



**CONSULTATION REPORT**

Prepared for: Florida Atlantic University

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Charges: -Assess and evaluate the Florida Atlantic Fraternity and Sorority Community  
  
-Provide recommendations and ideas to improve the quality of Fraternity and Sorority Life at Florida Atlantic University

Dates Visited: November 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007

## TABLES OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	3
General Observations.....	4
<b>Themes</b>	
Vision and Values Education.....	8
Leadership Development.....	9
Alcohol & Other Drugs.....	11
Recruitment/Expansion.....	14
Community/Public Relations.....	20
Risk Management/Crisis Management.....	23
Service/Philanthropy.....	23
Academics/Faculty Interaction.....	24
Council Effectiveness/Chapter Relations.....	25
Membership Development.....	26
Alumni and Advisors.....	27
Housing.....	28
Judicial Processes/Standards.....	29
University Support/Staffing Issues.....	30
Branch Campuses.....	32
Multicultural Greek Council.....	33
National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC).....	33
Other.....	37
Conclusion.....	38

## INTRODUCTION

In June of 2007, Ryan O'Rourke from Florida Atlantic University contacted t.jelke solutions. He informed us that Florida Atlantic University was seeking a consultant to a) assess their fraternity and sorority community; b) provide recommendations as to how to help that community become more high performing and c) identify ways in which the University could have a stronger relationship with the fraternities and sororities on campus.

The evaluation consisted of interviews (both formal and informal) with over 82 Greek and non-Greek students, University administrators, Florida Atlantic alumni, chapter advisors, and other members of the Florida Atlantic community. These interviews were held on three of FAU's campuses. *It should be noted that the least amount of participation was from IFC fraternity chapter members. I was only able to meet with 11 of them, although I believe I was able to identify pertinent issues and needs despite the small showing.* We also analyzed 22 pertinent documents ranging from governance statements and council constitutions to University policies and procedures. Finally, some time was spent observing the campus culture, with emphasis on the fraternity/sorority community.

After carefully studying the fraternity and sorority community, the following observations and recommendations have been drafted for your review. Our hope is that these observations and recommendations provide you with enough data to create a plan of action that will help improve fraternity and sorority life at Florida Atlantic.

Our suggestion is that this data be collaboratively used by administrators, alumni, and, most importantly fraternity and sorority leaders, to create a strategic plan (one that is in line with the University's soon to be created strategic plan) for individual chapters and the fraternity and sorority community as a whole.

The observations and recommendations have been broken down into basic themes that emerged during the assessment. Please note that these themes are seamless. Theme areas will tend to blend into one another. We try to provide as much information as possible at the risk of some duplication. For example, suggestions in the leadership development area may blend into an area involving university support. It should also be noted that many of the observations are, by nature, generalizations. Whenever possible, exceptions to the generalizations are noted.

There are many changes and new ideas suggested in this document. These changes are in no way an indictment of any staff member, faculty member, chapter, or student at Florida Atlantic University. They are merely suggestions from the observations, interviews, and analyses that took place on site.

The report may seem overwhelming, especially to members of the fraternity and sorority community. There are many suggestions included in the report. All of these suggestions do not have to be implemented at the same time—indeed we recommend that a change management plan or strategic plan that spans 3-5 years be created to help manage these recommendations.

Finally, while I believe the observations in this document are accurate and that the suggestions are necessary, they were created from a visit that lasted only one week. It is you, the Florida Atlantic community, that should read these observations and suggestions with an open but critical eye as you will be the best judges of what is accurate and necessary and what is not.

I am available to you for clarification or discussion of the report at any time.

Formally,



Thomas B. Jelke, Ph.D.

## GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

1. Please note that some of the observations in this report may seem overly critical upon first glance. **The intent is not to criticize, but rather to create points of discussion** among the many constituents that want the fraternity and sorority community to realize its potential. There are some strong things happening in the fraternity/sorority community:
  - a. An understanding of the importance of philanthropy and service by most chapter leaders and many members
  - b. Improving leadership for some fraternity and sorority members, both in chapter positions and campus positions
  - c. Some individuals and chapters who are holding their members accountable for living up to their core values
  - d. An improving judicial system for the IFC indicating a desire to enforce the policies they create
  - e. A core group of students who understand that change and improvement are not only necessary but an integral part of a dynamic, high performing fraternity and sorority community. Indeed, many of these students seemed excited about the opportunity to make changes and improvements to their chapters and the community as a whole.
2. The mission of a strong fraternity and sorority community should be in line with that of the host institution. The fraternities and sororities at Florida Atlantic, therefore, should be “preparing [members] to make meaningful contributions in an increasingly complex global society.” Both entities should be **working collaboratively** to make sure that fraternities and sororities are indeed providing this preparation for their members.
3. For the fraternity and sorority community at FAU to perform at a higher level and properly prepare its members for an increasingly complex global society, it will need:
  - a. a strong, supportive relationship with the host institution, alumni, inter/national headquarters, and the surrounding community
  - b. chapters to work together as a community with common values, and a shared, focused vision, in order to make positive change
  - c. provide more than just a social outlet for students on campus
  - d. to actively identify and bring in members that exemplify and uphold a higher standard of behavior than the average Florida Atlantic student
  - e. to educate new members in a productive, non-threatening and developmental manner so that they may become leaders within their organizations and on campus
  - f. to self regulate and hold individuals and chapters accountable for inappropriate actions and behaviors
4. Florida Atlantic University’s fraternity and sorority community is quite young and still developing operationally. It has great potential to become high performing, but needs to address some major issues if they are going to improve. The university administration is going to need to take a stronger and more consistent role in challenging and guiding councils, chapters, and

members to perform at a higher level. The university administration also needs to provide the human and financial resources to help the fraternity and sorority community grow and improve.

5. The university administrators I interviewed showed a **great deal of interest in providing support and guidance for the fraternities and sororities**. Many of them also said that the necessary support and guidance has not consistently been provided. They noted the campus was changing to a more traditional feel and a high performing fraternity/sorority community could bolster that change. They envisioned a fraternity/sorority community that was a vibrant part of the campus community, was strong in membership and operations, was self-governing and held itself accountable for a high set of agreed upon standards.
6. There is a **need for stronger involvement from alumni and chapter volunteer advisors** in order to fully utilize the resources available to help make this fraternity and sorority community more high-performing. Through the combined efforts of student leaders, alumni/advisors, chapter headquarters and the university staff, the fraternity and sorority community can become one that:
7. This report will address several issues, but most participants in the study identified one pervasive issue that seemed to be at the core of several other issues. They noted that a **significant number of fraternity men and sorority women were failing to understand and live by the core values of their organizations**. Chapter leaders often commented about this issue and noted that they had a particularly difficult time understanding how to deal with these members. New members are not often recruited with these core values in mind, they are often not educated enough about these core values, and they are commonly not confronted when their actions are not in line with those values. For an increasing number of members, the core values have been replaced by alcohol and partying. This problem needs to be addressed before the number of members who have lost sight of the organization's core values achieves a critical mass.
8. The problem noted in (7) above is exacerbated by several factors: inconsistent enforcement of policies and standards by chapter leaders; inconsistent guidance from the university (mainly stemming from the inability to keep someone in the Greek Life Coordinator position for a substantial amount of time); a lack of alumni/volunteer support for some chapters (mostly fraternities); recruitment practices for many groups that over-emphasize the social aspect of joining and sometimes includes the use of alcohol; new member programs that are sometimes unproductive and demeaning; and the (perceived and real) lack of human and financial resources to make substantial cultural changes.
9. To further increase the support for the fraternity and sorority community, the university should consider the following:
  - a. Playing a more direct role in the education and training of fraternity and sorority members and leaders

- b. Having more proactive interaction with the ‘rank and file’ members of chapters and more visibility at key fraternity/sorority functions
  - c. Creating a clear and omnipresent set of expectations for chapters and for students who are members that is balanced with a clear set of benefits for fraternities and sororities and membership in those organizations
  - d. Implementing tangible and desirable support mechanisms that provide invaluable benefit to the fraternities and sororities (many examples are provided in this report)
  - e. Developing a consistent and intentional effort from university administrators to publicly recognize the positive contributions of fraternities and sororities more often
  - f. Creating and sustaining a strong relationship with all inter/national organizations and chapter alumni/volunteer advisors in order to expand the influence over chapter performance
10. While protocol dictates that I use the term “fraternity and sorority community” when referring to the conglomerate of chapters on Florida Atlantic’s campus, they are not acting like a community very often. They have **minimal interactions with each other** (outside of competitive functions such as recruitment and Greek Week) and **lack a strong and well-respected governing structure.**
11. Change is not easy, and in many cases it is a frightening proposition. Some members of fraternities and sororities and even the university community may be opposed to any change. If this fraternity and sorority community is to become more high performing, the fear of and resistance to change needs to be managed and conquered. This may mean that some members and chapters stop being a part of the fraternity and sorority community. Rest assured, that other members and chapters will emerge because those same changes have taken place

## THEMES

### Vision and Values Education

#### *Observations*

*Most chapters are not functioning as values-based organizations. While some chapters have a few members who have a clear understanding of their chapter's core values and a vision for what they need to accomplish, many do not. Furthermore, students (even some leaders) had difficulty identifying a shared set of values and a vision that drives actions for the community as a whole.*

Participants in the study noted a lack of congruence between what fraternities and sororities espouse as lofty ideals and how fraternity and sorority members enacted those ideals. Nearly all chapter leaders said that they struggled with chapter members who were not interested in much more than the social aspects of the organization. As one chapter leader said, "Most of my members are focused on Greek Week, sports, social and that is it." Some of them said that up to 50% of their membership did not care about the "more serious side" of the organization. For chapters at FAU to become truly high-performing, members need to be more strongly connected to the ritual and values of their organizations (see Figure 1). For the community as a whole to become truly high-performing, more needs to be done to identify and cultivate shared community values, and to create a shared vision that will move them towards alignment with those values as a community.

