategory. Cramér's *V* was calculated to test significance. Table 1 is a summary of results.

Table 1
Fraternity Characteristics by SOGS Classification (No Problem, Problem, Pathological Gambler)

Fraternity Characteristic	No Problem		Problem		Pathological			
	f	%	*f*	%	*f*	%	χ^2	Cramér's *V*
Membership status							10.111	.315*
Member (non-officer)	20	39.2	5	9.8	–	–		
First semester member	1	2.0	2	3.9	–	–		
Officer (non-exec)	5	9.8	3	5.9	1	2.0		
Officer (exec)	7	13.7	7	13.7	–	–		
Years of membership							6.159	.246
1	9	17.6	6	11.8	–	–		
2	5	9.8	5	9.8	1	2.0		
3	10	19.6	3	5.9	–	–		
4	9	17.6	3	5.9	–	–		
Place of residence							6.416	.251
Fraternity house	5	9.8	3	5.9	–	–		
Apartment/house w/members	16	31.4	9	17.6	1	2.0		
Residence hall	–	–	2	3.9	–	–		
Home with parents	5	9.8	1	2.0	–	–		
Other	7	13.7	2	3.9	–	–		
Others with a gambling problem								
Fraternity brother	8	15.7	6	11.8	–	–	1.074	.145
Friend in another fraternity	6	11.8	5	9.8	–	–	1.117	.148
Non-affiliated friend	11	21.6	6	11.8	–	–	.529	.102
Relative (recoded)	3	5.9	5	9.8	–	–	3.693	.269

* $p = .120$

Membership status. Of the 51 respondents, 49 (96%) indicated that they had gambled at least once. Approximately 22% of the officers sampled scored in the problem range, compared to 14%

of the members (Table 2). A slight, but unacceptable (p = .120) significant association was identified between membership status and SOGS classification [χ^2 (6, n = 51) = 10.11, p = .12, Cramér's V = .315].

Years of membership. Younger members fell into the problem gambler classification more often than older members (1 – 2 years, 22%, 3 – 4 years 11%), and the only case of pathological gambling also came from the younger group. No statistically significant associations were found between years as a members and problem and pathological gambling.

Place of residence. A higher percentage of members who lived with other members (22%) were found to be problem gamblers, and the only case of pathological gambling also came from this group. No statistically significant associations were found between residence and problem and pathological gambling.

Others with a gambling problem. The most common group identified by the members as having a gambling problem were "non-affiliated friend" (f = 17, 33%), followed by "fraternity brother" (f = 14, 28%), then "friend in another fraternity" (f = 11, 22%). The lowest scoring group, "relative," (consisting of father, mother, sibling, grandparent, or other) made up only 16% (f = 8) of the sample. No statistically significant associations were found between others with gambling problems and problem and pathological gambling.

Table 2
Gambling Characteristics by SOGS Classification (No Problem or Problem Gambler)

Gambling Characteristic	No Problem		Problem			
	f	**%**	***f***	**%**	**χ^2**	**Cramér's *V***
Amount of money spent					15.549	.552**
Never gambled	2	3.9	–	–		
$1 or less	2	3.9	–	–		
More than $1 up to $10	14	27.5	2	3.9		
More than $10 up to $100	15	29.4	11	21.6		
More than $100 up to $1,000	–	–	5	9.8		
Types of gambling						
Played cards for money	22	43.1	17	33.3	4.995	.313*
Played skill game for money (pool, golf)	15	29.4	17	33.3	11.958	.484**
Played the numbers or lottery	15	29.4	11	21.6	1.142	.150
Bet on sports	9	17.6	13	25.5	9.594	.434***
Gambled in a casino	9	17.6	7	13.7	.730	.120
Played machines (slots, poker)	9	17.6	5	9.8	.001	.005
Bet on sports with a bookie	4	7.8	4	7.8	.899	.133
Bet on animals (horses, dogs)	4	7.8	3	5.9	.203	.063
Played Bingo for money	2	3.9	3	5.9	1.482	.170
Pull tabs or "paper" games	–	–	2	3.9	3.816	.274
Play dice games for money	–	–	–	–	–	–
Gambled online	1	2.0	9	17.6	16.301	.565***

* $p \leq .05$
** $p \leq .01$
*** $p \leq .001$

Research Question
Demographic variables related to amount of money spent while gambling and types of gambling were also included on the survey. The dependent variable, SOGS classification, was dichotomized to meet the requirements for binary logistic regression. To recode this variable, the single case of pathological gambler was recorded as a problem. Table 2 is a summary of descriptive and chi-square analyses.

Amount of money spent. Consistent with Rockey et al. (2005), the majority of participants (90%) responded that they gambled less than $100 during the day in which they gambled most. A significant association was found between amount of money spent and problem gambling [χ^2 (4, n = 51) = 15.549, p = .004, Cramér's V = .552].

Types of gambling. According to survey results, fraternity members preferred card games, gaming for money (pool, golf), lotteries, sports, casino gambling, and slot machines/video poker most. Played cards for money [χ^2 (1, n = 51) = 4.995, p = .025, Cramér's V = .313]; game for money (pool, golf) [χ^2 (1, n = 51) = 11.958, $p \leq .001$, Cramér's V = .484]; and bet on sports [χ^2 (1, n = 51) = 9.594, p = .002, Cramér's V = .434] were significantly associated with problem gambling.

Gambled online. Members were asked whether or not they gambled online. A significant association was found between gambling online and problem gambling [χ^2 (1, n = 51) = 16.301, $p \leq .001$, Cramér's V = .552].

Predicting gambling behavior. Forward logistic regression was conducted to determine which independent variables (amount of money spent, played cards for money, played skill game for money, bet on sports and gambled online) were predictors of SOGS classification (no problem/problem gambling behavior). Regression results indicated a fairly good fit for two predictors (played skill game for money and gambled online) (-2 Log Likelihood=43.178) and a statistically reliable result for distinguishing SOGS classification [χ^2 (2, n = 51) = 23.045, $p \leq .001$]. The model correctly classified 80.4% of the cases. Regression coefficients are presented in Table 3. Odds ratios for played skill game for money (OR = 10.286) and gambled online (OR = 15.750) revealed a significant increase in the likelihood of being a problem gambler when the predictors increase by one.

Table 3
Regression Coefficients

	B	***Wald***	***df***	***p***	**Odds Ratio (OR)**
Played skill game for money	2.331	4.339	1	.037	10.286
Gambled online	2.757	1.143	1	.016	15.750
Constant	-2.890	7.915	1	.005	

Discussion

Research has shown that gambling is similar to alcohol use (Greene et al., 2000) and sexual promiscuity (Smith & Brown, 1998). While Rockey et al. (2005) suggested an enabling environment among fraternity members, college, in general, constitutes an atmosphere that is more permissive and encouraging of venturous actions. Just as not all college students who try alcohol become alcoholics or those who experiment sexually become promiscuous, not all fraternity members who gamble will develop a disorder.

Though the research failed to reject the null hypothesis (no enabling environment), descriptive analysis suggests that moderate rates of problem gambling are exhibited by subsets of fraternity members. Most concerning is that fraternity officers scored higher in the problem range. Living with fraternity brothers (in the chapter house or elsewhere) was also telling, as gambling was more prevalent among these cases. Though only a small portion of the sample gambled online, those members exhibited predictive signs of problem gambling. With the easy access to online casinos, especially poker, how are advisors to monitor this behavior?

What constitutes the institutional sponsorship of gambling behaviors on a college campus? Are Texas Hold 'em poker nights between fraternities sanctioned by the student activities office acceptable? If they are, how do student affairs professionals and fraternity advisors deal with the small segment of the population that develops a problem or pathological need to gamble at ever higher stakes?

Action Steps to Consider

The challenge that campus educators face is engaging students in learning opportunities about gambling. Gambling education and intervention programs are in their infancy, but a handful of institutions have launched successful programs, such as one author's experience at the University of Alabama (UA). Co-chaired by Athletics and Residential Life, UA educators developed the Gambling Action Team, a campus-partnership response. Education and awareness programs reached segments of every population including fraternity members. The Team met regularly, held workshops, invited speakers to campus, and developed a comprehensive plan of action including a calendar of events, a Web site devoted to gambling issues for students, debt management and counseling assistance, and an annual assessment report. Such methods have shown some early success, but much more work is needed in this area.

