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SWAC Report 2010-2011

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I. Committee Charge:

The necessity for the existence of the System-Wide Assessment Committee (SWAC) emerged from the Strengthening Greek Life Task Force's proclamation that:
"There will be an annual assessment of the overall Greek system, to measure progress towards realizing the vision for Greek life as well as to identify emerging needs and opportunities to strengthen Greek life. A System-Wide Assessment Committee comprised of students, alumni, and University staff, charged by the Vice Provost for Student Affairs, will be responsible for conducting this assessment. The System-Wide Assessment Committee is also responsible to make recommendations to the Vice Provost regarding the viability of expansion of the Greek system.

"The committee utilizes a full range of resources including but not limited to: Accreditation reports, annual reports of the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs, a review of national trends and innovations in Greek life, insights and perspectives of members of the Lehigh community, as well as input from the executive leadership of affiliated chapters.

II. Committee Membership:

Tom Dubreuil, Associate Dean of Students, co-chair
Tim Wilkinson, Assistant Dean of Students; Director, Office of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs
Ozzie Breiner, Director, Office of Residential Services
John Pribis '12, President Interfraternity Council,
Taylor Kite '12, President, Panhellenic Council,
Howard Foltz '86, President Greek Alumni Council, Kappa Sigma

III. Introduction:

As stated above the System-Wide Assessment Report is an annual examination of the overall fraternity and sorority community at Lehigh University. Given timing and staffing issues of the past year, this report is spanning a period that covers the 2010 – 2011 academic year with updates directly reflecting the “Next Steps for the Fraternity and Sorority Community” final report, as well as the 2010-11 Accreditation process. The System-Wide Assessment Report, recommendations were approved by Vice-Provost for Student Affairs John Smeaton on September __, 2011.

IV. Academic Culture:

For the fall 2009 semester, the Intefraternity Council all-fraternity GPA (3.03) was close to the all-men’s GPA (3.06) and the all-sorority GPA (3.336) was over the all-women’s GPA (3.286). The all-greek GPA (3.179) was over the all-undergraduate GPA (3.159). Eight of 21 fraternities were above the all-men’s average and all eight of the Panhellenic sororities were above the all-women’s average. The lone Multicultural Greek Council sorority GPA (3.24) was slightly below the all-women’s GPA and both Multicultural Greek Council fraternity GPA’s (2.025) were well below the all-men’s GPA.

For more specific academic information, please go to:

<http://www.lehigh.edu/~indost/greek/PDFs/Fall%202010%20Grade%20Report.pdf>

For the spring 2010 semester, the all-Greek GPA of 3.149 was above the all-undergraduate GPA of 3.137. The Interfraternity Council all-fraternity GPA (3.039) was close to the all-men’s GPA (3.068) and the Panhellenic Council all-sorority GPA (3.268) was again over the all-women’s GPA (3.260). The all-greek GPA (3.145) was above the all-undergraduate GPA (3.137). Eight of 21 fraternities were above the all-men’s average and seven of the nine Panhellenic sororities were above the all-women’s average. The lone Multicultural Greek Council sorority GPA (2.832) was below the all-women’s GPA and both Multicultural Greek Council fraternity GPA’s (2.1) were well below the all-men’s GPA.

<http://www.lehigh.edu/~indost/greek/PDFs/Spring%202011%20Grade%20Report.pdf>

V. Greek Community Status/Recommendations

A. Recruitment

Panhellenic Recruitment:

Zeta Tau Alpha sorority was colonized on campus in the spring 2011 semester and as expected this expansion led to more bids for Panhellenic membership being accepted. 348 women accepted bids in the spring 2011 semester. This number is an increase from 237 in the spring of 2010. Women depledging sororities were also up from 13 in 2010 to 26 in 2011. The majority of these depledges came from new members of Zeta Tau Alpha whom made the decision that the experience of joining a new sorority was not for them. Through conversations with women who were depledging other Panhellenic chapters, the issues leading to this decision were time commitment to the chapter as well as some questionable new member practices, which led to all

new member programs being placed on hold and a summit of inter/national headquarters partners on campus to help continue to battle the issue of hazing.

Fraternity Recruitment:

Interest in fraternity recruitment was back up from 348 men in 2010 to 444 in 2011 and accepted bids were also up from 265 in 2010 to 298 in 2011. Additionally, it was a very positive sign that depledges were down from 46 men in the spring 2010 to only 16 in 2011. Although we have no hard data, anecdotally, some have cited the following as possible factors for such a small number of students depledging.

1. New member education programs and initiation dates were publicized so that the air of uncertainty in new member education was lessened.
2. Most chapters were more proactive and publicly vocal in working to end hazing practices that have been a part of their organizations.
3. The month before fraternity new member education began; sorority new member education was put on hold due to several hazing allegations. Given the increased scrutiny that chapters were under throughout the entire Greek community, many leaders did not want to take any chances of doing things improperly.

With this being said, the fraternity community still lost a chapter due to risk management violations during the spring 2011 semester. Delta Tau Delta's loss of recognition will be reviewed below.

