



Bloomsburg University

Greek Life Assessment

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Bloomsburg University, Greek Life Assessment

INTRODUCTION AND CHARGE

The AASCU Penson Center for Professional Development responded to RFP#11232016 from Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania (BU), which requested an external review of the Greek Life program at the University. Specifically, the RFP requested “an assessment of the impact of sorority and fraternity Greek chapters on the Bloomsburg University campus community and to identify successes as well as issues, challenges and limitations that the program faces.”

The AASCU Penson Center prepared a work plan that proposed data that would initially be gathered followed by a campus visit in which a broad based group of students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni and community members would be interviewed. Following the gathering of data, a risk/gain analysis approach would be used as the framework for the project. Specifically, the consulting team would conduct a Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis of the data gathered. This analysis will lead to a report that outlines findings and a series of recommendations that will provide options for the campus to consider.

The campus awarded the engagement to the AASCU Penson Center on July 28, 2017. As proposed in the RFP, two consultants were responsible for completing the engagement – John D. Welty and Paul M. Oliaro. A summary of the consultants experience is included in Appendix A.

INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE/DEMOGRAPHICS

Bloomsburg University is a comprehensive public university that offers 56 undergraduate programs and 20 graduate programs. The University’s total enrollment in the fall, 2017 is 9,658 (8,995 undergraduate and 663 graduate) and is the third largest University in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. Seventeen and one tenth percent (17.1%) of the students are from underrepresented minority groups and 33% of the students are first generation students. The University’s graduation rate is 37.9% after four years; 39.1 % after five years and 61.6% after six years. There are over 250 clubs and organizations that include eleven sororities (six national and five local) and eleven fraternities (nine national and two local).

The University has over 70,000 alumni with the largest number of these alumni residing in Pennsylvania.

METHODOLGY

The consultants requested that the University provide the data that are displayed in Appendix B. After the initial receipt of the data, a second request was made in an effort to amplify the original data requested. In some cases, data requested were not available.

METHODOLOGY (Cont.)

After a review of the data that were submitted to the consultants, a plan was developed in concert with the Director of the Student Union and Campus Life, who oversees the Greek Life Program, and the Vice President for Student Affairs to interview a wide cross-section of the campus community and select members of the Bloomsburg community. A total of seventy-three people were interviewed almost all of them in person. In addition, approximately forty-five Greek students participated in two group meetings with the consultants. All interviewees were advised that the report prepared would not attribute specific comments to individuals. Finally, an online survey was distributed to chapter presidents, chapter advisors and Greek alumni who could not be interviewed. The survey was completed by nine chapter presidents, six alumni advisors (four national and two local) and 276 Greek alumni. Of the Greek alumni responding, 72% were from sororities.

Those interviewed (by position) included the following:

Consultant One – John Welty

- University President
- Former University President
- Director of Government and External Relations
- Bloomsburg Mayor
- Bloomsburg Town Police Chief
- Bloomsburg Town Code Enforcement Officers
- Chapter Alumni
- Faculty Leadership
 - Chair of University Forum
 - Chair of BU Curriculum Committee
 - Chair of General Education Committee
 - President of APSCUF (faculty union)
 - One department chair from each of the four colleges
- Associate Provost
- Executive Director of BU Foundation
- Vice President for Administration and Finance
- Vice President for Enrollment Management
- Director of Athletics
- Assistant Vice President for Finance, Budget and Business Services

- President, Student Government
- Assistant Vice Presidents for Student Affairs(2)

Consultant Two – Paul Oliaro

- Vice President for Student Affairs
- Presidents of Greek Governing groups (Inter-Fraternity Council, Pan Hellenic Council)
- Assistant Vice President for Alumni and Professional Engagement
- Director of Women’s Resource Center
- Member, Council of Trustees
- Vice President for University Advancement
- Director, Center for Leadership and Community Engagement
- Director, University Police
- Director, Multicultural Center
- Two fraternity and two sorority chapter presidents from nationally affiliated chapters and two of each from local/independent chapters
- Two multicultural fraternity and two sorority chapter presidents
- Faculty/staff advisors from nationally affiliated, local and multicultural groups (one sorority and one fraternity chapter advisor from each group)
- A recruitment/rush chair from one sorority and one fraternity chapter from the same 3 groups of chapters noted above
- 3-5 non-Greek students informally chosen by the consultant

DATA ANALYSIS

The consultants received a data report indicating membership by fraternity and sorority chapter from 2012 to 2017. The report also included information on Greek life ethnic diversity, community service and philanthropy, graduation rate data, grade point average data, new member grade report data for 2015-16, behavioral incidents, and the Something of Value (SOV) Report. The analyses of these data are provided below.

Greek Membership

During the period between 2012 and 2017, the overall Greek membership grew approximately 15% from 598 in 2012 to 701 in 2017; however, there was fluctuation during this period with consistent growth from 2013-16 and a high membership of 774 in 2016 but then a 10% drop in 2017.

Sorority membership remained relatively stable during this period, averaging around 400 members for the first three years and 450 members for the latter three. Individual sorority memberships also remained relatively stable and increased proportionately, for the most part, during the past three years. Overall membership increased 10% from 407 in 2012 to 446 in 2017.

A review of fraternity membership revealed some fluctuation - with a consistent increase in membership from 2012 to 2016 (192 to 330) but then a decline of 25% to 255 in 2017. There was fluctuation by chapter during this period, with almost all experiencing declines during the past year.

The consultants do not have enough information to determine causes for this decline or the fluctuation; however, the information we did receive regarding the variability in the recruitment process from year-to-year may be a factor. The consultants also found it difficult to reconcile this data sheet with the data we received on ethnicity across the Greek Life program. That data indicated membership at 1166 for what appeared to be fall, 2017 compared to the 701 figure on the 2012–2017 chart. This, along with discrepancies between the list of fraternities and sororities that we received, and the listing of sororities and fraternities on the Greek Life website gives us pause about the data gathering process and the accuracy of the data we received.

Greek Life Ethnic Diversity

Another data sheet received by the consultants indicated that of the 1166 members, we believe for fall, 2017 (although that is not clear on the chart) 9.5% were students of color and 61.4% were identified as Caucasian; however over 31% did not respond to reveal their ethnicity. In addition, there were 22 members in multicultural chapters. This data reflect a greater diversity in mainstream chapters than might be expected and suggests an openness in recruitment and an appreciation of differences that reflects positively on the Bloomsburg University values and mission statement. The small numbers in the multicultural chapters is not unusual for campuses of this size, but it may also be a reflection of the greater diversity in mainstream chapters.

Community Service and Philanthropy

The consultants received data from the 2015-16 year on fraternity and sorority service hours; no other years of data on service hours were available. It is commendable to note that over 20,200 hours of community service were contributed during that academic year. Bloomsburg University's Fast Facts suggested over 70,000 hours are annually contributed by the University as a whole. The fact that over 25% of those hours come from the Greek community reflects positively on the Greek Life program. It is also worthy to note that 70% of the service hours were provided by sororities, which is positively disproportionate to the percentage of sorority members in the Greek Life community.

The consultants also received a lengthy list of fraternity and sorority service events for 2015-16 with over 260 events included. The breadth of organizations who were recipients of the service hours is extensive and impressive and appears to cover most aspects of the Bloomsburg area community. While

Community Service and Philanthropy (Cont.)

there is no breakdown between fraternity/sorority service events, the report still provides a very positive message about the importance of the Greek community to serve the entire Bloomsburg area.