#### Suggestions

- The Office of Greek Life should identify ways to **help individual chapters work with their members to more clearly understand their fraternity/sorority values**
  - Many chapters lack a shared vision among members as to what it really means to be a fraternity man or sorority woman
  - Provide chapter alumni/volunteers and leaders with resources to help their chapters with values clarification and visioning retreats
  - Some chapters may even want university administrators to facilitate the retreat or parts of it
  - Provide chapters with self-assessment tools so they can measure operational areas
    - Academics
    - Recruitment
    - Member development
    - Alumni relations
    - University relations
    - Leadership
    - Service/Philanthropy
- The Office of Greek Life should explore ways for **fraternity and sorority leaders to come together to create a written, agreed upon set of shared values, vision, and purpose** for the fraternity and sorority community.

- The high turnover at the Greek Life Coordinator position has hurt past attempts by the community to create and sustain shared values, vision and purpose.
- The Office of Greek Life should host an overnight or weekend retreat to start this process
  - There are packaged programs such as IMPACT (run by the NIC) that could be extremely effective
- This should include both chapter leaders and council leaders
- This should include members of IFC, Panhellenic MGC and NPHC groups if possible
- The retreat should also help leaders understand how to successfully share the vision with members of their chapters
- Members of the Florida Atlantic University administration (more than just Greek Life staff members) and/or alumni/volunteers can help facilitate different sessions
  - This would be a wonderful time for high level university administrators to discuss expectations, support, appreciation, etc.
  - Perhaps even utilize this time to help connect the fraternity and sorority community values and vision to the University values and vision
  - This would also be an excellent time for other departments to make connections with fraternity and sorority leaders and explain how the organizations can utilize their services
  - Alumni would be especially helpful in discussing values clarification and alignment pieces
- Self-assessment and goal setting could be a part of this program
  - Focus on areas that councils and all the chapters have in common (and program collaboratively)
    - Leadership
    - Scholarship
    - Service/Philanthropy
    - Character Building
    - Recruitment/Intake
    - Chapter standards/judicial
    - Finances
    - Member Development
- This could even be used as a mechanism to unveil this consultation report and work with students to identify ways to implement the desired changes
- This retreat should be something that is held annually so that each new set of leaders feels like they had a hand in the process
- Chapter and Council operations should be evaluated (collaboratively between the Greek Life Coordinator and Chapter and Council leaders) for values congruence (to determine if there are parts of operations that go against any created vision statement, values/guiding principles, and mission.
  - What parts of chapter/council operations are aligned with the written values and vision?

- What parts of chapter/council operations are not aligned with the written values and vision?
- What programs, procedures, experiences can be added or created that would further align the chapter/council with the written values and vision?
- The Office of Greek Life should partner with other members of the University administration, fraternity and sorority leaders and alumni/volunteers to create a strategic plan for the fraternity and sorority community
  - There is already a plan to have this take place in March of 2008
  - Create a committee comprised of all these constituents and charge them with creating/implementing the strategic plan
  - This should be in line and tied in with Florida Atlantic University's strategic plan if possible
  - Have the administration, students, and alumni work together to better the fraternity and sorority community
  - Identify benchmarks for 1 year, 3 years, and 5 years in order to assess progress over time.
    - Benchmark areas could follow the theme areas in this report
  - Break down 1 year benchmarks annually into more tangible goals and action plans
- The Office of Greek Life, council leaders and chapter leaders must find ways to infuse core values into the recruitment process more
  - The emphasis on recruitment needs to be the leadership, scholarship, character building and service components of fraternity/sorority life
  - Currently, too much emphasis on the social aspects
  - Very few members who were not in leadership positions could convincingly explain the value added through their fraternity membership

## Leadership Development

### *Observations*

*The fraternity and sorority community at Florida Atlantic University needs a centralized, multi-tiered leadership development program.*

High performing fraternity/sorority communities have multi-tiered leadership development programs that are based on the vision and values of the community. Leadership development should balance theoretical concepts, practical information, and opportunities to lead. The creation of structured leadership development at the council and chapter officer level, general member level, emerging leader level, and new member level is imperative. Also, officer transition support is sorely needed. Finally, more chapter members need to get involved on campus in leadership positions. While some leadership positions on campus are held by fraternity and sorority members, it seems that the same 10% are the ones getting involved.

### Suggestions

- The university (The Office of Greek Life, and other Student Affairs departments) needs to create a "leadership continuum" for the Greek community that provides targeted leadership programming for:
  - New member development

- Education should include:
    - Values education
    - Breaking down Greek stereotypes
    - Understanding/Connecting with national organization
    - Alumni speakers to discuss lifelong membership
    - Alcohol abuse
    - Retention
    - Academic success
  - General member development
    - Values education discussed in values section above
    - Working with chapter leaders to develop chapter retreats and sessions that focus on operational evaluation, values congruence and goal setting would greatly help chapters' ability to share a vision for where they want to go and what they want to be
  - Emerging leaders
    - How to set goals for chapter
    - Accountability/Confrontation of peers
    - Risk Management
    - Responsibility to the college community
  - Chapter/Council officers
    - Visioning
    - Meeting management
    - Standards enforcement
    - Values congruence
  - When appropriate, make these programs mandatory or indispensable (so important that those who choose not to go will be at a great disadvantage).
  - The university should look at this as a 5 year project- perhaps creating and implementing a program for one target audience (chapter/council officer transition, for example) before moving on to a program for another (emerging leaders)
- The Office of Greek Life should also consider creating a system of intentional officer transition assistance for individual chapters
  - This was done a few years ago, but has fizzled out
  - Nearly every chapter and council officer I met with said they had a poor transition to their position. This is a key focus area for the next set of officers
  - At the very least, a structured officer transition should take place for every chapter president, treasurer, and risk manager, as well as every council officer
  - University should create written resources, scripts, and agendas for chapters
  - Greek Life Coordinator should be available to facilitate chapter officer transitions if requested

- Officer transition attendance should be added to job expectations area of council by-laws.
- Councils should create a position or assign a current position the responsibility to identify and promote available campus leadership positions to chapters.
  - Positions are sometimes announced at these meetings, but by creating a position that deals specifically with campus involvement, it becomes a priority and an empowering opportunity.
  - This person would identify leadership positions on campus, and communicates those openings, responsibilities, requirements, and deadlines to chapter presidents at council meetings
  - If a current position could take this responsibility on, then add it to their job description in the bylaws.
- Office of Greek Life and council leaders should continue to utilize outside resources to assist with leadership development programming.
  - Schools and Departments could provide facilitation help
    - University Housing for example has program facilitation expertise
    - Business school professors might be able to work with chapter treasurers as another example
  - Community leaders
  - Alumni in the area

## Alcohol and Other Drugs

### *Observations*

*While the problems associated with alcohol at Florida Atlantic extend beyond the fraternity/sorority community, alcohol is still the root of several problems for fraternities and sororities there. There was also some concern among study participants that other drugs were starting to become a problem among some members.*

Like nearly every campus I have visited this year, alcohol has become too much of a focus for IFC fraternities and NPC sororities at FAU. There has been little regulation or risk management education provided by the councils or FAU in the past, and that has allowed this problem to fester. Some chapters have with difficulty with attendance at events, especially social events, unless there is alcohol present. Anecdotal evidence suggests that fraternity and sorority members drink more alcohol and have access to more alcohol than the average student. Alcohol is provided freely at most fraternity parties, especially for women attendees, despite FIPG risk management policies prohibiting this. Access to alcohol at fraternity events is a problem, especially during large events (such as Greek Week parties). There are some chapter leaders that try to follow their risk management (FIPG) policies and procedures, but most are not making a real effort to do so.