Undergraduate fraternity leaders themselves need to initiate a programmatic response to gambling for any intervention to be successful, though a potentially heavier rate of gambling among leaders is a first priority for campus educators. Afterward, fraternity members could be directed to a self-evaluation (such as the free online version of the SOGS at http://www.addictionrecov.org/southoak.htm) to initiate inter-chapter discussion and possible education programs. Perhaps the significance of the issue warrants asking fraternity leaders to note on any given night how many of their members are in the lobby of the chapter house playing poker or making friendly wagers on the pool table, how many are in their rooms in an online casino making wagers, and how many have either just returned or are preparing to go on a road trip to the casinos only a few hours drive from most college campuses? Not only campus educators, but also officers, advisors, and alumni have to be engaged in acknowledging the detrimental short as well as long-term effects of gambling to have any lasting success in affecting the "enabling environment" that supports gambling within the chapter house.

Limitations and Future Research

A sample size of 51 from one institution limits generalization, though results were consistent with similar studies of gambling among fraternity men (Rocky, et. al, 2005). Location and institutional type may also have affected results, though descriptive findings were consistent with national studies conducted by Lesieur et al. (1991). The variables measuring the enabling environment hypothesis, though grounded in empirical findings, may not sufficiently address critical aspects of fraternity and community culture. These aspects would perhaps be more sufficiently treated with qualitative techniques to better understand aspects of peer culture(s) and influences. Social network analyses would significantly add to the research on this subject, and perhaps serve as a better informant of enabling environment, risk-taking behaviors among affiliated students in general, and similar peer effect hypotheses. Finally, education and intervention programs should be assessed and reported to inform best practices and recommendations.

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THE EFFECTS OF SORORITY RECRUITMENT ON SELF-ESTEEM

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Mental health issues among college students are of increasing concern to administrators (Kitzrow, 2003). Self-esteem is a concept central to mental health (Kittleson, 1989) and can be linked to the social situations found in college settings, especially those that deal with rejection (Caunt, 2003; Eisenberger & Lieberman, 2004; Steffenhagen & Burns, 1987). Sorority recruitment is a process that can include rejection (National Panhellenic Conference, n.d.) and, thus, may negatively affect self-esteem. The purpose of this study was to determine how the sorority recruitment experience affects the self-esteem of participants. First, we explored whether self-esteem differed between two groups of potential members (PMs): those who completed recruitment (persistent PMs) and those who withdrew from the recruitment process (withdrawn PMs). Second, we examined how self-esteem differed at the start and the end of recruitment within these groups of PMs. Results revealed significant differences between groups and suggested a relationship between recruitment and self-esteem.

For a variety of reasons, including students' pre-college background and experiences as well as situations that affect them on the college campus, mental health issues have come to the forefront of issues impacting college students' experiences and success. Poor mental health can affect academic achievement, student retention, and graduation rates. As more students seek counseling, mental health issues are fast becoming a new focus of higher education administrators (Kitzrow, 2003). Students have many experiences and characteristics that result in poor mental health, prompting them to seek counseling. The first year of college, in particular, is a sensitive time for college students. First-year students are likely to experience a decline in mental health (Sax, Bryant, & Gilmartin, 2002). The mental anguish often experienced in the first year of college can also lead to poor coping skills in stressful situations (Arthur, 1998). Indeed, reported ratings of mental health among first-year students steadily declined from 1985 to 1995 (Sax, 1997).

Self-esteem is an integral part of overall mental health, and addressing self-esteem issues is a method to ensure mental wellness in students (Kittleson, 1989). In addition, elements that affect mental health can also affect self-esteem (Harter, 1993). For example, low self-esteem is specifically related to higher rates of attrition (Pritchard & Wilson, 2003) and binge drinking (Fortney, Geller, & Glindemann, 1999). Negative life events and stressful situations are associated with lower self-esteem among college students (Hudd et al., 2000; Pettit & Joiner, 2001). College-age women are particularly sensitive to experiences that can affect self-esteem, either positively or negatively. For instance, women who participate in gender-related activities, such as women's studies courses, report higher levels of self-esteem than females who do not participate in such activities (Macalister, 1999).

As a dynamic construct, self-esteem "does not develop in a vacuum, but is created out of… the social milieu" (Steffenhagen & Burns, 1987, p. 23). As students mature from childhood through adolescence, the influence of peers on self-esteem becomes more important (Caunt, 2003). Consequently, perceptions of approval from others and/or social rejection can influence the self-esteem of college students.

Sorority recruitment, the method by which new members become affiliated with sororities, is an experience that may affect self-esteem in the aforementioned ways. Recruitment is a mutual selection process. That is, both chapters and potential members have a say in the process (National Panhellenic Conference, n.d.). As a result, sorority recruitment involves rejection of some potential members and rejection by a peer group. As Eisenberger and Lieberman (2004) noted, failure to be accepted by a peer group can lead to diminished self-esteem in young adults. Additionally, structured sorority recruitment is often characterized by long days and stressful situations. For the potential members involved in recruitment, the combination of stress and fear of not being accepted could have negative impacts on self-esteem. Research is needed to determine the role that sorority recruitment may have with respect to self-esteem. This study attempted to address this issue by measuring the self-esteem of potential members before and after recruitment.

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between sorority recruitment and the self-esteem of participants in two ways. First, we examined levels of self-esteem before and after recruitment for two groups of Potential Members (PMs): those who completed recruitment (persistent PMs) and those who withdrew from the recruitment process (withdrawn PMs). Second, we investigated how self-esteem differed at the start and the end of recruitment for these two groups of PMs. We posed two primary research questions:

1. Does self-esteem change among persistent and withdrawn PMs between the start and the conclusion of recruitment?
2. Does self-esteem differ between persistent and withdrawn PMs at the start or at the conclusion of recruitment?

Literature on Self-Esteem and Recruitment

The literature relevant to our study can be categorized into two groups. The first group includes studies on undergraduate fraternity and sorority members. The second group focuses on research associated with the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, the instrument employed in our study.

Research on Undergraduate Fraternity and Sorority Members

Fraternity and sorority membership may have discrepant social consequences for college students. On the upside, fraternity/sorority organizations positively affect campus involvement and cognitive development. Conversely, these organizations negatively affect academic performance and behavior (Pike, 2000). There is a higher level of critical thinking among students who participate in campus activities like fraternities and sororities (Gellin, 2003). Gellin also found that the increase in critical thinking is believed to be the result of students' ability to select how they will spend their time, which in turn produces a higher level of commitment to the activity. This cognitive effect of fraternal involvement, however, differs based on ethnicity

(Pascarella, Flowers, & Whitt, 2001; Sidanius, 2004). Caucasian men who are first year members of fraternities report lower cognitive levels than those of other racial groups, although these differences do not persist into the second and third years of membership in a fraternal organization (Pascarella, Flowers, & Whitt, 2001).

There are social issues associated with fraternity and sorority life as well. Racial insensitivity, hazing, and alcohol abuse have cast a negative shadow over fraternal organizations. Exhibitions of racial insensitivity in fraternity and sorority theme parties have caused unrest within campus communities and resulted in the suspension of members as well as chapters (Bartlett, 2001). Affiliated students report consuming greater quantities of alcohol and binge drinking more often than non-affiliated students. However, both affiliated and non-affiliated students exhibit similar negative behaviors associated with binge drinking. Researchers have also found that fraternity and sorority members are more likely to use a fake identification card to purchase alcohol than non-affiliated students (Durkin, Wolf, & Phillips, 1996; Pace & McGrath, 2002). Sorority members report drinking less than fraternity members, although both report higher usage of alcohol than non-affiliated students. The higher usage of alcohol may be due to the fact that members of fraternities and sororities report that alcohol augments social life, attractiveness, and bonding (Alva, 1998).

Fraternity/sorority membership can also affect the academic achievement of college students. Fraternity and sorority members are as involved as non-affiliated students within the academic community, but affiliated seniors report higher academic achievement than their non-affiliated counterparts. First-year women in sororities report higher levels of personal growth but lower gains regarding active learning than first-year men in fraternities (Pike, 2003). However, first-year fraternity/sorority members may find it difficult to successfully fulfill both their academic and social responsibilities because of time constraints (Hayek, Carini, Oday, & Kuh, 2002).

Interestingly, much of the research on this population includes both fraternity and sorority members. Studies on women in sororities are scarce, and explorations of women and the sorority recruitment process are even more rare, suggesting that our study would expand the knowledge base. In particular, we were interested in the relationship between self-esteem and sorority recruitment, so we examined studies that employed the instrument we used to collect data, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES).