Graduation Rate Data

The data on graduation rates for the Greek Life program that we received were incomplete and difficult from which to analyze or draw conclusions. One data sheet provided the average year to graduation by chapter for 24 chapters, but there was no indication what year for which these data were provided and it was difficult to align with the list of active chapters for fall, 2017. The data did show that the average years to graduation were mostly in the range of 4.0 to 4.5 years with one high of 5.25 and one low of 3.50. Overall, this graduation rate is positive.

Another data sheet provided 4, 5 and 6 graduation rates for Greek members graduating from 2015 to 2017. This set of data provided percentage totals of those graduates who completed their degree in 6, 5, 4 or less than 4 years. It is worthy to note that 365 Greek members completed their degree over the three-year period and 76% of them did it in four years or less. However, these data do not include the total number of Greek members during that period, nor did it provide any comparison data for the cohort with whom the graduates entered Bloomsburg. Thus, we cannot make comparisons about whether or not the Greek Life experience makes it more or less likely that a student will graduate or if the experience reduces the time to degree compared to other students who entered Bloomsburg at the same time but who were not participating in the Greek Life experience.

At a time when many campuses and external stakeholders are questioning the value of maintaining the Greek Life program, it will become increasingly important for campuses to demonstrate that participation in the Greek Life experience increases students' grade point average and increases the likelihood of completing their degree in a timely fashion compared to those students who are not involved with Greek Life. To make those comparisons would require that every semester a complete list of new Greek members for all chapters be made available to the Office of Institutional Research. That office could then align those individuals with the cohort of students with whom they entered (i.e., full-time first-time freshman fall, 2015 or entering transfer students fall, 2016, etc.) and track their persistence rates until graduation. An addition to that request would be to submit those names by chapter each semester so that the chapter graduation rate by cohort could also be determined along with the all-fraternity/all-sorority and all-Greek graduation rates. It is acknowledged that the cells for some chapters may be small and not revealing, but the overall sorority/fraternity and all-Greek rates should be helpful.

Grade Point Average Data

In order to assess the value-added experience of Greek Life on academic achievement, the consultants requested grade point average data by chapter as well as all-fraternity and all-sorority grade point averages by term with comparisons to the all-male and all-female university grade point averages.

Data were received for fall, 2015, spring, 2016, fall, 2016, and spring, 2017. A comparison of the all-fraternity semester GPA for each term with the all-male university GPA for each term showed the all-fraternity average was consistently below the all-male university average. The differences ranged from -.04 to -.47. The cumulative grade point average during the same period was also consistently

Grade Point Average Data (Cont.)

below the all-male cumulative university average with a differential range of - .21 to -.01. During each of these terms, there were a number of individual fraternities whose semester average GPA was below 2.5 including nine chapters in 2015–16 and four chapters in 2016-17. This is a troubling finding because the initial eligibility to join a Greek organization is a 2.5 GPA.

As a side note, there were two separate sets of data for fall, 2016. In the analysis above, we used the more favorable GPA data for fraternities; however, it may be worthwhile to review the sources of those two sets of data and to be very thorough in releasing any future GPA data that is produced.

The sorority data were more favorable, but was also consistently below the all-female university semester and cumulative grade point averages. However, the differential was smaller ranging from -.21 to -.05 for the semester averages and -.10 to -.06. for cumulative GPAs. No sorority chapters had semester or cumulative GPAs below 2.5 during this period. It is also worthy to note that both fraternities and sororities showed improvements in their semester and cumulative GPAs in 2016-17. Once again, this change was due to a favorable differential in the second set of data from fall 2016, which we used, but that data source and report should be reviewed.

It is apparent that these data are not favorable for showing added-value as a member of a fraternity or sorority. Based on the limited amount of time we were able to spend on the campus, we are reluctant to identify any single cause for the differential; however, the Coordinator's apparent lack of focus/emphasis on academics may be a factor.

New Member Grade Report Data for 2015-16

The consultants received one year of New Member GPA data for 2015-16 academic year. Our analyses of those data follow.

The new member all-fraternity GPA for fall semester 2015 was 2.79 compared to the all-male university GPA of 2.61, which is a positive differential of +.18. The cumulative grade point average was 2.85 vs. 2.70 for the all-male university cumulative GPA, a +.15 positive difference. Spring, 2016 results showed a 2.79 GPA with a differential of +.19 and a cumulative GPA of 2.74, a +.08 differential, compared to the all-male university averages.

The new member all-sorority GPA for fall 2015 was 2.94, just .01 below the all-female University average; the all-sorority cumulative grade point average was 3.05 which was +.06 above the all-female University average. However, the new member all-sorority semester GPA for spring 2016 was 2.73, a -.21 difference from the all-female university GPA; the cumulative GPA was 2.91 a -.08 differential from the all-female university cumulative grade point average.

The new member data is encouraging, especially for fraternities. It is also worthy to note that the new fraternity member semester GPA for spring, 2016 was higher than the new sorority member GPA for that semester. It is the only semester in any of the data that we saw in which the fraternity GPA was higher than the sorority GPA. We encourage the University to review the last two years of new member data to see if that trend continues. Given the previous data on all fraternity and sorority GPAs, one of the challenges for Greek Life at Bloomsburg would be to help new members maintain their new member GPAs after their first semester as a Greek member.

Behavioral Incidents

The consultants were provided data that indicated that between the years of 2012 - 2017 there were 25 formal complaints of alleged Code of Conduct violations involving fraternities and sororities.

Approximately 75% of those complaints involved fraternities and the remaining 25% involved sororities.

Just over half of the complaints involved hazing and the remainder involved violations of alcohol policy, sexual-harassment, drugs, fighting and illegal pledging.

Only 10 of the 25 allegations were adjudicated and resulted in findings of responsibility. The remainder could not be adjudicated because individual complainants were unwilling to identify themselves or the perpetrators of the violations; others would fail to follow through after the report due to intimidation/harassment by the alleged perpetrators of the violation. Of the 10 cases that were adjudicated, two resulted in suspensions and the eight others resulted in probationary status and/or community service.

In addition to receiving complaints from individuals in the Dean of Students office, there is also a Hazing Hotline that was established to allow individuals to report incidents of hazing in any organization. While the university should be commended for providing another source for reporting information about hazing, the calls are almost always anonymous, do not usually result in enough information to pursue an investigation and there is also risk the report may be false in order to possibly damage a competing fraternity or sorority. However the existence of the hotline is still a positive.

Educational efforts are undertaken at the beginning of the year to inform new members of issues related to hazing, the Student Code of Conduct and other health and safety related behaviors. In addition, other Student Affairs departments offer sexual misconduct programming and other educational workshops throughout the year on topics relevant to alcohol and drug abuse, harassment, consent and other relevant topics related to student health and safety.

In the judgment of the consultants, the number of complaints reported over the past five years would seem to be at, or perhaps below, what might be expected for a campus and a Greek community the size of Bloomsburg. Unfortunately, the inability to pursue many of the complaints is not unique to Bloomsburg and is a challenge faced by all campuses because of the strength of the Greek community's peer pressure and the prevalence of a "deny and protect" ethos when confronted with allegations of bad behavior on the part of Greek chapters. These factors also give rise to reasonable speculation that the number of behavioral incidents is underreported.

In addition, the frequency with which the Dean of Students office receives reports from professional staff about specific incidents that have been brought to their attention regarding hazing, illegal pledging, illegal fraternity houses, inaccurate rosters, incidence of alcohol poisoning and sexual behavior within chapter houses (including reports on social media), and the difficulty in pursuing action to combat them, offers a major cause for concern.

The consultants recognize this cause for concern is shared by the Student Affairs leadership as well as other Student Affairs staff across the division. Most importantly, this information provides credible evidence of a very high-risk Greek environment that requires multiple educational interventions and careful monitoring in order to avoid the serious Greek chapter-related tragedies including deaths that occur on many campuses each year and most recently at several major, prestigious universities.