### Suggestions

- Alcohol violations during recruitment or new member education should bring with it severe penalties

- Consider complete social probation for at least a semester for first time offenders and chapter suspension (ceasing all operations) for repeat violators
- These are two operational areas that must be clean if the community is going to make any real advances: recruitment and new member education
  - Having alcohol at recruitment functions reinforces the concept that fraternities are all about alcohol
  - There is no more dangerous time for alcohol to be present in a fraternity/sorority event than when new members are involved
    - Hazing situations are created, amplified, and left unstopped
    - Peer pressure (even unintentional) leads to poor decision making when it comes to alcohol at new member events
    - Alcohol at bid day, big brother/big sister day, “pre-initiation activities” and initiation have proven to be especially dangerous nationally and should be dealt with harshly
- The Office of Greek Life should partner with council officers to create a system of alcohol/risk management education for chapter officers and leaders
  - Identify the major issues involving alcohol consumption/abuse, event management, and risk management policy compliance
  - Work with council officers to create a mandatory training session that deals with these major issues and discusses expectations
    - Councils have the ability to make these mandatory for chapters wishing to have any function with alcohol
    - The university can also make this mandatory, but it will be more collaborative if it is something the councils require
    - Training sessions can be set up for individual chapters or more conveniently, you can have one large session at the beginning of the academic year or each semester and make it available for all presidents, risk managers, social chairs, etc.
    - Start a peer advocacy group such as Greeks Advocating the Mature Management of Alcohol (GAMMA) and they can also be involved in this training as well as other programs
    - Campus Police can also be a component of this training, regardless of whether they take a larger role in the monitoring of events
  - Chapters should not be allowed to have functions with alcohol until they meet the requirements of having appropriate officers trained
    - This may meet with some resistance, but is done on other campuses. Again, it would be easiest if the councils were the main agents for getting it passed
    - This is not set up to prevent them from having functions, but merely set up to help them have safer and more compliant functions
- The Office of Greek Life should work with the office of Student Health Services to create a comprehensive educational campaign to help fraternity and sorority students make better choices when it comes to alcohol

- Provide resources to chapters on how to identify and work with members who may have alcohol abuse problems
- Create and distribute confidential surveys that would provide tangible data on alcohol consumption and could help fraternity and sorority leaders identify major issues (if any) for their chapters
- Work with chapter leaders to create chapter specific programs that focus on that chapter's major issues when it comes to alcohol/events
  - Provide various options for program facilitation
    - Student Affairs Staff member
    - Community Specialists
      - Legal expertise
      - Substance abuse expertise
      - Risk management expertise
    - Trained chapter leader
- Chapter leaders, Council leaders and the Office of Greek Life need to do specific education in regards to off campus functions and special times during the year when alcohol seems to be a big problem
  - Members need to understand how parties at bars or people's homes/apartments create chapter liability and need to be careful about how those parties are managed
  - The beginning of the school year seemed to be a critical times for chapters as well. How can those specific times be managed more appropriately by student leaders?
  - Bid Day, Big Brother/Sister day, pre-initiation activities could also be discussed since these tend to have been especially problematic at other campuses
- Chapters should be encouraged to have **more events without alcohol**
  - Several chapters already do program non-alcoholic events, with varying degrees of success
  - Panhellenic and NPHC groups could host more events with each other
  - This should be a part of the accreditation process/awards program
    - Chapters that do plan or host several non-alcoholic social events should be recognized
- The Office of Greek Life and council leaders should review their current social event policies(registration, risk management, etc.) and make changes to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the community
  - Registration of events should go directly through The Office of Greek Life
  - Any alcohol/risk management policy needs to extend to off-campus apartments and third party vendors
  - The policy needs to be more clear about how a function is supposed to operate
    - Provide step by step guidelines on how to practically follow FIPG policies
  - Invitation-only parties need to be required as all national organizations have that requirement (open parties should not be occurring)

- The Office of Greek Life and council leaders should create a comprehensive list of nearby third party vendor locations that comply with FIPG regulations
  - This would provide chapters with locations that meet the criteria required by their headquarters
  - Representatives from those establishments could go through an educational session with the University if so desired

### Recruitment/Expansion

#### Observations

*The fraternity and sorority community at Florida Atlantic needs to be more intentional and targeted with their recruitment and intake efforts and should, focus on selling the values of the community and identifying and bringing in students who buy into those values. An expansion plan to bring in strong new fraternities and sororities is also necessary in order to create an orderly and systematic way to deal with any attrition of chapters.*

If the fraternity and sorority community is going to attract students that understand and agree with the vision and values of the community, there needs to be a change in how new members are recruited or brought in. Nearly all of Florida Atlantic's IFC fraternities are operating in a Rush mentality and that is partly the reason their numbers have been stagnant or declining. Currently, many fraternity members tend to wait for prospective members to come to them and recruitment events. Most fraternities do not recruit year-round, nor do they see other interactions with non-Greek students as recruitment opportunities. The NPC sorority community needs to be more aggressive with their recruitment marketing and also needs to streamline their rules and processes. Sororities feel restricted by their rules, policies and structures and have not figured out ways to extend their recruitment efforts as a sorority community outside of that formal recruitment structure. NPHC and MGC intake/recruitment efforts will be handled in separate sections for those councils.

90%+ (and growing) of the campus is choosing not to affiliate with a fraternity or sorority. Many students who would be excellent members are choosing to join other organizations for a variety of reasons. Here are some of the most prevalent:

- Don't want to be hazed
- Not interested in the strong emphasis of alcohol in operations
- Don't want to join something that will detract from academics
- Not worth the investment- "I can get the same things somewhere else for less money"

Chapters are going to need to directly address (actually change operations and processes) these concerns if they are going to attract more members. Fraternities and sororities need to provide more than just a social outlet if they are going to flourish on campus. They also need to provide students with a positive, educational and developmental membership process that goes beyond the first semester of membership. As one student leader who was not in a fraternity expressed, "I have a limited amount of time and money and I need to clearly understand why I should invest those things in any organization. Prove to me, show me that you don't haze or just drink all the time, because that is all I hear about."

Many students that do affiliate (particularly with IFC fraternities and Panhellenic sororities) are joining for the ‘wrong’ reasons. Most students interviewed noted that they came to campus with the ‘Old School’ stereotype of fraternities and sororities, and the fraternity/sorority community has not put sufficient effort into combating those perceptions or changing that image. Many students who enjoy that stereotypical image are the ones that will actively seek out fraternities and sororities, while more ‘serious’ students can only be found if **they** are intentionally sought out. Indeed, most leaders of the community are people who never thought they would join a fraternity or sorority. If significant progress is to be made in the next 5 years, more effort needs to be made by members to understand, believe in, act in line with, and promote the positive aspects of fraternities and sororities as a whole. Members of the Greek community also need to work with student affairs staff, faculty advisors, and other student organization leaders to find strategies to identify, target, and actively recruit students who buy into these ideals. Fraternities and sororities need more access to the serious students, but that should come gradually as much needs to be done to show that such access would not be abused. None of these changes are going to occur if chapters continue to approach recruitment strictly as individual groups, and not as a community.

Councils, Chapter leaders, and the Office of Greek Life should consider creating an expansion plan that systematically brings a new chapter to campus every 2-3 years or so.

#### Suggestions

- IFC chapter and council leaders need to take serious steps to remove alcohol from recruitment
  - Much of the violations don’t take place in the “official” recruitment event, but rather before or after
  - All chapters admitted that they had violated the policy at some time or another
  - Chapters violating this policy should be given a minimum of 1 semester of social probation for the first violation, and suspended for a year for the second violation- needs to be emphatically enforced
- The Registrar’s Office can give Office of Greek Life and Council Leaders a list of non-Greek students who have above a certain GPA (3.0 for example)
  - This is not a FERPA violation, it is done on dozens of campuses
  - Give councils the opportunity to target these students and provide them with informational sessions about the merits of joining a fraternity/sorority, expectations, change stereotypes, etc.
  - Contact with these students could be regulated by the Office of Greek Life
- ALL councils and chapters need to promote ‘Going Greek’ in a way that combats all the stereotypes.
  - Consolidating resources will be cost and time efficient
  - Take a **very aggressive** marketing stance against the stereotype
    - On some campuses, the community has gone out of their way to say that if you want the stereotype, please do NOT join