Research Using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

The RSES has been used in hundreds of prior studies on self-esteem and is touted as a reliable and valid measure of this relatively elusive construct. To better understand previous use of the RSES, we examined the samples that have completed the instrument over time. Research that employs the RSES often includes samples of children. Studies that involve children fall under a variety of topics typically involving family issues. These include parental relationships, parenting styles, and family relationships, all in regard to children's self-esteem (Axinn, Barber, & Thornton, 1999; Felson & Zielinksi, 1989).

Research involving adults and the RSES is more varied. One broad topic for which the RSES has been used with adult samples is the work experience, including issues such as social class, unemployment, and the receipt of federal aid (Elliot, 1996; Gecas & Seff, 1989; Shamir, 1986;

Thomas & Perry-Jenkins, 1994). Other studies explore relationships between family issues and self-esteem, such as domestic violence and parental roles (Goldstein & Rosenbaum, 1985; Reitzes & Mutran, 1994). Traits such as immigrant status, sex, and ethnic identity and their impact on adult self-esteem have also been examined (Hoelter, 1983; Schnittker, 2002).

Finally, studies have been conducted in which the RSES has been administered to samples of adolescents and college-aged students. Some of these explore topics dealing with certain behaviors and their relationships to self-esteem, such as spiritual activity, Internet use, and drinking (Knox, Langehough, Walters, & Rowley, 1998; Luhtanen & Crocker, 2005; Niemz, Griffiths, & Banyard, 2005). Other studies explore relationships between self-esteem and characteristics like learning disabilities, attrition, stress, and body image (Lowery et al., 2005; Pritchard & Wilson, 2003; Shaw-Zirt et al., 2005; Wilburn & Smith, 2005).

In general, there is literature about self-esteem among college students (Hudd et al., 2000; Kitzrow, 2003; Pettit & Joiner, 2001; Sax, Bryant, & Gilmartin, 2002; Sax, 1997), and there is a body of work on fraternity and sorority recruitment (Alva, 1998; Durkin et al., 1996; Pace & McGrath, 2002). Missing from the literature is research that explores the intersection between fraternity and sorority recruitment and self-esteem. Atlas and Morier (1994) explored recruitment and depression, but depression is a different construct than self-esteem. Likewise, Keller and Hart (1982) explored fraternity and sorority recruitment and self-image, a concept associated with self-esteem, but their study is now 25 years old. Additionally, while studies using the RSES have included samples of college-aged populations (Knox et al., 1998; Lowery et al., 2005; Luhtanen & Crocker, 2005; Niemz, Griffiths, & Banyard, 2005; Pritchard & Wilson, 2003; Shaw-Zirt et al., 2005; Wilburn & Smith, 2005), no study has been found that utilizes the RSES with students participating in fraternity and sorority recruitment. Our study was designed to address these gaps in the literature.

The Recruitment Process at the Study Institution

Formal recruitment for the National Panhellenic Council (NPC) chapters at the institution where the study was conducted takes place annually over the course of six days prior to the start of classes for the spring semester (referred to as deferred recruitment). During the first two days, all PMs visit each of the 13 recognized NPC chapters. Each visit, or "event," occurs at a designated time and has a strictly enforced time limit. PMs receive an individualized schedule of which chapters they will visit during specific time slots. Subsequent rounds of recruitment take place over the next four nights. At the end of each recruitment round, chapters participate in a process to determine which PMs will be invited to the next round. At the same time, PMs prioritize the chapters they would most like to visit the next day. Once the chapters and PMs have made those decisions, a computer program uses that information to determine the PMs' event schedules for the next round.

The last night of recruitment is Preference Night. This event is designed for PMs to make a decision about which chapter they most want to join and for chapters to prioritize those PMs to whom they are interested in offering invitations to membership or "bids." If the PM signs the membership acceptance agreement at the conclusion of Preference Night, it serves as an agreement that she will accept the invitation to join the chapter that offers her membership. The final day in the process is known as Bid Day. The PM learns which sorority has offered her a bid and has the opportunity to accept or to decline this bid. Each PM may receive only one bid at this time. If she declines the bid, she is not allowed to go through formal or informal recruitment for one calendar year.

Methodology

The study institution, a large, land-grant institution in a mid-Atlantic state, enrolls approximately 18,000 undergraduate students. There are 13 NPC sorority chapters and approximately 2,000 sorority members on campus. The formal recruitment process in January 2007 was normal in terms of the number of women who participated in some or all activities. Seven hundred thirty-two students registered to participate, and of those students, 607 attended one of the orientation sessions, a requirement for participants. Of the students at orientation, 591 students agreed to participate in the study.

Data were collected by administering the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) (Rosenberg, 1979) at two distinct times during the recruitment process: once before recruitment began, and again when the PM either withdrew from recruitment or completed the recruitment process. PMs were separated into two groups: those who completed the recruitment process (persistent PMs), and those who withdrew from the process on or before Bid Day, because they decided not to join or were not invited to join a sorority (withdrawn PMs). The final sample included 336 PMs who withdrew from formal recruitment. These 336 respondents represent a response rate of 55.35% of the 607 who attended orientation sessions.

Procedure

All women who wanted to participate in recruitment were required to register and to attend one of several orientation meetings held prior to the start of recruitment activities. Staff members of the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life (OFSL) ensured that all attendees were registered to participate in recruitment. All PMs were invited to participate in the study at these meetings and, if they agreed, completed the RSES for the first time at the conclusion of that meeting.

For the second round of the RSES distribution, PMs were asked to complete the instrument at one of two times. A PM who formally withdrew from recruitment prior to the end of the six-day period was asked to complete the second round of the RSES when she notified staff of her decision to withdraw from the process. A PM who did not officially withdraw, or simply stopped attending events, was contacted via email and asked to complete the instrument electronically (within 24 hours). PMs who completed recruitment completed the RSES for a second time when submitting their membership acceptance agreements at the conclusion of Preference Night.

All PMs were assigned identification numbers for purposes of the recruitment process. Women who agreed to participate in the study listed their identification number on the RSES both times they completed it. PMs also listed their identification number on their paperwork to withdraw from recruitment or on their membership acceptance agreement. Hence, we were able to match identification numbers to determine which PMs withdrew and which PMs completed the recruitment process.

Instrumentation

The RSES consists of 10 items and is designed to measure self-esteem by asking respondents how they feel about themselves. For instance, one item asks respondents if they feel equally as worthwhile as others. Another item asks respondents if they feel worthless or useless. Participants respond to items using a Likert-type scale where 1 equals "Strongly Agree" and 4 equals "Strongly Disagree." The responses are assigned a value of 0, 1, 2, or 3, and are scored in one of two ways. For half the items, a response of 1 ("Strongly Agree") is assigned a score of 3. The remaining items are written in reverse format. These are included to ensure that respondents are reading items carefully and conscientiously deliberating their responses. For reverse-worded items, a response of 1 ("Strongly Agree") is assigned a score of 0. Total scores on the RSES, therefore, can range from 0 to 30.

The internal consistency reliability of the RSES has been scored between .77 and .88, and test-retest reliability correlations have ranged from .82 to .85 at 1- and 2-week intervals respectively (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991). Also, the RSES has been used as a primary self-esteem instrument in various settings and projects for nearly three decades (Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, n.d.). These data suggest the RSES is both highly reliable and valid.

Data Analysis

The first research question asked whether self-esteem changed among persistent and withdrawn PMs between the start and the end of recruitment. To address this question, the mean scores on the RSES were calculated for each group (persistent PMs and withdrawn PMs) for each of the two rounds of administration of the instrument. *T*-tests were performed to determine if the mean scores from the two groups differed significantly on either round ($p<.05$).