Behavioral Incidents (Cont.)

The consultants will further address this issue under their SWOT analysis and in their final recommendations.

Something of Value (SOV)

The consultants were also given a copy of the “Something of Value” (SOV) workshop conducted in fall, 2016 to provide a values review of the campus sorority chapters. That report included some observations that were similar to those that were shared with the consultants during our review that included concerns about risky behaviors, the need for more unity and community across all Greek chapters, as well as concerns about housing conditions in properties off campus.

In addition, several action items were proposed for implementation by sorority chapters. They included guidelines for conducting safer party planning, suggestions for hosting alcohol free events, increasing efforts to create more Pan Hellenic unity and spirit and increasing educational efforts that address overall wellness and well-being to include unprotected sex, hazing, sexual assault and date rape, and promoting responsible bystander behavior.

We believe that the recommendations that emerged from this SOV workshop had merit and were well-focused. However, the results of this visit were not addressed by anyone with whom we met and we do not have any knowledge of any steps that were taken to implement the action items noted in that report.

INTERVIEWS AND SUMMARIES

The data gathered from the interviews and the surveys were analyzed using a modified content analysis in order to identify the major findings of the review, which appear below.

ORGANIZATION OF THE INTERVIEW FINDINGS

The perceptions about Greek Life are reported by the major groups who were interviewed or surveyed. These groups include Non-Student Affairs campus leaders, Student Affairs campus leaders, faculty members, select members of the Bloomsburg community, chapter presidents, Greek and non-Greek students, and Greek alumni including some who were Greek advisors. The perceptions shared in the interviews are summarized by assets of the Greek system; liabilities of the system; risks associated with Greek Life; obstacles to improvement; and recommendations for change.

FINDINGS

Non-Student Affairs Campus Leaders

Approximately, two-thirds of the campus leaders not in Student Affairs interviewed identified community service as the greatest asset of Greek groups. This service includes the Big Event, which annually provides service to the local community and involves over ten per cent of the campus student population. Some anecdotal comments included specific examples of Greek groups volunteering at organizations within the town. For example, one interviewee stated, “The recent letter to the editor in the paper highlighted a fraternity’s service to a couple in need.”

Non-Student Affairs Campus Leaders (Cont.)

A second significant asset, although not nearly as strong as community service noted by non-Student Affairs campus leaders, was the building of relationships among students, which leads to long lasting friendships. The non-Student Affairs campus leaders who were interviewed stated that the formation of these relationships help students to feel a sense of community and connectedness to the University. Specifically, one interviewee noted, "I have heard from alums who continue to meet every year," and another stated, "I am aware of one graduate who attributes his graduation to the support of his fraternity."

A significant observation is that one third of those interviewed were unable to identify any assets for the Greek groups.

Liabilities

Nearly every one of the non-Student Affairs campus leaders interviewed identified the annual Block Party as the greatest liability of Greek Life and viewed it as a disaster for the University. Parties at Greek houses were also identified as a major liability. One interviewee stated, "The Block Party is a PR disaster." An observation was made by several of those interviewed that there has been a greater presence of students in the community and as the campus has grown the parties have become more visible.

The quality of Greek student housing, which is privately owned, was also identified as a major liability. One non-Student Affairs campus leader interviewed observed, "Living in a Greek house is a form of hazing." However, several of the interviewees noted that it does appear that code enforcement has improved, which they expressed came about as a result of two major fires in the past.

Risks

The majority of those non-Student Affairs campus leaders interviewed pointed out that the greatest risk of Greek groups was risky behavior, such as excessive drinking, which could lead to death. Most of those non-Student Affairs Campus leaders interviewed had not heard of any serious hazing activity, however, several of those interviewed believed that hazing may occur but it was not viewed as dangerous behavior.

Obstacles to Improvement

The lack of a major "Greek Week" activity was cited by non-Student Affairs campus leaders as an obstacle to improving the sense of community among Greeks. In addition, several interviewees stated that the rest of the campus does not have an opportunity to be exposed to the value of Greek life. Specifically, one of the interviewees stated, "there was a time in which Greek Week was a major campus activity" and another noted, "many more students used to wear their letters."

The Greek Life office was identified by some of the non-Student Affairs campus leaders as an obstacle. One individual observed that the Greek Life Coordinator had difficulty understanding the difference between being friends with the students and being friendly towards students.

The failure of the Greek groups to police themselves was also identified as an obstacle to improvement.

Obstacles to Improvement (Cont.)

When asked if they could recommend Greek life to a son or daughter, no one interviewed said they would recommend Greek life at Bloomsburg to their son or daughter. A few interviewees were neutral in their response.

Recommendations for Change

The most frequent recommendation was to eliminate the Block Party.

It was also suggested that the University should assist in publicizing the contributions that Greek groups make to the community.

Student Affairs Campus Leaders

The consultants interviewed 11 Student Affairs staff from various units across the division to elicit their perceptions about the Greek Life program, its assets and liabilities, its contributions to the campus and opportunities to improve the program.

Assets

In general, the Greek Life program was associated with philanthropy and community service; involvement with social causes; a vehicle to create a network of leaders; a social outlet for students; and a means to connect with the campus and be a support system for students. The Big Event and the 50th Anniversary celebration were seen as positive contributions to the campus. It was also noted that some sororities were making efforts to increase their educational efforts to provide programming that addresses topics such as the Consent Continuum, Management of Harm, and the Hook Up Culture, for example. An interviewee also noted efforts to work with athletes to promote a "Huskies Don't Harm" theme.

Liabilities

There were concerns raised by Student Affairs campus leaders about underground pledging. Several of the interviewees also noted there was evidence of a "mean girl culture" in sorority recruitment. In addition, hazing, evidence of a strong drinking culture, and a notion that there were "many who caused problems but who do not seem to be held responsible" were noted. Interviewees also acknowledged there was also a sense of growing apathy and indifference within the Greek community demonstrated by the lack of participation in homecoming and less evidence of Greek participation in campus-wide events and projects, and less overall visibility. Concern was raised about support for multicultural students in mainstream and multicultural chapters.

The continuation of the Block Party was also seen as a liability by those interviewed. In addition, the interviewees pointed out that working with the Greek Life Office (GLO) was difficult, that there was not a lot of openness to help or for collaboration from that office. Further, some of those interviewed stated they felt that there was not good overall oversight for the Greek Life program. Several interviewees noted that mainstream chapters were becoming more diverse but there was also an observation that some students of color, in mainstream chapters, were not satisfied with their experience.

Risks

Several interviewees cited they had heard that they were expectations for sexual behavior in conjunction with some Greek events. They also noted they observed offensive banners hung around fraternity houses that could be perceived as "promoting a rape culture". Further, several interviewees stated that there was a sense of immunity from consequences for poor behavior for those participating in Greek Life activities. There was also a perception that hazing may not be taken as seriously as it should be. While the Block Party was seen as a risk by several of those interviewed, the Spring Fest event, that is offered as an alternative, was seen as a positive, but there did not appear to be any support for that event coming from the GLO.

Obstacles to Improvement

Some obstacles to making improvements to Greek Life provided by the interviewees included a lack of leadership training, the Greek culture itself, a lack of educational programs, a lack of accountability to follow established procedures, a lack of resources and staffing support in the GLO. However, the GLO was also perceived as an obstacle to improvements because of the seemingly different standards for fraternities and sororities, because of the "status quo attitude" towards change, and in the GLO's demonstrating a general resistance to looking at ways to improve the program.