- This also means that the office of Greek Life and councils **cannot allow recruitment functions (or other functions throughout the year) that perpetuate the stereotype** to occur.
- The University administration needs to find ways to give councils access to students in order to educate those students about the right reasons to join a fraternity or sorority
  - Phase 1 - Start off by helping them maximize the time they currently have at the showcase
  - Phase 2 - Create a way to be a part of the overnight housing sessions
  - Phase 3 - Create a time allotted during orientation to Fraternity and Sorority life and have handpicked fraternity/sorority leaders available to make a presentation, address issues, and answer questions with incoming students and parents.
    - You can also have a session for parents that is run by parents of fraternity/sorority members
- Office of Greek Life needs to educate IFC fraternity leaders in particular about the differences between rush and recruitment.
  - Many chapters just wait to see who shows up at their event on the week of formal recruitment instead of actively seeking out potential new members
  - I would strongly recommend bringing in a recruitment expert to educate chapter and council leaders
    - Phired Up speakers have been successful in the past
    - Campuspeak also has speakers dedicated to this topic
    - Coaches in the athletic department might also be able to discuss recruitment as an active process
  - Help chapters and councils evaluate all recruitment activities and entire recruitment process
  - Identify opportunities for members and non-members to interact throughout the year (not just for 1-2 weeks per semester)
    - Philanthropy and Service events
    - Revive Hall Wars event
      - Co Sponsor with Campus Recreation and RHA
- Chapters should learn how to develop standards criteria for membership
  - Values
  - Academics
  - Involvement
  - Etc.
  - The NPHC, MGC and Panhellenic are much more adept at this, and some of the IFC fraternities are starting to see the need to do this consistently
- Governing councils need to identify opportunities to have Greek students interact with non-Greek students throughout the year. This can be a positive non-traditional way to recruit new members and introduce non-members to fraternities and sororities

- Office of Greek Life and councils should take advantage of opportunities to present programs at various campus locations, like residence halls
- Office of Greek Life and councils should identify ways to co-sponsor events with other student organizations?
  - Philanthropies, service projects, faculty appreciations, non-alcoholic social events, etc.
  - Hall Wars mentioned before could be a great way to start the year off
    - Residence hall floors compete against one another in games like kickball, whiffleball, etc.
    - Greeks can organize, co-sponsored with RHA, Campus Recreation, Athletics, etc.
- Office of Greek Life and the councils should explore ways to identify and target leaders, scholars, athletes, students of character, residents on campus.
  - Targeted mailing campaign
    - Lists, labels, or mailing assistance from college
      - A list of student leaders should be compiled
      - A list of student organizations with contact information should be distributed to the councils
    - The councils should conduct information sessions in residence halls
- Councils and Office of Greek Life should conduct market research to determine specific reasons why students are not joining Greek organizations.
  - Survey non-Greek students who are eligible to join
  - Survey Freshmen as well to see why they are thinking of not joining and what they would be looking for in an organization
  - Specifically target non-Greek students who you would want to be Greek
  - Utilize a PR or Marketing class, or some other college resources to help- maybe even turn it into a class project.
- Fraternity and sorority leaders should work with Office of Greek Life, Orientation staff and Residential Life offices to discuss how to best reach desired students at crucial times.
  - Some access is given during Orientation but could be improved and expanded
    - The showcase session needs to be more organized and has to improve, for example
    - There is an opportunity to have some kind of connection to the overnight housing sessions
  - The concept of Greek Life having its own breakout session should be discussed
    - Would need to be very organized
    - Could have members and ideally some of their parents at orientation sessions to talk about their perspective and answer questions

- Perhaps there is an opportunity to do something during the lunch hour?
    - The Orientation staff seemed to want to help fraternities and sororities, but cannot provide unlimited or unorganized access to students
    - The access to those students and parents is imperative, but also a big responsibility, and cannot be abused by the fraternity/sorority students if they ever get the access
  - More opportunities to meet with students and parents at the **beginning of the semester**
    - Perhaps have a move-in day mega event co-sponsored or sponsored by the Councils and University Housing, Athletics, SGA, etc.
    - There used to be something called “Hall Wars” that could be revived
    - Co-sponsor with Residential Life, Student Government, local non-alcohol related businesses?
  - More opportunities to meet with students in residence halls periodically throughout the year.
  - Councils should work with fraternity/sorority leaders to have more fraternity men and sorority women become Orientation Leaders, RAs- these are all excellent leadership opportunities but also high visibility positions
    - Somewhere, the communication was lost this year and only ONE person applied to be an orientation leader
- Panhellenic council and chapter leaders should concentrate on four things in order to help their recruitment
  - Move toward a code of ethics and away from so many rules
    - Too many rules regarding silence and potential new members that it is scaring off many potential new members
    - Unnecessary rules create more and more hoops for women to jump through to go through the recruitment process
      - The whole facebook patrolling was a bit excessive and created more angst and animosity than needed
  - Identify ways for the Panhellenic sorority system to be marketed as a whole
    - Unified front will help you sell sorority system first, then once they are in the process, they can choose which one
    - Identify ways for sorority women to interact with non-sorority women
      - Let them see you being a good sorority woman. Then they will want to be one too
    - Stronger marketing during orientation and over the summer
    - Informational sessions in residence halls
  - Focus on truly becoming no-frills recruitment



- You can start as soon as you like, but I would research what student and headquarters (HQ) interest is out there first.
- The plan should include options for student groups that want to start an organization as well as a plan for identifying inter/national groups that the college wants on campus
- It would be wise to be clear about expectations for any new fraternity/sorority that comes to campus
- What inter/national groups would you like to have on campus?
  - Strong HQ response to incidents
  - Alumni in the area already recruited to serve as advisors
  - Resources to provide HQ consultant visits often in developmental stages
- What criteria would you like to have these chapters meet?

### Community/Public Relations

#### *Observations*

*Fraternities and sororities at Florida Atlantic need to find ways to be more visible on campus, to positively promote their strong points on campus and to minimize some behavioral issues that create negative relations with the campus and surrounding community*

The public image that fraternities and sororities have at Florida Atlantic is typically neutral. In many aspects, most people at FAU don't even really know there are there. Chapter leaders wanted to improve public image, but often wanted to tackle that problem by either touting the positive behaviors and impact of the fraternity and sorority community or by blaming the negative images on stereotypes or outside entities (the media, the university, etc.). Too many students wanted to change perceptions without changing some of the behaviors that cause those perceptions. The realities about alcohol use, academic underperformance, and the limited interaction with non-Greek organizations on campus all contribute to the negative images of fraternity life. For example, for many non-Greek students, the only real time they interact with fraternity chapters is through parties. If this is the only glimpse they get of fraternity life, then they are getting a skewed image, but one that will be ingrained in their minds. There should be concentrated efforts to improve relations with Faculty, SGA, Non-Greek Students, University Housing, and Athletics.

#### Suggestions

- More events (especially philanthropic or service events) should be planned with non-Greek student participation as the goal.
  - Chapter philanthropies tend to only include Greek members
  - If non-Greek students never see the energy that goes into service and philanthropy, how are fraternities and sororities going to change their image?
  - There is a need to strengthen the connection between councils/chapters and the office of Civic Engagement and Service

- Also a good time to find ways to connect more with SAVI
- Recreational events (flag football tournament, basketball tournament, etc) can be planned in conjunction with Recreational Sports
- Councils can also sponsor a lecture series or a debate for the campus
- Council leaders should work with the Office of Greek Life and the VPSA to identify ways to improve relations with Faculty
  - Chapters need to have faculty as advisors and mentors if they are going to succeed academically and be taken seriously on campus
  - Faculty appreciation dinners or receptions could be held to recognize outstanding faculty members
    - Each chapter could nominate a faculty member
  - Can faculty members be utilized more for educational programming?
    - Perhaps council leaders can send out a survey asking for potential educational program topics
- Fraternity and sorority leaders should find ways to improve relationships with University Housing staff and students
  - The relationship between The Offices of Greek Life and University Housing has been up and down over the past 5 years, both on the student and staff level
    - There is an opportunity right now to reconnect those two entities and create a more vibrant campus life
  - It is important for chapter and council leaders to start finding ways to co-sponsor events with RHA or RA's or even University Housing staff and help improve the relationship between the entities
- Council and chapter leaders should also find ways to improve the growing relationship the fraternity and sorority community has with Athletics
  - There is a sentiment or perception that athletes cannot or should not join fraternities
    - The only way to combat that is to have open dialogue about it
    - Athletes need a specific type of environment that will not detract from their academics or their athletic routines
    - Are fraternities and sororities able to provide that? If not, then there needs to be some changes in chapter operations if chapters want athletes.
    - Need to be able to unequivocally prove that joining a fraternity/sorority will enhance the athlete, not detract from his or her endeavors
  - Athletic coaches can be utilized as educational resources, particularly in the recruitment area
  - Councils can coordinate an "adopt-a-team" program
    - Fraternities and sororities are asked to adopt an athletic team for the semester
    - They provide fan support for that team
- The Office of Greek Life should help council and chapter leaders compile positive information in order to create a Year in Review publication