Table 1
Results of T-tests

Measure	**M**	**sd**	***t***	**F**	**df**	**p**
Persistent PMs' Self-Esteem Pre- and Post-Recruitment (N=317)					316	0.00*
Pre-Recruitment SE	24.99	5.21	85.40			
Post-Recruitment SE	25.35	5.29	85.32			
Withdrawn PMs' Self-Esteem Pre- and Post-Recruitment (N=19)					18	0.00*
Pre-Recruitment SE	27.74	2.26	53.57			
Post-Recruitment SE	26.32	4.78	23.97			
Persistent & Withdrawn PMs' Self-Esteem Pre-Recruitment (N=336)				4.5	316	0.02**
Persistent PMs	24.99	5.21				
Withdrawn PMs	27.74	2.26				
Persistent & Withdrawn PMs' Self-Esteem Post-Recruitment (N=336)				0.05	334	0.44
Persistent PMs	25.35	5.29				
Withdrawn PMs	26.32	4.78				

**=significant at the .01 level*
***=significant at the .05 level*

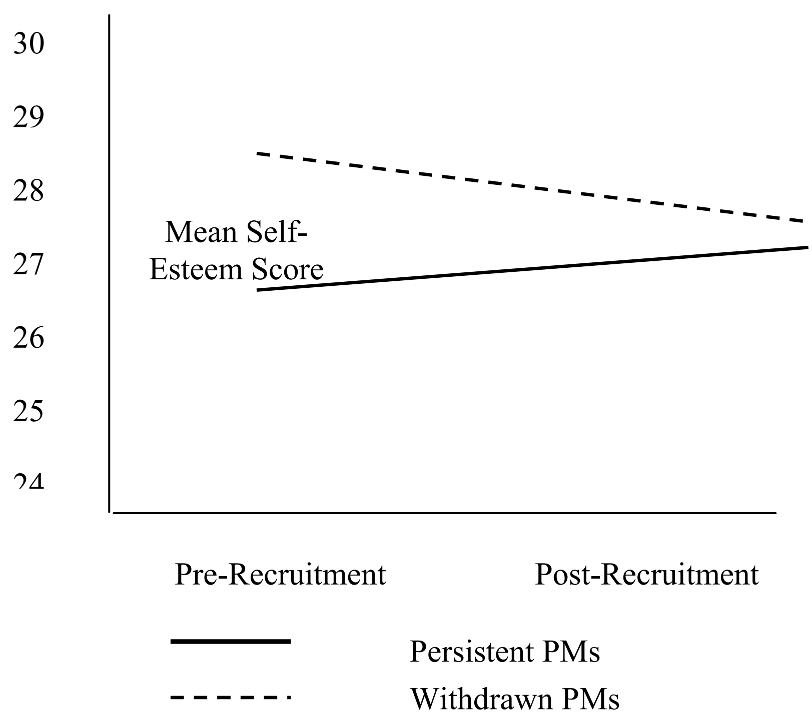
The second research question examined whether the level of self-esteem differed between persistent and withdrawn PMs at the start and at the end of recruitment. To determine any potential difference, the mean RSES scores for both groups were calculated for the pre- and post-recruitment administrations of the RSES. *T*-tests were performed to determine if the mean scores from the two groups differed significantly at either point in time ($p<.05$).

Results

Three of the four *t*-tests yielded significant differences. These are reported in Table 1. The first research question posed in the study examined whether there was a change in self-esteem between the beginning and the end of recruitment among the persistent and/or withdrawn PM groups. The persistent PMs experienced a significant increase in self-esteem, from a mean score of 24.99 to a mean score of 25.35. The withdrawn PM group experienced a significant drop in self-esteem, from a mean score of 27.74 to a mean score of 26.32.

The second research question examined any difference in the self-esteem levels between persistent and withdrawn PMs at the beginning and end of recruitment. One significant difference was found. The withdrawn PMs had significantly higher self-esteem (M=27.77) than the persistent PMs (M=24.99) at the start of recruitment. There was no significant difference found between withdrawn and persistent PM mean scores at the end of recruitment. The changes in pre-post scores from both groups are illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Change in Self-Esteem Among Withdrawn and Persistent PMs



Discussion and Implications

Those who withdraw from the recruitment process actually started the process with significantly higher levels of self-esteem than those who successfully completed the process. By the end of recruitment, however, persistent PMs' level of self-esteem increased significantly while the self-esteem of withdrawn PMs decreased significantly. Since recruitment occurs during a single week when classes are not in session, it is likely that recruitment is the predominant activity in PMs' lives during that time frame. Arguably, then, recruitment seems to have an effect on self-esteem. The change in self-esteem among potential members displayed during sorority recruitment has significant implications for practitioners and suggests the need for more research.

Fraternity and sorority professionals could use our findings to shape practices associated with sorority recruitment. The results suggest that those who are not successful in the recruitment process experience a significant decline in self-esteem. Anticipating this, those responsible for administering the recruitment process may want to offer a program as part of the orientation process that emphasizes other elements of university life in which all PMs can be involved after recruitment, regardless of whether they are successful in the recruitment process. Specifically, women could be encouraged to maintain their involvement with other campus activities and to sustain previous friendships. Such a program might encourage withdrawn PMs to find other opportunities for involvement and help persistent PMs to maintain a healthy balance of activities.

Given these results, professionals who work with sororities might want to enlist help from counselors on campus. Soliciting help might simply involve alerting counseling center staff as to when recruitment occurs, so counselors might be prepared to work with PMs. Alternatively, it might entail requesting that counseling staff be assigned to work with PMs throughout the recruitment process to address issues of self-esteem that might arise. Perhaps a counselor or other mental health professional could be "on call" during recruitment activities and available only for that purpose, so that a PM who experiences mental health issues related to recruitment has access to immediate assistance.

Because many potential fraternity and sorority members are first-year students who live on campus, resident assistants should know which residents are participating in recruitment and should be encouraged to monitor those who withdraw from the recruitment process. Because the withdrawn PM group experienced a significant drop in self-esteem, and lower self-esteem levels can lead to other mental health issues, resident assistants would be well served to speak with these students and to refer them to counseling or other campus services as necessary.

Finally, because the persistent group experienced an increase in self-esteem, this group may have high expectations for sorority membership. Fraternity and sorority life administrators may want to continue to monitor the persistent PMs in some way to ensure that they are not disappointed with sorority membership after recruitment, and that their expectations of sorority life are congruent with their experiences. Incongruencies between expectations and realities could lead to a subsequent drop in self-esteem that could affect new recruits' mental health. Further research should be conducted to explore this possibility.

Future Research

In this study, participants could indicate three reasons for withdrawing from the recruitment process: because they were not invited back to any chapters in which they were interested, because they decided sorority membership was not for them, or for other reasons. It is possible that the reason for withdrawing from recruitment influences self-esteem score. On a related note, PMs could withdraw from the recruitment process on any given day. We did not disaggregate the data to see if there was a relationship between either the reason for withdrawal or the day on which PMs withdrew and self-esteem. More research with larger samples is needed to investigate these potential correlations.

This study also found that persistent PMs had a lower self-esteem score than withdrawn PMs at the beginning of recruitment. The lower self-esteem score exhibited is somewhat counterintuitive. More research is needed to understand why this difference occurred and to predict relationships between self-esteem scores at the beginning of recruitment and likelihood of persisting through the recruitment process.

Additionally, this study addressed self-esteem within the context of deferred recruitment, after students had been enrolled at the university for at least one semester. Many campuses implement fall recruitment, either before or immediately after classes begin. Including new students participating in a fall recruitment process in the study may have led to very different results. Further research into the effects of recruitment timing during the academic year on PMs' self-esteem is needed.

Lastly, this study only examined women participating in recruitment activities for predominantly White sororities. More research is needed to examine fraternity recruitment and multicultural or African American intake processes, and how participating in those activities may affect self-esteem.

Limitations

While the implications of the study are important, there were some limitations associated with the collection and analysis of data that also merit mention. The first limitation is the sample. All the participants came from the same institution – a large, public, research university. It is possible that the women at this institution differed in some important manner from female undergraduates at other types of colleges or universities. If so, this might have skewed the findings in some unforeseen manner.

There was also a limitation related to the type of data we collected. PMs had a choice of listing either one or two preferences in terms of chapters they wished to join. We did not explore whether there were differences between those who opted for the Single Intentional Preference and those who listed two preferences. Omitting this information might have influenced our results.

The next limitation dealt with the environment during data collection. During the second round of data collection, the persistent PMs completed the instrument at the end of a long and exhausting week, in large groups, inside sorority houses that were crowded. It is possible that the PMs were distracted or uncomfortable and completed the instrument quickly without fully considering their responses.

A related limitation was the amount of time that elapsed before some withdrawn PMs completed the instrument for the second time. Although some withdrawn PMs completed the instrument directly after recruitment activities, other withdrawn PMs had a window of 24 hours to complete the instrument online. This difference in time or format (paper v. electronic) could have impacted the PMs' self-esteem and how they completed the instrument, thus affecting the results. Likewise, it might be argued that the changes in self-esteem that occurred over the relatively short period of recruitment were not lasting changes and merely reflected short-term differences. Additional research measuring self-esteem one month, six months, and one year after recruitment should be conducted to explore this issue.