Recommendations

Recommendations that were offered by those interviewed include the need for more strategic planning, a need for more focus on Greek Life at the Student Affairs leadership level, a need for better supervision of the GLO with possible major changes to that office's structure. It was also noted that the Greek Life program offers great opportunity as a path for leadership, student development and creating an ethic of giving back, but it is not realizing its potential to create that kind of culture. It was suggested that reinvigorating the Minority Association of Greek Students (MAGS) would enhance support for multicultural students in Greek Life.

Faculty Members

Assets

Virtually all of the faculty interviewed identified community service by Greek groups as the greatest asset. In particular the Big Event was cited as a major contribution of the Greek groups.

A slightly fewer number of interviewees identified the building of long lasting relationships as a great asset. One anecdotal report indicated that a student was going to transfer until she pledged a sorority and ended up staying at the University.

Liabilities

There was unanimous agreement that the Block Party was a major liability. Faculty viewed the event as a "PR nightmare".

Risks

The greatest risk identified as students engaging in risky behavior such as excessive alcohol consumption. One faculty member stated “It is a better than average system with serious PR problems and has issues that would keep a risk manager up at night.”

Faculty interviewed had no knowledge of serious hazing activities.

Obstacles to Improvement

Faculty who were interviewed indicated that rush week had a negative impact upon the academic life of the University. One faculty member stated, “During Rush Week a greater number of students are sleeping in class.” Further, they were unable to identify any way in which Greek groups contributed to the academic life of the University.

Recommendations for Change

It was observed that students in Greek groups were less visible than in previous years. It was suggested that the wearing of the Greek letters would contribute positively to the perception of Greek groups on campus.

Several faculty observed that offering a major Greek Week activity would greatly enhance the image of Greek groups.

Two faculty members cited positive experiences with the Greek Life Coordinator although one experience occurred several years ago.

Select Members of the Bloomsburg Community

Assets

Those members of the Bloomsburg community who were interviewed cited the community service performed by Greek groups as a great asset. A recent example, in the newspaper, of a Greek group helping a couple was cited by everyone interviewed.

Many of the community members noted that sororities were viewed as more positive contributors to the community than were fraternities. One community member said, “Most of the raucous parties are at fraternities.”

Several community members noted that the town gown committee was viewed as an asset that has helped to improve relationships between the University and the community.

Liabilities

Community members largely agreed that the annual Block Party is a major liability. According to one of the interviewees, the number of arrests during that event range from 250-350 per year. The interviewee noted that eighty percent of those arrested are from out of town. Further, it was stated that there is concern in the community that incidents have become more violent in recent years.

Also related to the Block Party is the issue of litter and debris. The large number of participants in the event overwhelms the ability of the community to provide adequate trash receptacles.

Risks

The Block Party is cited as the greatest risk by almost every community member interviewed.

It is believed by the community members interviewed that code enforcement has improved in recent years, but only in the aftermath of two serious fires that resulted in deaths. Individuals who rent to students must have an inspection completed and a license issued.

Obstacles to Improvement

Currently, there is frustration that the University does not provide information on Greek houses to the town. The University does not know about the addresses of some houses in which there might be Greek students housed. Code officials would like this information to assure that these houses comply with town ordinances. This issue is a continuing discussion among town and University officials.

Recommendations for Change

The Town Gown committee has contributed to improved relationships and there has been positive solutions reached that have impacted the Block Party event. There is a desire to add more student representation to the committee, which would have a positive impact.

Town leadership are very pleased with the appointment of the new President and believe he will interact positively with the community.

Chapter Presidents

The consultants, both individually and together, met with about 18 chapter presidents and recruitment chairs. The similarities in their comments allowed us to summarize their key messages together under this combined stakeholder group called chapter presidents.

Overview

The majority of chapter presidents interviewed reported that their Greek experience met, and for the most part, exceeded their expectations. Those chapter presidents interviewed said there was good cooperation among all chapters except during recruitment. As a group, their responses indicated they did see a divide between mainstream and multicultural chapters. On the other hand, it was also noted by some that they were seeing more civility recently among chapters.

Assets

When asked about Greek Life assets, the chapter presidents pointed out community service and that there were few high profile negative incidents. Other interviewees noted the receipt of national, regional and local chapter awards as Greek Life assets.

The work of the Greek alumni advisors and their mentorship of Greek Life students was commonly cited as an asset of Greek Life by interviewees as was the Stroll event, which is an alternative activity to a Step Show. There was also an acknowledgement by several of the interviewees that Greek Life at Bloomsburg “did not haze and that hazing was taken very seriously.” Several interviewees praised the Inter- Fraternity Council/PanHellenic leadership for their service to members. The Dean of Students was also cited by several chapter presidents as a go-to person for problems.

Liabilities

Liabilities observed by the chapter presidents interviewed included underground pledging and the perception that most people look the other way when these activities take place. Several interviewees noted that there was a lack of respect for the GLO. One interviewee stated, "We don't get the guidance and support we need." Several other liabilities were noted by the interviewees, including, inappropriate behavior by the leadership; too many hoops to go through for special events; the small size of some chapters; social activities involving alcohol use and partying. The chapter presidents interviewed stated that the GLO offers support if something happens and may send emails but students do not want to go to the office very often.

General Comments

There was not much emphasis on academics that emerged during the interviews. Only a few of the chapter presidents interviewed knew the chapter GPA, but several said they knew how to get that information. Some chapters have an alert threshold GPA of 2.7/2.8, however, if a member falls below the threshold there is no intervention with tutoring, mentoring or required library hours. According to the chapter presidents interviewed, members typically tend to go to other Greek members for academic help.

The National PanHellenic Conference (NPC) was noted for offering leadership training for national sororities and even to locals on occasion. There was a perception articulated by those interviewed that fraternities need a great deal more training and a focus on civility than is currently being offered. Further, there was no reference to any leadership training offered through the Greek Life office except for the member education program during recruitment. According to those interviewed, this program was seen as positive with relevant topics. Some interviewees also made reference to a group "chat" program that seemed to be working well for Greek members.

Recommendations

Chapter presidents who were interviewed made some recommendations including the need for more leadership training in general and in particular for fraternities; the need for more financial support; the need for more "all Greek" program planning; the need for more financial transparency for the use of student fees; the need for better communication with the GLO; and the need for more GLO office hours including more availability and visibility. There were multiple comments made by interviewees directed at the GLO suggesting a change in leadership; review the NPC recruitment process and its effect on sorority chapters - especially look at the quota system. It was suggested to consider allowing first semester freshman to participate in recruitment. There was also a call for more unity among chapters as well as more recognition and support from the Community Government Association (CGA) and the University.

Greek and Non-Greek Students

Three non-Greek student interviews were conducted and in addition, one of the consultants spent time in the Dining Commons area over lunch and talked with three different groups of students, chosen at random, who agreed to be interviewed. Some of the students in these groups were Greek members and others were not Greek members.

Greek and Non-Greek Students (Cont.)

The non-Greek students reported that the time commitment and other personal interests were the reasons they did not consider becoming a member of a Greek chapter.

Greek members interviewed indicated that participation requires a lot of work but it pays off.

Perceptions of hazing included that they did not hear much about it; it did not seem as intense as on other campuses; it was noted “you're not supposed to talk about it;” there were perceptions that hazing is more mental with sororities and physical with fraternities; and, if they thought there would be hazing, they would not have joined. They were believable.

Assets

Interviewees cited that community service, friendship, networking and social opportunities/partying were factors in joining Greek Life. Some of the interviewees noted academics were emphasized in some chapters of Greek Life and other interviewees stated the campus is recognizing the diversity in some of the mainstream chapters. Several interviewees mentioned that Greek Life is not seen as a major factor on campus. One interviewee stated, “Greek Life is not very visible.” However, some of the interviewees stated that the member recruitment period was a visible campus activity that adds to school spirit during that period. Greek members who were interviewed all indicated that they had not experienced any hazing. One interviewee stated, “I have not seen hazing and if it existed in my chapter I would not have joined”.