- Highlight academic, philanthropic, service, leadership, educational, awards, and other achievements
- Distribute this document to faculty, staff, parents, orientation participants, etc.
- Office of Greek Life needs to work with councils to update the FAU Greek Life website
  - University of North Carolina and Kansas State University have excellent Greek Life websites
- Chapters and councils need to create a master calendar with the Office of Greek Life
  - This could include campus events and activities as well as chapter and council events and activities
  - VPSA could try to have Greek calendar events added to the university calendar and university website
- Chapters and councils need to find ways to increase visibility on campus
  - Wearing shirts that promote Going Greek or even individual chapters more often
    - Not just Wednesday nights, and the first couple of weeks of school
  - Greek Life website (which needs updating) should be no more than 2 clicks away from the FAU home page
  - FAU bookstore should carry Greek items
  - The Office of Greek Life should be moved to the Union for more visibility
  - Work with the university's PR department or even marketing students to identify other ways to have a stronger public presence

### Risk Management/Crisis Management

#### *Observations*

*Risk management for the fraternity and sorority community at Florida Atlantic varies greatly among the individual organizations. Compliance is inconsistent, especially for fraternities. As a whole, most policies are not as detailed as they should be. Also, a crisis management/emergency response plan should be created for all chapters.*

Most chapters at Florida Atlantic attempt to follow some of their risk management policies. Much of the risky behavior takes place at events outside the chapter houses for most groups. The sororities are better at it than the fraternities, but that is the case on almost any campus. The real issues come from a handful of chapters that do not practice risk management at all, but rather what I like to call "get caught avoidance." The university should also consider ways to provide services to chapters in order to help them increase safety and security and reduce risk.

#### Suggestions

- A thorough review of all risk management policies should be conducted by chapter presidents, council leaders and the Office of Greek Life
  - Identify policies that are unclear, or that need updating
  - Identify areas that need more specific and practical instructions on how to remain compliant

- The Office of Greek Life should partner with council leaders and advisors/alumni to create a crisis/emergency management plan for fraternities and sororities
  - Step by step procedure to follow in case of a severe crisis such as the death or serious injury of a chapter member
  - Phone numbers to call in an emergency
  - Perhaps work out an evacuation plan for weather emergencies as well
- The Office of Greek Life and council leaders should consider having a risk management presentation at the beginning of the semester
  - Either a centralized one for chapter leaders or one at each chapter
  - Discuss risk management policies and how it pertains to all functions but in particular, events with alcohol present
  - Consider making this a mandatory session
    - Chapters would be unable to have events with alcohol until they or their leaders went through the training

### Service/Philanthropy

#### *Observations*

*Service and Philanthropy are considered by some to be among the strong points of the Florida Atlantic fraternity and sorority chapters. Not enough of it is done together as a community, and not enough involves non-members.*

Community service and social responsibility are two of the core values of Florida Atlantic University (<http://www.fau.edu/strategicplan/values.php>). Philanthropy and community service are two of the ways that fraternities and sororities help to enact those core values. Chapters do focus on this to a good extent, but there is room for improvement. Chapters need to do a better job of planning more creative and efficient, **one-day philanthropic events**. As one Greek student explained, “Penny wars and pageants are getting old and really aren’t that effective.” Chapters and councils need to place more emphasis on hands-on service projects. Both should be done at the individual, chapter, and community level. High performing Greek communities understand the difference between community service (hands-on assistance to those in need) and philanthropy (fundraising for those in need) and provide BOTH for the community. Fraternities and sororities could work together with other entities on campus (Residence Halls, SAVI, etc.) to create some very meaningful service events for the local community. Too many events are marketed poorly to students outside the fraternity and sorority community. The university can provide assistance and support by having a stronger presence at these events.

#### Suggestions

- Each chapter’s leaders should identify ways to have a stronger non-Greek presence at their philanthropies
  - How can non-greek students or organizations team up in the philanthropic projects
  - How can chapters change their philanthropic projects to be more appealing to a larger population

- One chapter had a successful poker tournament that was marketed and attended by many non-Greek students
- Chapter leaders should try to team up with a non-Greek organization to conduct at least 1 joint service project a year
  - Perhaps team up with the athletic team that was adopted
  - Other options include RHA, Student Government, SAVI, etc.
- Councils should work with the Office of Greek Life to revamp Into the Streets
  - How can you include non-Greeks in this so they can work together
- Councils should also try to coordinate one ongoing hands-on service project
  - Perhaps adopt a local elementary school and provide tutoring, reading, or recreational activities for the students there
  - Some participants talked about a kickball tournament with local elementary schools- this is the kind of idea that could work
- Service hours and Philanthropy money raised should be calculated for each chapter and published

### Academics/Faculty Interaction

#### *Observations*

*The Florida Atlantic Fraternity and Sorority Community is generally underperforming when it comes to academics. It is imperative that they improve in this area if they are to be taken seriously by the University community.*

Florida Atlantic University “values an academic environment that facilitates intellectual growth.” Fraternities and sororities, therefore, should be expected to provide an environment and experience that enhances academic performance of members.

Academics are a weak spot for many of the chapters at Florida Atlantic. Every chapter should strive to be above the all men’s and women’s averages, but most are not.

Councils should identify ways to provide academic support to chapters. There is also an opportunity to engage faculty members in a way where they provide guidance and support for chapters and even the councils.

#### Suggestions

- The faculty advisor role for chapters needs definition and structure
  - Perhaps start by calling the position “faculty mentor” as the term advisor seemed to create some anxiety for potential candidates
  - The position needs a clearly and narrowly defined role so that it may be more attractive to faculty members
  - Create a manual and training process for faculty mentors
- Council leaders should consider bringing on a faculty member to serve as a “Chief Academic Mentor” for the community
  - This person could help coordinate, provide direction to and mobilize the faculty advisors and help create excellent academic programming for chapters
- The Office of Greek Life should consider publicizing academic results in newspapers and all promotional materials

- Does not have to be a ranking system, but rather noting the chapters that are above the all men's and women's averages, etc.
- Act as a motivator
- An opportunity exists to create or staff a tutoring program through an academic support center on campus
  - Start this as a way to tutor new members and chapter members that fall below a certain academic standard
    - Identify 3-4 difficult 1<sup>st</sup> year courses
    - Provide 7 days of free tutoring for those classes a couple of weeks before midterms and finals for members of the Greek community
      - Tutors can be hired or can be volunteers from the fraternity/sorority community
    - After working out the kinks to the program, open it up to anyone on campus
  - Through such a program, there would be:
    - A service provided to the university community
    - The opportunity for fraternity and sorority members to utilize the service and improve their own grades
    - The opportunity to meet and assist non-Greek students
    - The opportunity to show that fraternity/sorority life does take academics seriously (excellent PR)
  - This would be an excellent way for the fraternity and sorority community to partner with Academics on campus

### Council Effectiveness/Chapter Relations

#### *Observations*

*Councils are not consistently seen as strong or effective governing bodies. In general, chapters could be doing much more to support each other and to work as a community. There is some disconnect between chapters and councils. Council meetings tend to be executive board driven and activity/report based. Fraternity and sorority communities that are high performing in this area are able to have meetings be issue based and chapter leader driven (and council leader implemented). While there are several individual members from different chapters that do have extensive interaction with each other, whole chapter interactions are often limited to parties or competitive events. While the relations between the groups are not as hostile as in the past, there could be more proactive connections between chapters and especially among the councils.*

#### Suggestions

- Council leaders should work with the Greek Life Coordinator to set specific goals for their leadership positions and the entire council for the upcoming year
- Chapter presidents, as the most knowledgeable representatives of their organizations, should be one of the representatives to all council meetings
- The Greek Life Coordinator should work closely with chapter presidents as well as council leaders to help identify issues from which a council agenda can be created

- This will help council meetings go beyond just a report and event based structure
- Will at least attempt to facilitate conversation and discussion about important issues
- Chapters should be encouraged to have more non-competitive events with each other as a community
- Joint council meetings should be held once a semester at least to discuss how to improve fraternity life as a whole on campus
  - Identify ways the councils could program together
  - Discuss the marketing and vision of the entire community

### Member Development

#### *Observations*

*Many chapters struggle with providing intentional development beyond just the first semester. Hazing exists in many chapters.*

Fraternalities and sororities at Florida Atlantic should be creating lifelong developmental opportunities for members. Part of that charge can be fulfilled through an effective member development process. Some fraternities and sororities have traditionally engaged in activities that are considered demeaning or harassment. Chapters need to evaluate their new member development practices, as that perception is hurting recruitment. Several chapters, both men's and women's, tended to focus their development on younger members, and failed to provide sufficient programming to keep upperclassmen (specifically seniors) engaged.