Conclusion

Despite these limitations, the findings of this study merit the attention of administrators and scholars alike. Sorority recruitment is a widespread process that takes place on hundreds of campuses nationwide. Administrators who manage this process should be aware of the effects that recruitment can have on levels of self-esteem and take reasonable measures to monitor the effects of recruitment among the women on their campuses. Recruitment is linked to self-esteem, which is linked to mental health. Campuses are concerned with mental health issues among their students. As such, attending to events that can positively influence self-esteem, like recruitment, would serve the best interests of both students and institutions alike.

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A FORMATIVE EVALUATION OF A NATIONAL SORORITY'S RECRUITMENT PROGRAM IN ITS INAUGURAL YEAR

Colleen Elizabeth Coffey and Charles G. Eberly, Ph. D.

A formative evaluation of a national sorority's recruitment program was conducted to determine the effectiveness of selected program elements over the course of the first year's implementation. Primary objectives were to discover perceived needs among undergraduate members and chapters that were not met and to create program improvements based upon the respondent recommendations. A mixed method design employing a survey, the use of focus groups, and a review of available organizational recruitment data was utilized. Results indicated some participants understood and benefited from the recruitment program, while others felt pressure to recruit, and still others appeared unaware of the program's existence. Many chapters asked for a recruitment program tailored to their campuses' specific characteristics. Organizational data indicated a 9.1 percent increase in new member intake over the previous year, and a 10.2 percent increase in membership initiation. Recommendations include suggestions for program development, an examination of the national organization's communication modes with undergraduate chapters, and action- based recruitment plans tailored to individual campuses.

Introduction

One of the major components of sorority life is the recruitment of new members to join the organization. The recruitment process is often described as the "life-blood" of sorority chapters and colonies. Without new members the organization would cease to function. New member and continuing member dues and fees keep the inter/national organization and the undergraduate chapters and colonies solvent. Successful recruitment is also beneficial for undergraduate women in terms of perceived social status on a campus, distribution of workload, and cultivation of the bonds of sisterhood with as many women as possible.

In-College Effects of Fraternity/Sorority Membership

Psychosocial Development

Astin (1975, 1984) found that membership in a fraternity or sorority was positively related to student retention. Subsequent research yielded somewhat conflicting results, including positive outcomes (persistence, overall satisfaction with college, and satisfaction with instruction and social life), as well as negative ones (reduced intellectual self-esteem, higher status needs, and hedonism [in particular, drinking]). In a follow up longitudinal study of student experiences at over 200 universities across the country, Astin (1993) found that membership in a fraternity or sorority had "positive effects on self-reported growth in leadership abilities,…status striving, hedonism, and alcohol consumption, and a negative effect on liberalism" (p. 386).

Abrahamson (1987) sought to examine the influences of student involvement by sorority membership, and compared women who were involved in their residence hall environment to women who were involved in a sorority. Involvement in a sorority was positively correlated with additional involvement in campus recreation facilities, student organizations, personal experiences, and the student union. Ninety percent of the women Abrahamson surveyed reported the sorority had helped them to become involved in other activities.

Cognitive Development

Pascarella et al. (1994) examined the cognitive effects of membership in a fraternity or sorority among first year students and found negative effects in the areas of reading comprehension, mathematics, and critical thinking. However, a follow-up analysis of the same cohort of students demonstrated any initial negative effects on critical thinking of fraternity/sorority members compared to non-affiliated students were non-significant after the junior year (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Pike (2000) explored the influence of fraternity/sorority affiliation on college experiences and members' cognitive development, and reported higher levels of social involvement and general ability gains among members as compared to non-affiliated students. Further, membership in a fraternal organization was associated with higher levels of involvement, which was linked to greater gains in general cognitive abilities (Pike, 2000).

Leadership Development

Two qualitative studies relating to fraternity and sorority involvement and the college experience specifically focused on leadership development. Byer (1998) interviewed four men who were members of both student government and a social fraternity, and found both of these extra-curricular activities facilitated the development of leadership social skills, but fraternity involvement could encourage social exclusion. White (1999) explored the roles sorority membership played in the development of leadership skills among 47 sorority members who were peer nominated as being women who possessed strong leadership skills. Sorority membership appeared to "promote and expect involvement by members" and to "provide a place for women to develop their leadership skills" (White, 1999, p.171-173). Most notable were findings related to overall impact:

> …the sorority impacts these members by providing support and encouragement to one another. The women are given opportunities to become involved in the activities of their sororities, and they are expected to care about the sorority enough to commit time and effort to it. These women benefit by becoming involved. Those benefits include being exposed to people with different viewpoints and learning to formulate opinions while incorporating other's views into their decisions. The women learn to think independently; however they are affected by one another and have changed as a result of interacting with one another. (p. 171-172)

Student Engagement

Hayek et al. (2002) compared measures of student engagement between fraternity/sorority members and non-affiliated students. Affiliates were similarly engaged, if not more so, than other students on such constructs as academically challenging tasks, active learning, student-faculty interaction, community service, diversity, satisfaction, and select personal learning and personal development gains. Pike (2003) found similar outcomes when examining the effects on first-year and senior-year fraternity/sorority affiliation. Seniors who were members of a fraternity or sorority were significantly more involved in active learning and interaction with faculty members than seniors who were not members. Senior members also demonstrated higher gains in academic and personal development than non-members. First-year fraternity/sorority members exhibited more positive perceptions of the campus environment than their non-affiliated counterparts.

Background: Recruitment Practices

National Panhellenic Conference

Founded in 1902, the National Panhellenic Conference (NPC) is a governing body of 26 member organizations, which was established to assist collegiate and alumnae chapters, to cooperate with colleges and universities, and to promote interfraternal relationships. Among individual members, NPC's mission is to advance values, education, leadership, friendships, cooperation, and citizenship. On most college campuses, a campus governing body known as a College Panhellenic Council (CPH) governs the local operations of campus-based sorority chapters. The CPH guides the recruitment operations of each of the sorority chapters and *The National Panhellenic Conference Manual of Information 14th edition* (2005) offers specific guidance for recruitment to ensure that all groups maintain a viable organization.

Although the *Manual* provides regulations and guidance for sorority chapters, each NPC member organization has its own suggestions and programs for recruitment that are communicated to collegiate members. NPC groups contacted for this study respectfully declined to share inter/national recruitment programs because they existed, in most cases, as a resource for members only.

North-American Interfraternity Conference

The recruitment programs of the North-American Interfraternity Conference (NIC) groups are similar to those of the NPC groups. Therefore, examining what fraternities were teaching members about recruitment permitted educated assumptions about what the sororities were teaching women. Structurally, at the collegiate level, the Interfraternity Council (IFC) is similar to CPH. The most widely used NIC resource, *From Rush to RECRUITMENT*, (NIC, n.d.) recommends that IFC and chapter recruitment practices be both active and direct. In essence, the NIC document explains that fraternity chapters are in a seller's market as opposed to a buyer's market.

The most salient information in this document is the five-step model of recruitment, which outlines the process that should occur during the recruitment of new members. This includes, 1) meet him, 2) make him a friend, 3) introduce him to your friends, 4) introduce him to the fraternity, and 5) ask him to join (p. X). The model places value on the importance of year-round recruitment and careful membership selection. Another NIC recruitment resource, *The Truth About Recruitment* (NIC, n.d.), emphasizes the five-step model paired with year-round recruitment, but explicitly states that recruitment is not "entertainment, alcohol events, events with women, events that cost a lot of money…(or) onetime events" (p. 1). The principles of recruitment that are conceptualized in these documents are communicated by member inter/national organizations and campus advisors of both fraternities and sororities across the country.

The National Organization
In the fall of 2004, the principal investigator (PI) was appointed to the staff position of National Membership Recruitment Coordinator (NMRC) for her inter/national sorority. Concurrently, a new national recruitment program was formulated, which included many new services and expectations for the undergraduate chapters. The goal of the new program was to increase membership intake numbers significantly. The following steps were implemented to meet that objective:

1. The Regional Recruitment Coordinators (RRCs) and the NMRC made up the National Recruitment Team (NRT);
2. An article on a recruitment-related topic would be incorporated in each edition of the organization's monthly newsletter;
3. The National Organization would reinforce the message that each chapter should recruit year round;
4. The National Organization would reinforce the message that each chapter should recruit to meet campus total;
5. A national incentive, called the Plus One Challenge, would be instituted in the 2004-2005 academic year to encourage chapter members to recruit to replace themselves plus one additional woman each year;
6. A scholarship to attend the "Recruitment Boot Camp" (Stollman, 2004) program would be instituted for five women in five separate chapters selected by the NMRC;
7. A brand and name would be instituted for the national recruitment program;
8. Membership statistics would be gathered, compiled, and published for each chapter;
9. Chapters would receive and review the statistics;
10. Initiatives would be established to encourage chapters to recruit using the teams recruitment model, which was to be developed using ideas from the North-American Interfraternity Conference publication *From Rush to Recruitment* and the "Recruitment Boot Camp" (Stollman, 2004) curriculum from CAMPUSPEAK, Inc;
11. Chapter visits would be conducted by RRCs and the NMRC to improve recruitment operations and challenges with staff members present;
12. A recruitment resource CD would be distributed to chapters and colonies in the summer of 2005;
13. Consistent communication would be initiated between the NRT and chapter women who had questions;
14. Chapters would be grouped in one of three statuses: target, benefit, and healthy;
15. And, a Yahoo® group listserv would be established for chapter recruitment directors and advisers.