Liabilities

Several of the students noted a concern about underground pledging. Some also perceived the Greek Life program as in a silo from the campus.

Risks

There were no specific risks mentioned by this group related to Greek life on campus.

Obstacles to Improvements

Without any solicitation, comments were offered about the Greek Life Office (GLO) that included observations of disorganization, favoritism for some chapters and disrespectful behavior towards students.

Recommendations for Change

The Greek and non-Greek students interviewed recommendations included having more activities with other campus groups; the elimination of Thursday night parties; the need for more alternative activities on the weekend; the need for more structured policies related to Greek Life; the need for more focus on the positive aspects of Greek Life; and the need for more emphasis on education for harm reduction.

GREEK OPEN FORUM

In addition to meeting with chapter presidents and recruitment chairs, the consultants also held an Open Forum for any Greek members who wished to attend. Thirty-five students showed up and the summary of the key messages they conveyed are below.

Numerous comments were offered about the recruitment process, especially the NPC process for national sororities. Concerns were raised about quotas and its impact on sororities who may lose a number of senior members and cannot replace all of them thus increasing the fees for those who remain. Comments were also made about uneven treatment of men and women with regard to membership requirements and that the rules for women and men in recruitment activities were very different. The recruitment process for both fraternities and sororities was an important issue.

Concerns were also raised about a lack of leadership training from the campus. There seems to be reliance on national organizations to offer training for some chapters. Member education training was cited as being “okay”. Another concern was raised about the lack of interaction with the multicultural chapters and not enough outreach to each other from either group for more interaction. There were also perceived differences in the recruiting guidelines for multicultural groups and mainstream groups. Those attending the forum also expressed need for more fraternity/sorority interaction and more opportunities to create events together. There was clearly an interest in creating more unity among all Greek Life chapters.

Students also raised several issues about the interaction with and support from the GLO. Perceptions included mismanagement; disorganization; lack of answers or advice; lack of availability and approachability; favoritism toward some chapters; lack of positive feedback when good things happen or when chapters receive national or regional awards. There is declining interaction with the office because they do not see it as helpful. Students who attended the forum did offer positive comments for the GLO being effective in working with local police and townspeople as well as working well with constables.

The consultants noted that there was consensus among all the participants throughout the session on many of the above points regarding the GLO and overall the comments were offered in a very respectful manner.

Greek Alumni/Advisors

Alumni who were interviewed included some members of the Greek Life Advisory Council and other Greek alums, some of whom were advisors. In addition, Greek alumni were able to respond to an on-line survey that is summarized below.

Assets

Community service and philanthropic activities were identified as the greatest asset of the Greek groups. The Big Event was cited as a major activity in which Greek groups shine.

Alumni pointed out that fraternities and sororities create a sense of belonging for members, which contributes to the value of the University experience. There were several examples shared about life long relationships that were formed and brothers and sisters who participated in each other’s weddings and other major life events.

Greek Alumni/Advisors (Cont.)

Some alumni pointed out that some of the social activities helps to teach students how to interact more effectively. For example, one interviewee stated, "I learned how to communicate more effectively as a result of my sorority experience." In addition, many of the interviewees noted that relationships formed contribute to growing networks that are often important in later life.

Liabilities

Excessive alcohol use at parties was viewed as a serious liability by several of those interviewed. Some interviewees believe that alcohol consumption has moved from beer to hard liquors, which may be more dangerous to the students and to their actions that could have an adverse impact on the university.

The Greek Life Office is viewed as a serious liability by many alumni. Issues cited included the belief that some chapters are selectively assisted over others and the lack of attention to the training of advisors as well as the lack of providing support for the advisors. One advisor mentioned that they did not hear routinely from the Coordinator but that she was responsive when he sought her out.

Sorority alumni were very concerned over the Coordinator's lack of response to following Panhellenic rules. When the alumni offered to help they were rebuffed. Individuals who are part of Nationals are perceived to be more helpful than the University's Greek Life Office.

The Director of Student Union and Campus Life is perceived to be more helpful than the GLO Coordinator to alumni and he has reached out to them on several occasions. This attention by the Director of Student Life and Campus Life was viewed positively by alumni. One alum interviewee stated, "The Director has been supportive and I have seen a change in Greek alumni."

Several alumni believe that less accountability and structure is provided by the Coordinator for fraternities than is needed to be a safe and healthy Greek system. Several alum interviewees stated there is greater liability to both the Greek Life operations and to the university because of activities such as underground pledges and failure to follow other university procedures, such as providing accurate membership lists.

Risks

The greatest risk identified by alumni interviewees related to excessive alcohol consumption. However, some alumni stated they perceived that while excessive alcohol consumption is occurring it is overtly being discouraged and as a result there are fewer risky behaviors occurring.

Some alums believe that the hazing rules are "over the top"; that is, there are so many prohibitions that the more positive required behaviors, such as library hours, are overshadowed.

Obstacles to Improvements

The most significant obstacle to change identified by alumni interviewees was the lack of support from the Greek Life Office (GLO), which contributes to the belief that the University does not care nor is supportive of Greek programs.

Concern was expressed about the inadequacy of some of the training programs offered. One interviewee stated, "While there are some attempts they are not received positively by students," In addition, some of the interviewees noted advisors lack training and do not receive assistance from the office unless they seek it out. One interviewee noted, "When I seek help, there is a response."

It is believed that students need more leadership training and it is currently not being provided in sufficient amounts.

Some alumni believe that the University tends to keep a hands off approach to Greek Life, which leads to a belief that Greek Life is not valued and the lack of involvement by the university is an obstacle for productive change to take place. One interviewee said, "Student affairs leaders are great but stay at arm's length."

Recommendations for Change

Alumni believe that the publication of positive activities that are undertaken by Greek groups would lead to a more positive perception of Greek Life. In particular, one example of a fraternity helping a couple in which the husband was suffering from a life threatening illness had made a very positive impression in the community at large.

There is a need for more advisor training and for more assistance from the Greek Life Office. Even assistance such as providing a parking pass to attend campus events would be viewed by alumni advisors as positive support by the University and would ease their ability to come to campus to attend events.

Improvement in leadership training for Greek leaders was highly recommended by alums who were interviewed. Teambuilding activities was one of the specific suggestions made by an alum interviewee.

Alumni Survey Results

For alumni who could not be interviewed, a survey was disseminated to them to capture their responses. Two hundred and seventy-six Greek alumni responded to the on-line survey. Of this number, 199 or 72% were sorority alumna. A modified content analysis was completed on the data received through the survey instrument and is outlined below.

One hundred nineteen, or 43% of the respondent alums identified the belief that the Greek membership helped members develop a sense of community on campus and led to long-term relationships. Respondents cited participation in fraternity brothers or sorority sister's weddings and other major life events as one of the great benefits of Greek membership.

Forty-seven, or 17.1 % respondents identified community service and philanthropic work as a significant asset of Greek Life. The two other assets of Greek Life identified most often were networking (24 respondents, or 8.7%) and leadership skills development (18 respondents, or 6.6%).

Alumni who responded to the survey were most proud of community service work (76 respondents, or 27.6%); maintenance of traditions (25 respondents, or 9.1%) and survival of the Greek system (16 respondents, or 5.8%).

Alumni Survey Results (Cont.)

When asked about disappointments with the Greek system, 60 respondents indicated the Greek Life Office (GLO) was not the asset they expected it to be and therefore was seen as a lack of University support for Greek Life. Based on comments included on the survey and reviewed for the analysis, most of those identifying lack of University support based their perceptions on their perceptions of the Greek Life Office.