#### Suggestions

- The Office of Greek Life should work with chapter leaders to ensure that they are providing educational and cultural programming for all of their members
  - Compile and provide a list of potential educational topics and available speakers
  - Provide chapter leaders with information about on-campus educational opportunities
  - Have chapters list the educational programs they have had each semester
- The Office of Greek Life should work closely with chapter leaders and alumni and volunteers to identify specific ways to keep upperclassmen engaged with the chapter
  - The retention of members to their senior year is an increasingly problematic issue
  - Chapters and councils should begin to provide specific programming geared for upperclassmen
    - Job and internship search help
    - Networking opportunities with alumni
    - Cultural programming
      - Wine tasting exchanges just for seniors
      - Art exhibits, ballets, etc.

- Chapters should consider creating a “senior council” that provides advice and assistance to executive board
- Office of Greek Life should provide quality educational material and programs that address the issue of hazing
  - Should deal with hazing on multiple levels
    - Legal ramifications
    - Humanistic ramifications (health and safety)
    - Operational ramifications (creation of dead weight in chapters)
  - Provide specific education and training for New Member Educators
    - Important to provide them with alternatives to hazing
    - Identify what they want to accomplish then brainstorm ways to accomplish that without hazing
- Office of Greek Life should work in conjunction with national HQs to come up with a game plan in case of hazing situations
  - Set out the expectations of cooperation and information sharing
  - Set out expectations of visible presence from HQ staff or regional volunteers in cases that warrant such a response
  - Provide clear explanation of the judicial process and potential sanctions
  - Be very clear that severe hazing situations and attempts by the chapter to cover up information or hinder the investigation process will result in elevated sanctions, including the suspension or expulsion of a chapter

### Alumni and Advisors

*Although some Panhellenic sororities have better alumni and advising support than the other groups, there is still room for improvement. IFC fraternities and NPHC fraternities and sororities have inconsistent support. MGC groups have little to no advising support. Both the university and the fraternity and sorority community would greatly benefit from stronger alumni and volunteer guidance for chapters.*

There are a few dedicated alumni and volunteers that provide guidance for fraternities and sororities at Florida Atlantic. Many groups do not have a strong alumni or advising presence. The University should find ways to help chapters identify alumni and/or volunteers who can dedicate some time to provide this necessary guidance. Greek alumni tend to give more money than the average alumnus according to the Office of Alumni and Development. Chapters should find ways to reconnect with those alums.

- The Office of Alumni Relations and University Advancement should consider putting an article (or series of articles) dealing with fraternity and sorority life in the alumni magazine
  - Current status, upcoming changes, Greek alumni stories, support of Greek community
- The Office of Greek Life should work with the Office of Alumni Relations and University Advancement and chapter leaders to help identify potential advisors or volunteers that may play a role in guiding chapters.
  - Create a survey of all faculty and staff to determine if they were in a fraternity or sorority

- Also, work with inter/national headquarters to identify fraternity and sorority alumni who work at the university
- Invite those individuals to a luncheon or reception
- Introduce them to student leaders
- Discuss the need for some chapters to have advising
- Carve out smaller roles in which they can provide guidance
  - Financial guidance, for example, is something several chapters need, and would be less time consuming than becoming a chapter advisor
- The Office of Greek Life should meet monthly with all chapter advisors
  - Discuss issues and upcoming events
    - Sometimes they do not know about potential problems because chapter leaders do not inform them
  - Utilize advisors as an extension of the Greek Life office- they can be very helpful with internal issues
- The Office of Alumni Relations and University Advancement should work with chapter alumni/advisors and fraternity headquarters to share alumni data
  - Consolidate database information
  - Utilize new consolidated list to send out mailings
  - Provide chapters with assistance in creating newsletters, mailings, and invitations
  - Schedule an event where university officials can also be in attendance
  - Have university officials (Director of Greek Life, Dean of Students, etc.) help ask alumni to get involved with their chapter as an advisor or in a smaller role

## Housing

### *Observation*

*A conversation about fraternity and sorority housing and/or facilities needs to begin taking place if it is going to become a reality*

While on campus, there were several different ideas and rumors floating around about chapter housing and/or facility opportunities. Almost none of those ideas were identical. Chapters are not in a position to finance traditional housing at this time, but there may be creative ways to provide facilities that meet their needs. Those needs include (in priority order) a) a place to meet; b) storage space; c) a tangible sense of identity and connection to campus and d) housing.

### Suggestions

- The Greek Life and Housing offices need to begin preliminary discussions about the facility needs of chapters
- Once facility needs can be determined, a comprehensive proposal should be created in conjunction with The Office of Greek Life, Housing, chapter leadership, and alumni. Chapter headquarters as well as some councils (NPC for example) should also be consulted
- The main purpose of these conversations and proposals should be threefold:

- To get a shared vision about what is needed in writing
- To eliminate unnecessary options and quell rumors
- To identify costs and funding options for the projects
- If needed, the Office of Alumni Relations and University Advancement can work with chapters, house corporations and headquarters' to help chapters structure capital campaigns

### Judicial Processes/Standards

#### *Observations*

*There is a need to continue to improve council judicial boards so that chapter leaders feel empowered to hold community members accountable for their actions and decisions.* Chapters at Florida Atlantic do not always comply with policies and live up to behavioral expectations. High performing fraternity and sorority communities are successful at governing themselves because they hold themselves accountable for violation of policies. Florida Atlantic University should empower chapter and council leaders to work within the new judicial system so that violators are consistently held accountable by their peers. Furthermore, chapters are having a difficult time holding their members accountable for their actions. Chapter leaders claimed that between 30% and 50% of a chapter continuously violated internal policies but were inconsistently confronted or held accountable. The fraternity/sorority community is at the cusp of becoming truly self-governing. Now they have to find the courage to address internal issues consistently.

#### Suggestions

- The current changes to the University Greek Life Judicial Board are positive ones.
- There are some minor tweaks to the current process I would suggest
  - Incident reports should be reviewed with council leaders
  - A council officer should work together with the Greek Life Coordinator to determine whether complaints are chapter issues or individual issues
  - If individuals are found to be at the root of a chapter issue, those individuals may warrant a judicial hearing with the university
  - Set a specific day of the week or month when hearings would take place.
    - Once the judicial boards have been trained, and if there is no hearing coming up, consider having 'mock trials' every other week on that day to develop their skills
    - Allow chapters the opportunity to have a justice replaced if they feel he might be biased or if the two chapters have a "history" with each other. Replacement would come from the pool.
- Individual chapters need to improve their internal standards/judicial processes
  - Chapter leaders often commented on how difficult it was to hold their peers accountable
  - The Office of Greek Life could provide training for chapter judicial/standards boards as well
    - This would be a bit more complicated as each chapter has their own standardized practices

- Still, there can be education on the importance of accountability, ways to investigate alleged violations, fairness and confidentiality issues, etc.
- The council judicial boards should make all organizational hearing findings public in a timely manner
  - This information is not confidential because it deals with an organization and not an individual
  - Will show other chapters as well as outside constituents that the fraternity/sorority community is serious about holding itself accountable
  - Should definitely provide this information to the chapters and the police substation at the very least

### University Support/Staffing Issues

#### *Observations*

*FAU has recently made strides to increase support and stabilize staff for Student Affairs and the fraternity and sorority community. The university should explore more ways to partner with chapters, councils, alumni and headquarters to help the fraternity and sorority community become even more high-performing and more closely aligned with the vision and mission of the institution.*

Many students said that they feel there is a lack of support from the university. Some administrators agreed that “until recently, there was not a strong focus on fraternity and sorority life at FAU but that is now changing.” Undoubtedly, the lack of stability in the Greek Life Coordinator position has contributed to the problem. For the relationship to improve, the university needs to identify specific and significant ways to partner with and champion the fraternities and sororities. This could include the exploration of ways to provide these groups with services and resources. However, those resources and services should only be provided hand in hand with the creation and abidance of higher behavioral standards from the fraternities and sororities. All of these can be clarified with a creation of a relationship statement or Greek Governance statement. Through this collaboration, the university can and should expect a stronger alignment to the values, vision, and mission of the institution (which if all things are well, are the very same that chapters should be espousing).