Method

Data Collection
There were three facets to the data collection process in this formative evaluation study (Fitz-Gibbon & Morris, 1987). The first two parts of the data collection took place during the National

Organization's June 2005 undergraduate officer leadership training conference. All members of each chapter or colony in attendance received a specific folder that corresponded with the chapter offices they held.

Facet one. Undergraduate recruitment directors for each chapter represented at the leadership training conference received the National Recruitment Program Survey (NRPS) in their conference folders. The PI explained the purpose of the study and the informed consent protocol. Chapter delegations were told they could opt out of the process should they choose to do so. The groups had until the next morning to return the completed NRPS to the PI. The NRPS included eleven questions related to the undergraduate participants' perceptions and understanding of the national recruitment program. Answers were given on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (not true at all) to 5 (absolutely true). Participants were also encouraged to make free response comments under each Likert scale item. In addition, the survey asked five open-ended questions with similar objectives to the Likert items.

Facet two. Focus groups on recruitment practices were held on the evening of the second day. During the PI's opening remarks about the study, participants were encouraged, but not required, to attend these focus groups. When chapter members arrived for the planned, one-hour focus group sessions, they were each given an index card with either a red, blue, or green dot. Participants with a red or blue dot card were selected for the research focus groups. Participants with a green dot card represented the control group. A total of twenty-four volunteer participants were randomly assigned to two focus groups. The 24 focus group participants originated from 21 unique chapters and colonies. A second informed consent form for participation in the focus groups was explained and completed by participants.

The focus groups were recorded and led by two senior Regional Recruitment Coordinators (RRCs) and were observed by the National Risk Management Coordinator and another RRC. Participants in the focus groups were asked a series of structured, open-ended questions relating to their perceptions and understanding of the national recruitment program. Although this may have created a biased response, the students were very forthcoming in their answers.

Facet three. Existing records of the sorority related to membership intake numbers during the year prior to the inception of the national recruitment program (2003-2004) and during the 2004-2005 academic year were tabulated. These were then used in descriptive analysis.

Data Analysis

Completed group surveys were gathered from 48 chapter executive committees attending the leadership training conference. Eight chapter delegations chose not to participate in the research, so there was an 85.7 percent response rate. The resulting data were entered into a database and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, v. 14). Frequency distributions, cross-tabulations, and Pearson product-moment correlations were computed for the following survey variables: the perceptions of the effectiveness of the NRT (Item 1) and the perceptions of the helpfulness of the NRT (Item 3); the familiarity of the chapter with the Plus One Challenge (Item 6) and the familiarity of the chapter with teams recruitment (Item 7); the familiarity of the chapter with teams recruitment (Item 6) and the perceptions of the helpfulness of the NRT (Item 3); and the chapter's feelings on being held accountable in a good way to maintain a healthy size

(Item 8) and the chapter's feeling on being pressured in a bad way to maintain a healthy size (Item 9). The open-ended questions and other comments on the survey were tabulated by the PI's examination of common themes that emerged within the answers using the constant comparative method of qualitative data analysis (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001).

Focus group data were also analyzed using the constant comparative method, and common themes among the group conversations were identified. In addition, written notes from the two focus group observers (a National Risk Management Coordinator and a Regional Recruitment Coordinator) were examined carefully. After the focus groups were completed, the PI facilitated a de-briefing session wherein the focus group leaders and observers were given the opportunity to communicate their thoughts, frustrations, and feelings about the focus group process. The researcher also took field notes on what was communicated during this time from the tape recording. The focus group data, focus group observer notes, and the field notes served as a method of triangulation for the focus group experience.

The data on membership intake and membership initiation for 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 were tabulated by a national staff member. The staff member based these recruitment numbers on the amount of new member dues and initiation fees paid by individual chapters and colonies for each year.

Findings

Survey Data

The National Recruitment Program Survey (NRPS) was completed as a group by the executive committees (four women from each chapter) of 48 chapters represented at the leadership training conference. The composite group completed the survey without supervision. Responses to the eleven items in the quantitative section of the NRPS were scored on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (not true at all) to 5 (absolutely true). Participants also had the option to indicate a not applicable response.

I know what the Plus One Challenge is (Item 6) yielded the highest mean response with a score of 4.13 (Table 1). The Plus One Challenge was defined as replacing oneself with a new member, plus one more. Nearly seventy percent of the valid responses indicated that this statement was 5, absolutely true.

The National Recruitment Team helped my chapter this year (Item 3) yielded the lowest mean response with a score of 2.16. Fifty-four percent of the participants reported this statement was not true at all. Other low mean responses were to *My chapter has an improved recruitment program because of the National Recruitment Team* (Item 11), with a mean score of 2.60, and *I am familiar with teams recruitment* (Item 7), with a mean score of 2.58 and 48.9% of respondents indicating that this statement was 1, not true at all.

A mean response above 3.0 was found for *My questions about recruitment were answered in a timely manner* (Item 4), with a mean score of 3.97. Forty-two percent of all respondents indicated that this statement was 5, absolutely true.

I feel that my chapter is pressured in a bad way by the National Recruitment Team to maintain a healthy size (Item 9) was the only item where a lower score indicated a positive response. This item had a mean score of 2.23, and 45.5% of respondents indicated that this statement was 1, not true at all.

There were two items where 40% or more of the subjects indicated a response of 3: *I feel that the National Recruitment Team did an effective job this year* (Item 1) and *I found the [monthly newsletter] articles and other communications sent out by the National Recruitment Team useful* (Item 10). Missing responses, where subjects indicated N/A, were prominent in *My questions about recruitment were answered in a timely manner* (Item 4), with 15 missing responses; *The National Recruitment Team has good ideas for me to use* (Item 5), with 10 missing responses; and *I feel that the National Recruitment Team did an effective job this year* (Item 1), with 8 missing responses.

Four cross-tabulations using chi-square tests revealed a significant statistical relationship between two items, *I feel that the National Recruitment Team did an effective job this year* (Item 1) and *The Recruitment Team helped my chapter this year* (Item 3), $\chi^2 = 36.964$ (df=16), p <.002; and a cross tabulation of *I know what the Plus One Challenge is* (Item 6) and *I am familiar with teams recruitment* (Item 7), $\chi^2 = 29.914$ (df = 16), p < .018.

Table 1
National Recruitment Program Survey Results by Item

Item number and content	**Total**	**Response categories 1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**NA**	**Mean**
1. Team did effective job	40	12.5	2.5	47.5	30.0	7.5	8	3.18
2. Knew RRC or NMRC	42	28.6	14.3	14.3	14.3	28.6	6	3.00
3. Team helped chapter	43	53.5	7.0	18.6	11.6	9.3	5	2.16
4. Questions answered timely	33	9.1	0.00	18.2	30.3	42.4	15	3.97
5. NRT good ideas	38	2.6	23.7	18.4	31.6	23.7	10	3.50
6. Know Plus One Challenge	46	15.2	2.2	6.5	6.5	69.9	2	4.13
7. Know teams recruitment	45	48.9	11.1	2.2	8.9	28.9	3	2.58
8. Accountable good way	44	13.6	18.2	31.8	18.2	18.2	4	3.09
9. Pressured bad way	44	45.5	15.9	15.9	15.9	6.8	4	2.23
10. Newsletter was helpful	45	8.9	20.0	40.0	22.2	8.9	3	3.02
11. Chapter improved b/c of NRT	42	35.7	11.9	19.0	23.8	9.5	6	2.60

Responses to Open-Ended Questions

The survey had five open-ended questions relating to participants' perceptions of the NRT and the national recruitment program (Question 1), the areas of recruitment they felt they needed help with (Question 2), perceptions of the Plus One Challenge (Question 3), knowledge of whom to contact with recruitment-related questions (Question 4), and any other comments they wanted to share (Question 5). The open-ended questions yielded many responses with similar content.