Alcohol abuse and other forms of risky behavior were identified by 15 respondents. The only other response that came from several respondents was disappointment with the sorority rush system.

The survey asked about the existence of hazing and other forms of risky behavior. Concern was expressed about the wording of the survey question and its inference that this type of behavior only exists within Greek organizations. The consultants concur that this was not a well worded question. Alumni responding did indicate they were concerned about alcohol consumption, hazing and other forms of risky behavior. It was their hope these issues were being addressed if these types of behavior exist.

When asked an open-ended question about suggestions for improving the Greek Life program, there were many suggestions. The suggestions mentioned most frequently were as follows:

- Publicize the positive contributions of the Greek chapters' community service
- Provide increased support from the University and improve the performance of the GLO
- Improve or create more Greek housing including the possibility of a Greek row
- Significantly improve the recruitment process, which included the elimination of caps as well as provide more structure for the fraternity process
- Increase Greek alumni support and improve communications with Greek alumni

SWOT (STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS) ANALYSIS

A Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats analysis of the data gathered and the stakeholder interviews was completed. A narrative summary of that analysis follows.

STRENGTHS

Student satisfaction with Greek experience
Greek service hours to the community
Training program provided by NPC
Greek alumni advisors
Structure and organization of the sororities
Student leadership of NPC/IFC and chapter leadership
Working relationship between GLO and Campus Police
The Big Event and Spring Fest

WEAKNESSES

Lack of organization/structure for Fraternities – especially recruitment
Difficulty identifying active advisors
Support, communication, availability of GLO
No clear risk management program
Limited data on Greek academic performance and activities
No vision and goals for GLO
Lack of innovation or new concepts
Working relationship between GLO and Greek alumni
Little promotion of positive Greek events

SWOT (STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS) ANALYSIS (Cont.)

WEAKNESSES (Cont.)

Leadership training programs for Greeks
Little collaboration with Student Affairs offices
No Greek involvement in Spring Fest

Little focus on academics
Greek housing conditions poor

OPPORTUNITIES

Students eager for leadership/direction
SA offices interested in partnering
Greek alums willingness to help
Support available from other areas of the campus
Emphasize student success and academic performance
Focus membership education on mission/values
Implementation of SOV recommendations
VPSA focus on strategic planning and student outcomes
Town/university collaboration to mitigate negative consequences of Block Party
Improve/expand Spring Fest

THREATS

High risk behaviors around alcohol use
Partying and hazing
Insufficient focus on academic performance
Lack of fraternity accountability
Lack of accountability for policy violations
Block party behaviors
Underground pledging
Performance of Greek Life office

STRENGTHS NARRATIVE

- Greek students interviewed expressed that their expectations for the Greek experience was met and in many instances exceeded. Students indicated that the reason for joining a fraternity or sorority was for friendship, for leadership opportunities, resume building and a social life on campus.
- All stakeholder groups identified community service and philanthropic activities as the greatest strength of Greek groups
- Sorority members of national groups spoke very highly of the training offered by NPC. In some cases, this training was utilized by local chapters, which was of value to these groups.
- The Greek alumni advisors were identified as being very helpful by students. Those advisors interviewed expressed a strong commitment to their work and several advisors devote considerable time to their advising duties. While no formal analysis was done, it does appear that chapters with strong alumni advisors tend to be stronger in terms of membership and performance.
- The structure and organization of the sorority chapters appear to be very solid.
- Student leaders of NPC/IFC and chapter presidents appear to be very dedicated and committed to their work. The consultants were very impressed with the quality of the students.
- Interviews substantiated a positive working relationship between the Greek Life office and the campus police. There is a commitment to open communication and collaboration.
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STRENGTHS NARRATIVE (Cont.)

- The Big Event, while open to the entire campus, is viewed as a very positive Greek event. The dedication to cleaning up the town area is viewed very positively by town members and then University community.
- The Spring Fest, which seeks to offset the negative behavior of the Block Party event is seen as a positive alternative, has improved its credibility and could become even more of a factor to mitigate the effect of the Block Party.

WEAKNESSES NARRATIVE

- Fraternities do not have a high level of organization and accountability for following their policies and procedures. Inadequate completion of membership rosters is just one example of this condition.
- Chapters are required to have a faculty or staff advisor in order to be a recognized student group. Some groups experience difficulty in finding faculty or staff advisors and there are cases in which the advisor is in name only.
- As reported in the data section above, there is a paucity of data with regard to the academic performance of Greek chapters. Graduation rate data are not available by cohort. The lack of these data make it very hard to determine if Greek Life contributes to the academic life of the campus and to student success. In a similar vein, a robust data system for Greek activities does not exist. The development of more robust data systems would greatly assist in determining the value of Greek Life on the student experience.
- Several of the stakeholder groups interviewed expressed dissatisfaction with the support received from the Greek Life office. Some stakeholders expressed that the office was disorganized, unclear or inconsistent in its communications and favored some groups over others. These perceptions cause a lack of respect for the office.
- There does not appear to be a campus risk management program that concerns itself with the Greek Life groups. This lack of priority could provide substantial risks to the campus.
- The Greek Life office does not appear to have a vision and formally stated goals. The office vision should be linked to the Student Affairs mission and goals.
- The consultants could not identify any innovative programs or new concepts that had been implemented by the Greek Life office in the past three years with the possible exception of Greek Life joining ORG Sync – along with other student organizations – to enhance communication. Attempting new approaches is important to the building of a vibrant program
- There is no formal relationship between the Greek Life office and Greek alumni. The Coordinator is a member of the Alumni Advisory Council.
- There are minimal efforts to promote the positive activities of Greek Life through campus communications and other forms of marketing. The most frequently mentioned example of a positive contribution by a Greek group actually was the result of a letter to the editor in which a woman expressed her gratitude for a Greek chapter assisting her when her husband had a serious illness.
- There are minimal leadership training programs available to Greek students with the exception of those programs provided by NPC. Many students expressed the need for these programs.

WEAKNESS NARRATIVE (Cont.)

- There were few collaborative programs with other Student Affairs offices. Offices such as Leadership and Engagement and the Women's Resource Center expressed a strong desire to assist with leadership programs.
- Spring Fest has been developed as an alternative to the spring Block Party event. Unfortunately, there is no formal involvement of the Greek Life office or Greek groups in this effort, which leads to the perception that the Greek Life program is not interested in participating in an event that encourages less risky behavior than the Block party.
- As indicated in the data section, the academic performance of the Greek groups is usually below the campus average. This low performance is a serious issue since improved academic performance is often cited as a value of belonging to a Greek group.
- Many of those interviewed identified the condition of Greek Housing as very poor. All but one of the Greek houses, which are privately owned, were built between the years of 1896-1910. Code enforcement appears to have improved but the age and long term maintenance of the properties contribute to poor conditions.

OPPORTUNITIES NARRATIVE

- Greek students who were interviewed are very eager for leadership and direction. Many Greek leaders expressed receptivity to more leadership training and for clearer structure. This receptivity provides a great opportunity for improvement.
- Both the Center for Leadership and Engagement office and the Women's Resource Center expressed interest in developing more collaborative programs with the GLO.
- Greek alumni expressed a strong interest in helping to improve the Greek Life program. This positive energy could be channeled into additional support for Greek Life on the campus.
- Stakeholders interviewed outside of the Student Affairs area were generally neutral about the Greek Life program. This neutral feeling about Greek life provides an opportunity to promote positive collaborations without having to overcome a highly negative view of Greek Life.
- The Vice-President for Student Affairs is very focused on the development of a strong strategic plan for the division and is committed to student learning outcomes. This division focus presents an opportunity for Greek Life to develop a strong plan and to identify student outcomes for the Greek experience.
- There does not appear to be a heavy emphasis on academic performance and student success within the Greek Life program. Most Greek programs highlight their commitment to academic performance. An emphasis on academic performance would be a major step forward for the Greek life program
- It appears that member education programs, while addressing some important topics, do not effectively teach the mission and values held by individual chapters. For students to fully understand the value of the Greek experience, it is important for Greek members to absorb the mission and values of the chapter. A better understanding of mission and values will improve the student's experience. In addition, topics related to mental health and cultural competency do not seem to be included.
- The Panhellenic Program participated in the national "Something of Value" program in September, 2016. This workshop resulted in a document with several recommendations for improvement in

OPPORTUNITIES NARRATIVE (Cont.)