#### Suggestions

- The university and the fraternity/sorority community need to identify ways in which they can “combine forces” in order to achieve similar goals. Here are some examples:
  - They both want chapters to have strong membership numbers
    - Student Affairs can partner with council and chapter leaders to maximize their access to potential new members during orientation and welcome week
    - President of the University can actively promote fraternity and sorority life when he addresses incoming students and parents

- Campus publications can more prominently highlight fraternity and sorority life as a positive contributor to Florida Atlantic University
    - Athletics can work with coaches to develop a recruitment training session for chapter Recruitment chairs
  - They both want to have Greek Life add to the traditional campus feel that is slowly evolving created at FAU
    - Find ways to make it easier for chapters to have events on campus
      - Streamline the registration process, etc
      - Make sure that facilities are available for some of the larger events
    - Work with chapters to identify sources of funding for events that benefit the entire campus or add to campus life
      - COSO funds are going mostly to Greek Week- surely there can be more funds going towards other operational areas – the councils just need to be able to prove there is value to those programs for the entire campus
  - They both want alumni to remain connected
    - The alumni association can partner with chapters and headquarters to cross-reference alumni data
    - The alumni association can also partner with chapters in order to coordinate reunions and other functions
    - Alumni magazine can highlight some of the significant accomplishments of the Florida Atlantic fraternity and sorority community as well as outline the strategic plan to make fraternity and sorority life stronger on campus
- President Brogan should have annual meetings with fraternity and sorority leaders and key alumni
  - As these meetings become more common, students and alumni will realize the university commitment to improve fraternity and sorority life
- The University needs to make the Greek Life Coordinator position more attractive in order to stabilize that position and keep employees in that job for 4-5 years at a time.
  - The person in that position should have the ability to gain some supervising experience
    - A second graduate student (perhaps one that can help advise NPHC and MGC)
    - Bump up the position and add another entry level position
  - Eventually, the The Office of Greek Life position should report directly to the Dean, and should have a title change if the position is going to be more attractive
    - Also, the office of Greek Life should be a ‘stand alone’ office, not just a service provided by the Dean of Student’s Office. I realize this is semantical, but it is important
  - Include The Office of Greek Life in the director level meetings
  - Continue to provide strong professional development opportunities

- Conferences such as NASPA, IFI, ACPA and AFA
  - Provide stronger budgetary support to allow person in this position to make and sustain the changes recommended in this report
- Physically move the Greek Life office to the Union in order to be closer to the student hub
  - Also, provide office space for the 4 councils

## Branch Campuses

### *Observation*

*There is varying degrees of interest and need among the different FAU campuses*

Students and administrators at the various branch campuses expressed different views about the need for Greek Life on their campuses. Students noted a desire to have some kind of Greek Life experience, even if it is the opportunity to join a chapter at the Boca campus. Most national organizations will only start a chapter at what they consider to be the main campus, so this presents a dilemma for students at the branch campuses. The University should consider ways of meeting student's needs for fraternity and sorority life, and encourage chapters at Boca campus to reach out to other campuses with information and recruitment opportunities.

### Suggestions

- First and foremost, the councils from Boca Raton campus should provide information and even presentations at the branch campuses on a regular basis
  - Recruitment/Informational sessions once a semester
  - Information about events and programs should be done monthly
  - The opportunity for students to join a fraternity or sorority in Boca should be given to students who are at other campuses but still want to make the commitment to the organization and are willing to travel
  - Many of the students felt that this was their best option- but they never had any information about how to join or even what events were occurring.
- Other options exist for the branch campuses when it comes to Greek Life
  - Service fraternities such as Alpha Phi Omega exist on multiple campuses. Students at the Jupiter campus were trying to start this organization and felt this would meet their needs
    - They will need some help from Student Affairs in the chartering process as that process has stalled a bit
  - Working with chapters that aren't at the Boca campus may be another option, but most inter/national groups want to be at the campus with the highest population
  - The option of starting a local fraternity or sorority exists on the branch campuses as well
    - This would be risky since those groups do not have the infrastructure, resources, insurance or support that inter/national organizations do

- If chapters do start at a branch campus, it is important that they be advised by a local student life administrator – not by the Greek Life Coordinator from the Boca campus

### Multicultural Greek Council

#### *Observation*

*As the newest council, MGC needs special attention from the Office of Greek Life, specifically in the areas of council management and member recruitment and development.*

MGC chapter leaders seemed to be excited and interested in improving chapter operations. The council leaders were looking for ways to become more organized and have a stronger presence on campus. In general, these groups are ready for growth and at a point where they can become much more high performing. The Office of Greek Life should provide the MGC council and chapters with guidance in these developmental years.

#### Suggestions

- MGC council meetings should only be held when the Coordinator of Greek Life can be present
  - End of the business day on Friday is not a good time
- The Office of Greek Life should provide topical education for MGC council and chapter leaders
  - Recruitment
  - Member Development
    - Particular attention should be focused on avoiding hazing. I could not tell if hazing was occurring, but it is important to guide them towards developing their members in appropriate ways- hazing is a huge issue for MGC chapters in other parts of the country
  - Council Management
    - Focus of the councils needs to be visibility and creating a collaborative relationship internally and with other councils
- Every effort should be made to include MGC chapters in all Greek Life activities and programs
  - Not just campus activities- it is also important to get them to leadership conferences as well

### National Pan-Hellenic Council

#### *Observations*

*NPHC and NPHC chapters have some specific issues that warrant attention*

Several conflicting themes emerged in the interviews that contributed greatly to the membership situation:

- A) The majority of members of NPHC chapters claimed that they had trouble finding an abundance of qualified students at Florida Atlantic to choose from. Some of

- those that *were* qualified, they said, were not interested in joining or “not willing to do what it takes to become a member”.
- B) Some qualified members (leaders on campus with good grades and a strong desire to perform community service) exclaimed that they were either unaware of the opportunities to join NPHC chapters (or even the process of how to join), or were not interested in joining because of the reputation/stereotypes associated with fraternities and sororities. This indicates a need for NPHC to be more visible and intentional about their programming and operations. It also indicates a need for NPHC to intentionally change their reputation and shed the stereotypes people have about their chapters.
  - C) NPHC and NPHC chapters claimed they had an extremely difficult time finding space and facilities for meetings and events. The process was cumbersome. Furthermore, some recent events became volatile and led to physical altercations, creating some understandable concerns for university administrators
  - D) While chapters espoused high standards and ideals, the sentiment (real or perceived) among many potential members was that those standards were not always being followed by members in the organizations. GPAs for some chapters fell below the requirements for membership, for example. This needs to be explored if the stereotype is going to be shed for good. Upholding internal expectations and standards is a very tough issue for all fraternity and sororities, but especially for NPHC chapters because of their lack of membership size. That impetus is going to need to be reinforced strongly by the graduate chapters, and regional and national officers.
  - E) NPHC as a council was not seen as a viable governing entity by most of the chapter members. While some of the leadership was trying to strengthen council operations, most chapter members were solely concerned with their individual chapter operations and success. Without a pooled and concerted student effort as an NPHC community, very little progress will be made to improve the situation for the historically Black Greek-Letter Organizations. By not working together, the chapters are minimizing their exposure and ability to be seen on campus.
  - F) Exacerbating these problems is the concern (real or perceived) that NPHC chapters are not getting enough guidance from graduate chapters, national and regional officials, and university administrators
  - G) The university is going to start enforcing a minimum number of members (8-12) for the groups to be recognized as an organization on campus

**This combination of factors creates an impasse that may lead to the demise of some NPHC chapters at the university in the near future.**

The Florida Atlantic University administration indicated that this was an area of high concern. Several administrators noted that they wanted to have a healthy NPHC, and were interested in committing resources to ensure their survival. For any substantial improvement to occur, however, the administration is going to have to team up with chapter and council leaders as well as fraternity and sorority officials (regional or national) to address the **core issues** of this problem.