Plus One Challenge. Groups alternatively cited that the Plus One Challenge did not work for small campuses and that it did not work for large campuses. Smaller chapters stated comments similar to the following: "It is obtainable, but for colleges with small Greek populations it is difficult to recruit that many girls." Larger chapters made comments like: "It is obtainable for some chapters, not all. [We would like a] new challenge next year that we can do," and "We feel that challenges should be tailored to individual chapters."

Teams Recruitment Concept. Findings for large and small campuses were consistent in student comments about the teams recruitment concept such as: "Teams recruitment does not necessarily seem appealing to already large chapters. Motivation for this is difficult," and "[teams recruitment is] hard to do with small chapters and Greek life not being popular on campus."

Knowledge of Services/Communication. Some chapters did not know about the NRT, Plus One Challenge, or teams recruitment concept at all. Some examples of their comments are as follows: "[I] was not informed on the national recruitment team," "I wasn't given anyone to contact, I did not know who to contact," "We are unaware of what you do for us," "[teams recruitment was an] idea…never explained to us," "We were not affected (by the NRT) because we were not contacted," "I do not really understand the Plus One Challenge," and "We did not know who the RRC was because they kept changing."

Chapters who did know about the national recruitment program appeared to be positive in their responses when they actually knew their RRC or the NMRC, stating things like "Our (RRC) [name omitted] was fantastic," "open communication was marvelous," and "The conversation I had with the NMRC [name omitted] was what basically enabled us to recruit the girls we did last semester."

Many chapters reported they had people to contact for recruitment help, offering comments such as "When in need of help I contacted the NMRC [name omitted] and she was great," "The NRT has good communication and prompt answers for questions," "I always contact (RRC) [name omitted]," and "(the NRT is) very accessible."

Feelings of Pressure. Other chapters felt "constant pressure" to recruit. Their comments included the following: "We were pressured to take more girls even though we were already over quota," "If we do not maintain a healthy size, our chapter might be looked at as if [we have] a problem," and "Our chapter is doing what we can to promote [the national sorority] on campus and find women [to join the organization] but [we] feel that the NRT complained we were doing an inadequate job."

Chapters often communicated that recruitment should be about recruiting members who are of a high "quality" as opposed to a large "quantity." The campuses that host [chapters of the national sorority] are all unique, and a notable number of chapters asked for a recruitment plan specifically tailored to their type of campus, citing that a blanket plan for every chapter simply can not be applied to their campus. For example, one respondent said, "[The NRT] did not take into consideration the characteristics of the individual campus and tailor a program accordingly."

Chapters also indicated a desire for a recruitment online listserv to be utilized, providing comments like "It would be helpful if there were some kind of website [sic] or online group or even [a] newsletter circulated over the Internet for all chapters so we could give each other ideas. It would be a good way for us to keep in touch with other chapters."

Many groups cited problems motivating members to recruit: "We got plenty of information and ideas for recruiting, but we are struggling with motivation. Our girls just don't seem motivated to follow through."

Campus Culture. Finally, some groups commented about their unique campus cultures: "We have no girls [on our campus]," and "We are not recognized on campus." Another group had perceptions that their university did not support fraternity and sorority membership and had challenges with the effectiveness of their CPH: "[We have] Panhellenic issues [and] problems with [the] campus Greek Advisor, [We have] issues with [not] being able to rush freshmen…[this is] extremely detrimental to all aspects of our chapter."

Focus Groups

Student participants were asked a series of open-ended questions by focus group facilitators and were encouraged to freely respond. Several common themes emerged from these conversations. Consistent with the findings related to the open-ended questions, focus group participants seemed to feel pressure from the NRT to recruit. One group member stated, "Don't push numbers so much, [you should] bring back good GPA and other things as standard." Another stated, "Recruitment is now no-frills…With Nationals [sic] somehow it still seems it is about that…chapters have big fancy things, high numbers and that is why they are the best…" Other group members commented:

> …When I first joined we focused a lot on academics, the way we presented ourselves…this past semester we were so worried about meeting quota that we were taking girls just for numbers. I am not sure if it was Nationals [sic] wanting us to build so much or what it was…they have upped their standards, and that's a lot of pressure. We see these girls and we want them, we just can't get them…it makes our sorority look bad in the long run…

and

> We have been having trouble as a chapter recruiting…I just kind of got made recruitment chair…I have been in constant contact with [officials names omitted]…they have wanted me to email them. It is a lot of pressure on me and some women in my chapter aren't pulling through…It is falling on the shoulders of the recruitment chair a lot there is only

> so much that the recruitment chair can do and that is the one person who is getting all of the emails…it is kind of discouraging sometimes when you have to email all of these people back (that) we only had two people come (to a recruitment event.)

Many participants cited the need to recruit "quality" not "quantity" and were not aware of the Plus One Challenge, the teams recruitment concept, or that the NRT even existed. One comment offered was as follows: "this might sound really stupid…but we came here today and when you guys started talking about this we had no idea what was going on…we don't even know what the Plus One Challenge is." In both focus groups, facilitators had to explain both the teams recruitment concept and the Plus One Challenge to participants during the process of the group experience.

Some participants reported although the NRT did have excellent ideas, their chapter needed more on-site support to actually implement what they were being told.

> We get all of these excellent ideas from National Staff about how to get the girls…but I think, I am not trying to say come and do it for us, but when we try to implement (the ideas) we feel so frustrated that we are not (succeeding).

In addition, there appeared to be several different types of campuses represented in the focus group: "(The NRT was) giving us good examples of stuff we could do but given the small campus we are on it is pretty impractical at this point," "the Greek system (on my campus) is very formalized, very organized, very…strict," "In our chapter we aren't recognized by our school…we haven't been since the early 90's…some stuff went down with fraternities but we are still alive and have been since the 90's, we are just not recognized." Another group member reported:

> Our school is a commuter school so sometimes it can be a little harder…we had two people out of our chapter of nine…who lived on campus. One girl commutes from an hour away. Getting the time commitment (for recruitment) is just really hard sometimes… Even when people are there they are like 'I'm tired, I have a paper to write, I have a test tomorrow…

Some chapters are represented on campuses that appear unsupportive and even stifling of sorority life. One group member communicated her frustrations with the sorority community:

> …we are so much different than some of the other organizations on our campus…it is always a competition and it is not supposed to be. We are supposed to be building Greek life not just [our sorority]… (sororities) are always on edge with each other and I don't like it.

In addition, one woman communicated that she was told three different things from three different staff members about recruitment:

> This past year was a really a tough time for my chapter, we had two EC visits, one Regional Recruitment Director [sic] visit, and a District President visit…sometimes it got

> confusing… (the first EC who came in) told us one thing and we had another EC come in who told us something completely different and then [name omitted] came in and (said) you (should) do it this way so we pretty much stuck with what [she] told us.

There appears to be a theme of social rankings among sorority chapters on some campuses. Women described "not being in a top house" as part of their problem with recruitment. In addition, in each group the new recruitment process prescribed by NPC was mentioned, "Maybe the biggest thing [we need] is just involvement [from the NRT] even though we are a healthy chapter and we do make quota, we still need help…especially with us going into a totally new recruitment style." While some women had positive things to say about the National Organization, "Nationals [sic] is stepping it up…I can think of at least 3 people that have come to help us out," the underlying theme of the focus groups was that there are definitely areas of the national recruitment program with room for improvement.

Archival Data

The existing data on recruitment, based on new member and initiation fees payments, was provided by the National Organization. The data compared new member intake and membership initiation between the 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 academic years. There was a 9.1% increase in new member intake over the course of the 2004-2005 academic year and a 10.2% increase in membership initiation. It should be noted that during the 2003-2004 academic year one colony group of 33 women was initiated and during the 2004-2005 academic year three colony groups totaling 68 women were initiated. The attrition rate for new members in both 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 was slightly over 10%.

Limitations

There were several limitations to this study, the first of which pertained to the sample. Participants in the study were undergraduate members of the National Organization who attended the bi-annual, sorority leadership training conference. In theory, the women participating were to be the chapter president in addition to officers in charge of new member education, alumnae relations, risk management, and recruitment; however, in some cases, these specific chapter officers were not able to attend the conference. Because the national recruitment program had been targeted primarily at chapter recruitment directors during the previous year, and not all chapter recruitment directors were in attendance at the leadership training conference to participate in the surveys and focus groups, it is likely that some participants in the survey and focus groups may not have been equipped to accurately evaluate the program. However, all attendees were women who were committed to their involvement in the organization, since they traveled to take place in the conference. This may also be a notable limitation due to the fact that these chapter leaders represented only a small sample population of the entire chapter and an even smaller sample of undergraduate members nationwide.