- sorority life. The implementation of these recommendations would enhance the sorority experience.
- In recent years there has been improved communication between town and the University. The Town Gown committee has been effective in beginning to identify solutions to the negative outcomes of the annual Block party. This past year on campus students were limited in the number of guests they could have and limitations were placed on campus parking. These actions may have helped to reduce the number of outside participants who are the greatest contributors to negative behaviors during this event. This type of collaboration can lead to other positive outcomes in addressing the negative consequences of this event.
- Spring Fest has been developed as an alternative to the Block Party. If there is greater campus collaboration and support there is the potential to grow an event that minimizes the negative consequences of the Block Party.

THREATS NARRATIVE

- High risk behaviors that are the result of parties that emphasize heavy consumption of alcohol and serious hazing events are the greatest threats to the Greek Life program. The campus has been fortunate that it has not had any serious injuries or deaths in the past few years. Clearly there has been increased emphasis on reducing hazing activities that contribute to serious physical harm. Efforts to reduce abusive alcohol consumption have also occurred. There continues to be a need for the campus to focus on these potential threats because an incident can occur even with the greatest preventative efforts.
- The lack of respect for the Greek Life office is a serious threat to improvement of the Greek experience on the campus. It is important for the program to have strong leadership and to provide support for the growth of Greek Life.
- A serious threat is the current lack of emphasis on the value of academic life to Greek Life on the campus. It is very important to address this condition if the program is to be successful.
- The lack of accountability of fraternities is a serious condition that must be addressed. Fraternities require structure and accountability if they are going to be more than social drinking clubs.
- Virtually all stakeholder groups identified the Block Party as a negative for both the town and the University. Even though the event is not held on campus and is not officially sponsored by Greek chapters, the perception exists that it is a Greek event associated with the University. The event has grown in size by attracting outside participants who often contribute to some of the most negative behavior. While it may be impossible to eliminate the event, it is possible to look at restructuring the event to reduce risk and perhaps improve the experience for students.
- Underground pledging contributes to the devaluing of the Greek experience. It often leads to members who are not dedicated to Greek values and it contributes to a belief that cheating is OK. A strong Greek system cannot be built upon such a foundation.

The SWOT analysis provides a basis for the overall recommendations that appear below.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Greek Life program at Bloomsburg University is at a crossroads. Based upon data reviewed and surveys and interviews conducted, it is clear that there are significant issues and shortcomings in the

RECOMMENDATIONS (Cont.)

Greek Life program. The University must decide if it wishes to continue at its current level of emphasis or if it wishes to make the program a higher priority and make changes that have the potential to significantly improve the Greek Life experience and increase the impact of the experience on students, which will contribute to student growth and experience. The recommendations which follow are designed to improve Greek Life on the campus. In response to the many concerns raised about the College Panhellenic recruitment process, the consultants spoke with an NPC office staff member. That staff member indicated that in 2015 NPC changed their policy to allow for the automatic reset of total each semester; and more recently it began an "alternate total setting pilot" to help campuses address issues related to total. It is our recommendation that you contact your NPC Area Advisor for Bloomsburg to further discuss the issues at Bloomsburg for possible solutions to the concerns raised. In addition, Bloomsburg may wish to take advantage of the Consulting Team Visit option that is offered by NPC to more fully review the recruitment process.

1. Develop specific, written guidelines for Fraternity New Member Recruitment. The inconsistency and informality that exists within the current process differs markedly from the sorority recruitment process and may be a factor in the recent decline in membership. In addition, the current process implies an unwillingness to hold fraternities as accountable for this important process in the same manner in which sororities are held accountable. A starting point for identifying guidelines can be found with the North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC). We would add that we support the concept of deferred recruitment for both fraternities and sororities and the eligibility guidelines that are in place, and strongly recommend that they do not change.
2. A more concerted and intentional effort must be implemented to track membership rosters for all Greek Life chapters throughout the academic year. This increased effort would include tracking new member recruitment rosters throughout the recruitment process and through the end of the semester after members have been formally accepted into a chapter. In addition to maintaining accurate counts of Greek Life membership, it also may offer a step toward reducing the incidence of underground pledging.
3. The Greek Life Office should work with Institutional Research to create a data management system that develops and maintains basic data on the efficacy of participation in Greek Life as it relates to student grade point average and graduation rates; it also should identify improved information gathering processes for tracking community service hours, philanthropic events and money raised through such events. The value of Greek Life to students and the campus needs to be evidence-based as well as anecdotal.
4. The Greek Life Office should increase collaboration with University Relations and the Advancement division in order to improve visibility with the local media for the many positive contributions the Greek community makes to the campus and the town of Bloomsburg. In addition, more attention and visibility needs to be given to individual and chapter achievements across the Greek Life program. Several chapter members noted regional and national awards

RECOMMENDATIONS (Cont.)

that were received by some chapters but this information was not publicly acknowledged. This is a lost opportunity to recognize the positive work of Greek members.

5. As it has been noted, Bloomsburg alumni, especially those who were part of the Greek community as undergraduates, expressed a strong commitment and loyalty to Bloomsburg and to assisting the Greek Life program. The Director of the Student Union and Campus Life is seen as an ally who is respected by alumni and is seen as a positive resource. We recommend that he take a strong leadership role in reconnecting alumni to the Greek Life program and identifying pathways for them to contribute to improving the program.
6. Chapter advisors, both formal and informal advisors, can play an important role in reinforcing positive Greek chapter values, assist in problem-solving and reinforce behaviors that enhance student success. To more fully realize the value of active advisors, a greater effort must be made to identify incentives to serve as an advisor, create clear expectations and an orientation to the role and provide ongoing communication and feedback that will support the time and personal commitment made by the advisors.
7. While the hazing policy is standard and inclusive and not in need of major revision, the policy should include more specific reference to other individuals who can report violations, including parents and anyone on and off the campus.
8. The challenges to holding individuals/organizations responsible for reported hazing violations and the other serious violations noted under the Behavioral Incidents section of this report has no easy solutions without complainant cooperation. Student Affairs may need to be creative in utilizing the code of conduct discipline process as it applies to student organizations and the “preponderance of evidence” threshold for assigning responsibility for violations to try and increase accountability. In addition, greater monitoring of social media could provide an additional source of information in identifying violations and the source of those violations.
9. The list of factors that pose threats to the Greek Life program and to the University are exacerbated by the apparent lack of any risk management strategy, training programs for students, for Greek chapters, and for other student organizations other than what may be available from the national offices of nationally affiliated Greek chapters. For these reasons, we recommend that the Student Affairs leadership begin a campus-wide discussion about the viability of developing a risk management strategy for the campus as a whole and for all student organizations in particular. The Fraternal Information and Programming Group (FIPG) may be a source for help.
10. There is a genuine willingness on the part of other Student Affairs offices to collaborate with the GLO to serve Greek members but apparently without reciprocation. We recommend that increased and intentional collaboration on the part of a rejuvenated GLO with all Student Affairs offices, especially with the Women's Resource Center, the Center for Leadership and Engagement, and Dean of Students office, will provide an opportunity to improve leadership

RECOMMENDATIONS (Cont.)

training programs for Greek leaders. Increased collaboration with these offices should also focus on enhancing the new member education program and also in offering additional leadership programs for all Greek members. While the new member education program was considered to be adequate, national trends toward increased mental health issues for the campus as a whole as well as in fraternal organizations requires a segment devoted to this topic. In addition, the diversity found across chapters suggests it is important that a cultural competency component be included in the new member education curriculum.