## Suggestions

*The following suggestions are being made after consultation with Jennifer Jones, NPHC National President and Vashaun Harper, Professor of Education at University of Pennsylvania and member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.*

- If the university is going to set and enforce a minimum number of members to remain a recognized organization, they should provide some extra help at least for the first year or two
  - Members believed that 8 people minimum was doable, but hoped that the university would give them until 2009 or 2010 to reach that goal
- NPHC needs to work with chapter leaders and university administration to **increase visibility** and dissemination of information to potential members
  - Conduct a pre-informational meeting at the beginning of each semester where NPHC and chapter leaders present a unified front
  - Work with the university (perhaps through the office of Multicultural Affairs or other Student Affairs area) to get names and contact information for students of color who have above a 3.0 and provide these students with information about NPHC
    - Targeting these students as a council does not violate any ethos or tradition- it is merely a smart way to get an uninformed population some important information about NPHC chapters and the value these groups bring to campus and their members
  - Be clear about qualifications and expectations of membership as well as the processes of how interested parties may be asked to join
  - Create 3-4 events throughout the year when NPHC can come together to have a campus-wide projects (academic, service, etc.) that would appeal to qualified potential members. Market these events to those targeted individuals. This is not recruitment, this is merely showing people that the stereotypes are not true
  - Identify the 3-4 main feeder high schools for students of color. Work with those schools to co-sponsor a service project or provide informational materials or presentations about NPHC. This kind of connection is made at high schools in larger cities, and proves to be inspirational and educational for high school students.
    - Could be done in conjunction with NPHCs from other universities in the area with similar feeder school makeup
    - Needs to be extremely organized and professional and needs to focus on the positive aspects of fraternity/sorority life
    - Feeder school information can be provided by the university
- Chapter presidents need to be their organization's representatives to NPHC meetings
- Chapter presidents need to work with The Office of Greek Life and other university administrators to identify ways to reduce risk and potential incidents at events while at the same time streamlining the process to register and have events on campus

- Can more of the events be marketed on campus rather than just to other NPHCs in the area?
- Can the university help with security at events
- Can the university streamline the process to host an event on campus?
- These are some of the questions that should be discussed in this meeting
- Consider bringing in an outside resource to help improve the intake process
  - The university should consider having a Black Greek **summit** to discuss the issue with NPHC regional or national officers as well as undergraduate leaders from the NPHC chapters and council
  - The university should also consider bringing in a 3<sup>rd</sup> party resource or program such as **Intake Equation** run through Campuspeak ([www.campuspeak.com/programs/intake](http://www.campuspeak.com/programs/intake))
- The university needs to make a strong effort to **work with the national organizations to help establish and/or cultivate a relationship with graduate chapters** of all of the Divine Nine
  - Many of the groups lack a graduate chapter to provide them with guidance
  - This would help in the future if undergraduate chapters of NPHC groups that are not currently active on campus are to be established
- Every effort should be made to send NPHC chapter and council leaders to the Black Greek Leadership Conference in Chicago
  - This year, the conference is held simultaneously with the Mid-American Greek Leadership Association conference
  - Dates are February 21-24, 2008
  - Specific NPHC issues will be the focus of the conference, and would allow the student leaders to gain valuable insight from experts and peers
  - Since Florida Atlantic may be sending leaders from the other councils to the MGLA conference, this would also give NPHC leaders the opportunity to bond and exchange ideas with the other council leaders
- University financial and human resources are going to need to be secured to ensure that NPHC chapters prosper. This is going to be a key component to getting them back on their feet.
  - NPHC chapters are in need of guidance and financial assistance. Their membership size prevents them from doing many of the things they need to do in order to halt the downward spiral they are in. The university may be in the position to assist them but should also ensure that the resources are utilized properly
    - Some discount for meeting and event facilities
    - NPHC specific marketing materials
    - Black Greek Leadership Conference registration, etc.
    - Website updates
    - Black Greek summit
    - Intake Equation or other outside resource
    - Upgrade in promotional materials
    - University already has assigned a professional to be the NPHC advisor.

- Down the road, the university should consider hiring someone who's main focus the advising of the NPHC organizations
- Could be a part of the expansion of the Greek Life area explained in the staffing section of this report

### Other

- *The community is perilously close to having an over programming issue.* Indeed many students feel they are already over programmed
  - There should be a master calendar that is created 6 months ahead of time
    - This calendar should be created with the input of all chapter leaders
    - This calendar can be infused with the university calendar
    - Should be included in the website
    - Chapters need to agree that any events added after the calendar is created are strictly optional for other organizations to attend
      - Or that mandatory attendance would take  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote of all chapters at a council meeting or something of this nature
  - Philanthropy/Service projects that request involvement from members of other chapters should be limited to one or two day events
- *The university should consider ways of starting endowment fund opportunities that specifically benefits fraternity/sorority programming*
  - Some institutions such as Ball State University and Indiana University have begun tapping alumni and other donors to help create scholarships and programming funds for the fraternity and sorority community.
  - Work closely with the Office of Alumni and Development to do this appropriately and in a way that compliments FAU's fundraising plans.
  - This would help augment the programming budget without tapping other student affairs funds

## CONCLUSION

There is great potential for the fraternity and sorority community at Florida Atlantic University. It can reach a much higher level of performance if the organizations begin to work more like a community rather than individual groups and if the chapters and councils work hand in hand with the University to build a stronger relationship. There are enough people who want to see the two entities work more closely together that I feel comfortable saying that improvements are not long from occurring.

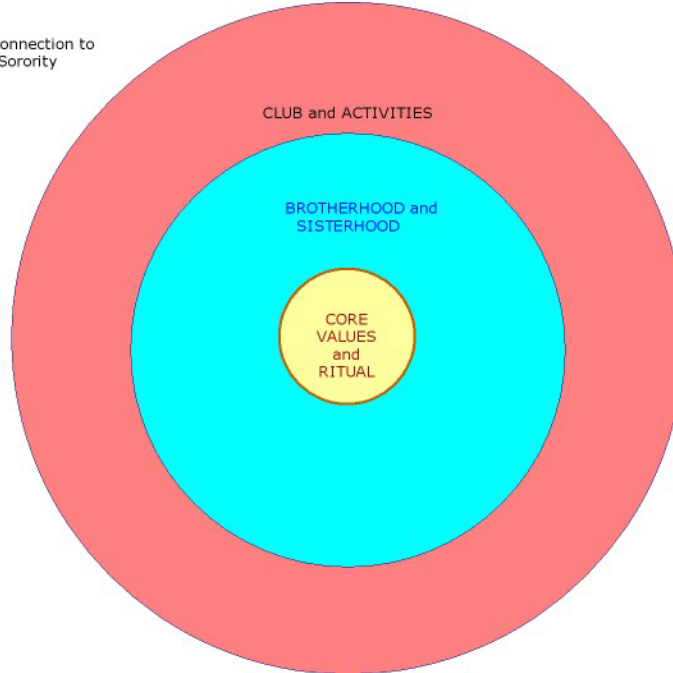
In my opinion, the fraternity and sorority community is at a crossroads – they can either choose to maintain the status quo or to make some cultural and operational changes that will take them to a much higher level of performance. It is a perfect time to choose the latter. There is a core group of student leaders and members in most of the chapters that want to be better; you also have key administrators and alumni that want to see them to improve and are willing to help them in the process. Finally, you have stability in the Greek Life Coordinator position at the moment.

The fraternity and sorority community and the college administration need to come together and decide what to do with the information included in this report. As per request, I will add my ideas on how to proceed from this point forward:

A Task Force comprised of 1/3 students, 1/3 administrators, and 1/3 alumni/advisors should be charged to create a strategic plan for the Greek community. That plan can be the cornerstone of how the fraternities and sororities and Florida Atlantic University will be connected from now on. How that plan is created is just as important as what it says. Process, in this case, is just as important as product, and the empowerment of Greek students to voice their thoughts and opinions when creating this document is paramount to its success.

There may be some skepticism and mistrust on both sides (Florida Atlantic University and Florida Atlantic fraternity/sorority community) as their new relationship is created and nurtured. While this is to be expected, it should not be allowed to impede the long term progress that is needed if the fraternity/sorority community at Florida Atlantic is to become high performing.

Figure 1  
Layers of Connection to  
Fraternity/Sorority



Members of a fraternity/sorority can have different connections of affiliation with that organization. The most basic is the connection to the **club-like activities** that organization provides (social events, intramural participation, etc.). This is the most common connection, especially for those who join without a recruitment effort that emphasizes the deeper meaning of fraternity/sorority. This is also the weakest connection in that once those activities are no longer desirable or available, a member's loyalty to the organization is lost. This is not necessarily an unhealthy connection unless those club-like activities are illegal, demeaning, or dangerous. It can, however, be a very superficial and temporary connection as people tend to grow out of their needs for these activities at some point. Most members that see the fraternity only as a place for these activities become dead weight or disappear after graduation.

Some members seek out or grow into a loyalty to the close camaraderie and bond with fellow members, termed **brotherhood or sisterhood**. This loyalty extends beyond just the club-like activities, although those activities often help promote the brotherhood and sisterhood of a chapter. On a base level, this can be a very healthy connection to the organization, nurturing long-lasting friendships and helping students learn to work and live closely with one another. The danger with this being the deepest level of connection to the organization is that members often fail to hold each other accountable for questionable behavior in an effort to maintain loyalty to one another. There is little confrontation or peer accountability.

The most difficult but meaningful affiliation to a fraternity/sorority one can have is that to the **core values and ritual** of the organization. When one is connected at this level, one understands the true purpose of the fraternity movement and can uphold and defend the ideals of the fraternity, while still maintaining a sense of brotherhood/sisterhood and an enjoyment of the club-like activities the fraternity/sorority has to offer. To reach this level, most members need to have the core values emphasized quite often (recruitment, new member education, member education, standards hearings, chapter meetings, etc.).

High performing Greek communities have a majority of members connected to the core values and ritual of their organizations and the Greek community at large.