There were also financial and time limitations that constrained focus group facilitator and observer training. Training was completed only via phone and email. Moreover, focus group facilitators and observers were National Organization officers, so undergraduates may have guarded their comments. The focus group recordings were not of excellent quality and at times were hard to hear, which resulted in some data loss. However, common themes emerged among the survey and focus group responses. One focus group facilitator became too involved in the focus group's comments and started to lead the group rather than guide students' responses, so this could have impeded the responses of these participants (Pickering & Calliotte, 1993). However, data from both focus groups yielded the same general themes despite the issues surrounding data collection.

The program evaluation was done as a part of another ongoing leadership development curriculum during the leadership training conference and was administered over the course of a program-intensive weekend. This could have impeded participants' desire or time to fill out the survey and actively participate in the focus groups. Finally, the national recruitment data used were based solely on the chapters and colonies that paid new member and initiation fees. The payment of these per-member fees is self-reported by chapters and colonies and sometimes may not reflect accurate statistics for membership intake. In addition, some groups pay these dues and fees late or not at all. In other words, there is no way to know the exact number of women pledged and initiated to the National Organization each year, but the present data are as close to accurate as possible given the limitations.

Conclusions

The purposes of this project were to determine the effectiveness of an NPC sorority's national recruitment program over the course of its inaugural year; to discover any perceived needs among undergraduate members and chapters that were not met over the course of that year; and to create recommendations for the program to be implemented during the 2006-2008 biennium. The study sought to answer two questions: 1) what are the undergraduate women's perceptions of the national recruitment program; and, 2) were the initiatives of the national recruitment program communicated effectively to the undergraduate chapters?

Undergraduate Members' Perceptions of the National Recruitment Program

Undergraduate members' perceptions of being pressured to recruit and to maintain a healthy chapter size were mixed. Quantitative data suggested nearly half of all participants did not feel they were pressured to maintain a healthy chapter size. In contrast, open-ended questions and focus group responses revealed an overwhelming feeling of pressure to recruit members. Some women felt as if they were recognized only on the basis of having high membership numbers. Although 69.9% of respondents recognized the Plus One Challenge program, only 28.9% indicated they were familiar with the teams recruitment concept. The Plus One Challenge and teams recruitment concept were communicated in very similar ways, via the RRCs, NMRC, and the monthly newsletter. The Plus One Challenge was a part of the program at the onset of the academic year, while the teams recruitment initiative began in November. These data are significant for the National Organization holistically, as the newsletter is one of the organization's primary means of communication. If chapter leaders are not reading or retaining the information provided in this newsletter, they are likely missing out on important information about many areas of the National Organization, not just recruitment.

The perceptions about the effectiveness of both the Plus One Challenge and the teams recruitment concept were conflicting, suggesting that either these items have not been properly explained to the chapters, the chapter women were not supported with ways to act on them, or the expectations of the Plus One Challenge were too high and the mechanics of the teams recruitment concept too complicated for chapter members to implement.

Were Recruitment Program Initiatives Communicated Effectively?

The open-ended question and focus group responses revealed some members were not aware that a new national recruitment program existed or that they even had an RRC. This could be due, in part, to the turnover across semesters among the RRCs, to the lack of training that the RRCs received, and/or to the re-districting of RRC chapter assignments in the middle of the year. Over half of the respondents indicated the NRT did not help their chapter during the year, which could be simply because they did not know who the members of the team were, or that it even existed. This idea resonated in several responses to the open-ended questions and focus group questions; however, chapters who did have a relationship with the NMRC or their RRC had positive things to say about the volunteers and the national recruitment program in general. Respondents requested a recruitment listserv, which did exist during the inception of the program but was not used frequently over the course of the year. These results suggest clear communication among constituent groups within an organization is at least as important as the specific program content communicated (Schein, 1999).

Do Recruitment Program Initiatives Consider Institutional Culture?

Finally, there was an underlying theme that many chapters were in unique situations on their campuses and/or did not perceive their campuses to be receptive to fraternal organizations. Further, members communicated the need for programs that fit their campuses, indicating applying one program to all chapters within the National Organization without consideration for local campus culture may not be in the best interest of the collegiate women.

There was a small increase in new member intake and initiation over the course of the year, which could be due to the efforts of the NRT and the focus and commitment to recruitment from the National Organization as a whole. The attrition rates of new members for each academic year were greater than 10%, which is of concern for recruitment as well as member retention. Perhaps these numbers are reflective of a miscommunication to potential new members about the commitment involved in the act of joining a sorority (Burnett, Vaughan, & Moody, 1997).

Recommendations

The national recruitment program was evaluated during its inaugural year through this study. Although a program evaluation at this time has certain relevance, it would be most advantageous to evaluate this program again after it has been in existence for at least three years (Andrew Wall, personal communication, October 27, 2005). Evaluating the recruitment program after three years will allow for the entire organization to become acclimated to the program and give enough time for the changes that often occur in a program's infancy to subside.

The following recommendations are presented for the national recruitment program in the 2006-2008 biennium:

1. The methods of recruitment, retention, and training for Regional Recruitment Coordinators (RRCs) need to be more carefully spelled out. It would be advantageous to

have some type of on-site training for the women before their terms begin. In addition, the expectations for these positions need to be concrete and serve as an accountability mechanism for the RRCs.

2. Collaboration and recruitment practices training should be conducted for all members of the national staff and Council, with special attention paid to the need for collaboration with the NPC delegation and NPC area advisers on campus-related issues. Training on recruitment practices should be incorporated in all previously existing staff and adviser training programs. Communication from the NRT to chapters must be copied to those staff members who interact with chapter officers. There should be one member on the NRT that is responsible for communication with the NPC delegation and area advisers. This person should create a bi-monthly report to give to these women, so that problems are noted and addressed in a timely fashion.
3. Research on the types of campuses where the National Organization is represented followed by the development of a variety of recruitment method modules ascribed to different types of chapters should occur as soon as possible. To address this recommendation, a committee should be appointed to research each campus culture and effective recruitment practices in fraternities and sororities and other areas such as volunteer organizations, college admissions offices, employment agencies, and businesses, to find the best possible recruitment prescription for each individual group. Committee members should include members from the national staff, National Council, and collegiate women from all different types of campuses. It is further recommended that the NMRC for the 2006-2008 biennium be selected from the membership of this committee.
4. An effort should be made by the NRT to collaborate with campus officials and other NPC chapters where the undergraduate women perceive a lack of support for fraternities and sororities. This effort should be carried out on a grassroots level through letters, personal phone calls, and even campus visits.
5. Rewards, celebration, and positive reinforcement should be given for chapters in even the smallest areas of recruitment success. Rewards can be given verbally; via letter, phone call, or email; in National Organization publications; or in the form of awards, scholarships, and/or gifts. Positive reinforcement should be communicated in the training of all National Organization personnel who interact with collegiate women on any type of recruitment operations.
6. Each RRC should create supportive and positive chapter-specific action plans for groups who are targeted for additional help in the area of recruitment, with guidance from the NMRC and in collaboration with the targeted chapter. These action plans should be followed up by the RRC and evaluated for effectiveness at the end of each semester.
7. The active use of an electronic listserv should be implemented to promote communication to and among chapters and colonies. The listserv that is already in existence should be managed by the NMRC with the help of one member of the NRT. Recruitment-related communication should be sent out weekly on the listserv.
8. A task force examination of the effectiveness of the current communication practices of the National Organization should be implemented. It is recommended that this task force consist of members of the national staff, the National Council, and undergraduate chapters and colonies.

9. A task force examination relating to the retention of new members should be implemented. The task force should be lead by the National New Member Coordinator, National Membership Development Coordinators, and NMRC and should seek opinions from every area of sorority membership. In addition, an "exit" survey should be created to disperse to all chapters to give to new members who release during the time of pledging and women who release from membership after initiation.

The above recommendations should be implemented with the needed financial support from the National Organization and should be led by staff members who have both the time and desire to commit to the national recruitment program. Therefore, it is further recommended that funds be allocated to the NMRC to ensure the feasibility of these recommendations and that the organization appoint or hire dedicated, responsible, and passionate staff who have significant time to allocate to serve on the NRT.

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