11. The concerns raised by several stakeholders about the status quo nature of the Greek Life program, the inability to identify recent innovations and the perceived resistance to change, must be addressed. The Association of Fraternity Advisors (AFA) and the previously noted NPC and NIC organizations all offer resources to identify national best practices among fraternity and sorority communities. In addition, the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators has a “Knowledge Community” that offers Student Affairs professionals information and resources on current trends and issues related to managing and advancing Greek programs. Also, there are several highly respected Greek Life programs within Pennsylvania and the mid-Atlantic region that would welcome “road trips” by staff and Greek leaders to identify best practices.
12. The campus should assist chapters in addressing the conditions of Greek Housing which is privately owned. Specific actions include developing a relationship with owners where possible and assisting Greek leaders in reporting code violations. In the long term, it may be worth considering efforts that might be undertaken by the Foundation or CGA to actually acquire housing to be used by sororities and fraternities. This step would require careful assessment of the feasibility and it is necessary to determine if chapters would see this direction as desirable.
13. It is recognized that the annual Block Party creates a negative image for the Greek Life program as well as the University despite cooperative efforts to manage it and localize its impact. On the other hand, Spring Fest is seen as a positive alternative event to counter the negative messaging of the Block Party. While elimination of the Block Party does not seem imminent, we recommend that additional efforts and funding be directed at expanding the Spring Fest to include meaningful incentives for attendance. In addition, we recommend greater involvement of the GLO, IFC and Pan Hellenic student leadership in promoting the Spring Fest event. The Greek community must recognize that if it is not part of the solution, it will continue to be seen as the problem. The campus could benefit from the creation of a high level group to examine creative approaches to making Spring Fest a popular event that would be supported by students. The upper campus provides a possible venue for such an event.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The consultants have tried not to paint negative perceptions of the Greek program with too broad a brush and we recognize that there are chapters that do model the values they espoused in their survey responses. The consultants also believe that, in some chapters, hazing is nonexistent or very subtle at

CONCLUDING REMARKS (Cont.)

best. However, the many pervasive and specific comments from stakeholders across the campus that characterized the current Greek climate as indifferent, and members as immune from consequences, suggest some chapters show little need for adherence to rules and established Greek procedures. This attitude suggests that significant problems in the future are imminent, unless serious changes are made.

Several factors indicate that this risk level for a significant problem is high including a lack of respect for the Greek Life office; an inability to identify accurate rosters; inability to manage underground pledging; lack of ability to hold accountable individual/chapters for inappropriate behavior; acknowledgement of the continuing existence of hazing and the frequency of alcohol misuse and partying that often begins on Thursday. These factors also contribute to on and off campus perceptions that are more neutral to negative about Greek Life at Bloomsburg University.

Responsibility for the current state of the Greek Life program must also be shared by the senior leadership of the University. While the general perceptions of individuals in those leadership positions are favorable, there is also a sense that the Greek Life program has not been a high priority, problems have been ignored and that there has been too much patience with the lack of leadership within the Greek Life Office. Steps have been taken to investigate complaints about underground pledging and other issues. Efforts to improve town gown relationships have also been encouraging. However, attempts at reorganization and reporting relationships that have occurred have not been effective in creating the necessary positive change.

For all of the above reasons, we believe there is a critical need to reinvent the Greek Life Office to include a new staffing structure, increased funding, clearly defined goals and objectives as well as a change in personnel. The reinvention process should include an internal review of the program under the rubric of the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS Standards) for Greek Life programs. We also recommend developing a specific action plan to address the weaknesses and threats that have been identified in this review. A list of suggested resources which can help in this process may be found in Appendix C.

In our judgment, the gap in leadership and respect between students and other campus stakeholders and the current Greek Life Office is too great to expect any real improvement without a change in leadership.

The consultants are available to discuss any and all of these recommendations as well as the findings that led us to these recommendations.

Appendix A

Consultants' Brief Bios

The consultants who lead the project are John D. Welty, Ed.D. and Paul M. Oliaro, Ph.D.



John D. Welty, Ed.D. John Welty is an Associate of APC and President Emeritus of Fresno State. He brings over 40 years of on-campus experience at regional comprehensive universities including 29 years of experience as President at two AASCU institutions. Prior to his presidencies, he served as vice-president for student and university affairs and held several student affairs positions. He has had considerable experience in working with campuses with Greek Life programs including the campuses where he served as Vice-President for Students Affairs and President. He has been active in national organizations and has served as Chairman of the AASCU Board and as Chair of the WASC Senior Accrediting

Commission.



PAUL M. OLIARO, Ph.D.

Paul M. Oliaro, Vice President Emeritus for Student Affairs (Fresno State) brings more than 40 years of experience working in Student Affairs on four comprehensive, public universities in four regions of the country. Twenty of those years were spent as a Vice President, often with concurrent appointments in other divisions of the university. In addition, he has served as the President of the American College Personnel Association and its Leadership Foundation. He has engaged in numerous campus consultations, presented/keynoted at many national and regional conferences on topics related to student development and success. He has provided oversight and leadership to Greek life programs on his two most recent campuses, including charging a campus commission to review the Fresno State Greek Life program.

Appendix B

Data Requested

Demographic data from each fraternity and sorority chapter to include:

- Membership -three years at least; five years preferred
- Ethnicity by chapter
- Class year of members for 2015 and 2016
- Grade point average for the last three – five years
- Six-year graduation rates for members in the 2008,2009 and 2010 cohorts
- Discipline incidents over the past five years to include allegations and outcomes including sanctions by chapter
- Philanthropic activity over the previous two years (2014-15 and 2015-16) to include dollars raised and charitable organizations that were the major recipients of the fundraising
- Community service volunteer hours and the organizations that were major recipients of those hours
- Campus based and regional/national awards for chapters and for members
- Identify chapters with national affiliations and those that are local/independent
- Campus policies related to fiscal oversight of Greek chapters
- Hazing Policy
- Risk Management policies
- Discipline process for adjudicating chapter violations of policy
- Policies related to recruitment/rush for new members
- Any Greek Life program reviews or internal/external evaluations or assessments conducted in the last four years
- Policies/Guidelines for the Conduct of Social Events Sponsored by Sororities and Fraternities

Appendix C
Recommended Resources

Resources

- Fraternal Information and Programming Group (FIPG) Risk Management Guidelines :: <http://fipg.org/>
- Contact at the National Panhellenic Conference :: Jenny Greyerbiehl, Director of Education and Panhellenic Support, jenny@npcwomen.org
- Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors (AFA) White Paper of fraternity advising profession : https://c.ymcdn.com/sites/afa1976.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/au/afa_whitepaper_spring_2016.pdf
- In terms of conduct processes regarding hazing, or confidential cases, the well-known leader in this area is Gentry McCreary. He is the founder and owner of Dyad Strategies; www.dyadstrategies.com
- North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC) Position Statement on Recruitment/website for :: <http://nicindy.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Position-Statement-Recruitment.pdf>
- . Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) – see Greek Life Programs; 202-862-1400; executive_director@cas.edu
- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) – Fraternity and Sorority Knowledge Community; HQ Office : 111 K St. NE, Washington D.C.; 202-265-7500; Attn:Kevin Kruger