Culturally-Based Chapter Intake:

Interest in culturally based chapter intake continues to be strong, but mitigated by a number of factors. First many students interested in culturally based chapters struggle to meet the necessary 2.5 GPA mandate in order to take part in the intake process. A number of academic retention efforts for students interested in culturally based chapters occurred in 2010-11, including:

- “All the Way Turnt Up” - Students of Color/Academic Success program (See separate document for more information)
- List of students interested in MGC fraternities or sororities given to OFYE to follow up with those who have grade deficiencies mid-way through the semester - reminding them about grade requirements
 - Academic support followed up with students who had 2/more midterm grades that are C minus or below
- Individual Emails sent out to interests of MGC
 - Sent on December 13th regarding academic requirements and reminders about individual informational events, in addition to connecting students to potential academic resources (Page 5)MGC
- Conversation about academics at MGC Council meetings

- Academic Sanctions were created for chapters who do not maintain 2.5 GPA per term and were amended into the Constitution by April 5, 2011
- MGC Informational: Misconception of Minority Greeks was hosted by MGC
 - Students held a program for campus community to provide information on culturally-based chapters
 - Opportunity for focus on grades

The second challenge continues to be the traditional preference of many students interested in culturally based chapters to shown interest in one chapter only. This is often tied to family or community roots for those students, and often results in either the attempted founding of the chapter that meets those roots, or the decision not to join another chapter. This often results in a fluid intake, and SWAC believes that expansion of the culturally based chapter community must continue to meet this tradition.

B. Occupancy:

Regarding sororities, chapters cannot completely fit in a chapter house and junior and senior women still prefer to move off campus. Although we did just complete an expansion of the sorority community, it did not help to lower the number of women per chapter, thus not alleviating housing issues.

Per the 2009-10 SWAC report, the committee continues to keep an eye on fraternities that allow upper-class members to live off-campus while the chapter is under occupancy. In the spring 2011 semester, four chapters (Alpha Tau Omega, Delta Upsilon, Kappa Sigma, Phi Kappa Theta) had enough upper-class members living off campus that would have allowed the chapter to make occupancy. The fraternities have chapter by chapter policies regarding housing and expectations for upper-class students living in. While some have seniors living in, the tradition for most chapters is that seniors move off-campus, continuing the trend of a lack of live-in senior leadership. The committee discussed community wide rules regarding mandating upper class fraternity members living in but decided it was best to leave these policies as a chapter by chapter decision.

C. New Member Education/Pledging Culture:

As mentioned briefly in the recruitment section, the fraternity and sorority community faced several significant challenges in the area of hazing. Beginning with the Panhellenic new member education period, the OFSA received multiple allegations of violations of university and Inter/national headquarters new member education policies, including allegations of hazing, new members being transported to the hospital for dangerous alcohol use, and incidents of blatant disregard of new member programs. Given all the information that was received during the first week of Panhellenic new member education; all new member programs were put on hold as the Offices of Student Conduct and Fraternity and Sorority Affairs conducted investigations. At the same time the investigations were occurring, the OFSA arranged for an impromptu summit with representatives from all 9 National Panhellenic Council sororities represented at Lehigh, including newly selected Zeta Tau Alpha. After a successful day of meetings, the group of representatives from both the sororities and the University agreed that once the conduct

investigations were complete, new member education programs and initiation dates had to be reviewed and were publicized to make sure that new members felt comfortable and safe. The review also assured the University and inter/national headquarters that the chapters were approaching new member education the correct way. Eventually, all of the chapters conduct investigations were completed and appropriate charges and sanctions were levied.

With the fraternities, due to the sorority hazing issues occurring before the fraternity new member education programs began, the OFSA worked with the chapters and mandated that all new member plans be submitted for review by Lehigh and inter/national headquarters staff as well. Additionally all new member plans and initiation dates were made public. Unfortunately, Delta Tau Delta chose to continue with negative new member events involving alcohol and public humiliation. After the University completed a conduct investigation and made the determination to send the chapter to a hearing before the University Committee on Discipline, the Delta Tau Delta national headquarters suspended the Lehigh chapter's charter for a period of four years.

Efforts to combat hazing continued over the summer with Lehigh hosting the hazingprevention.org Novak Hazing Institute and will continue throughout the 2011-12 academic year. OFSA will be conducting a needs assessment of hazing culture per the social/ecological model espoused by hazingprevention.org.

D. Accreditation:

The 2010-2011 academic year was the first year that the newly revised Accreditation program was utilized, per the "Next Steps for the Fraternity and Sorority Community strategic planning process. This process incorporated the Student Affairs Core Competencies and challenged student groups to demonstrate growth and effort in intellectual development, leadership development, community development, organizational development and facilities management. Although the process was new, chapters did very well.

Overall:

Gold - 3 fraternities and 5 sororities

Silver - 9 fraternities and 3 sororities

Bronze - 6 fraternities

Poor - 2 fraternities and 1 sorority.

The committee looks forward to continued growth and progress as chapters continue to develop. The only addition to the process this year will be a panelist liaison process, in which chapters can meet on a regular basis with one of the Accreditation panelists. This will allow the chapters

additional insight into the process, as well as connecting with a panelist and building an additional relationship to assist the chapter.

E. Greek Week:

Throughout the 2009-10 academic year, the three Greek governing councils, in conjunction with the Offices of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs and the Dean of Students, convened a joint student/faculty/staff Greek Week Revisioning Committee, tasked with assessing all aspects of Greek Week including its purpose, content and timing. Emerging from this process was a vision for a new Greek Week that would, “Be a time for Lehigh’s fraternities and sororities to promote our high standards and deep sense of pride and respect for community by showcasing the talents and uniqueness of members through a variety of philanthropic and entertainment-based events”. The committee centered all events on the shared fraternity and sorority values of Scholarship, Leadership, Citizenship, Partnership, and Stewardship, as well as utilized the Core Competencies Skill Development Map in creation and assessment.

Overall the new Greek Week showed promise in the first year. Younger members and more open minded older members enjoyed the change. Less active members carried some animosity forward as they had seen what Greek Week used to be. A big challenge was that sophomores were very excited to partake while juniors and seniors were much less interested due to their prior experiences. Greek Week still needs to be fine tuned but it does have traction to become a sustainable positive tradition.

VI. Recommendations:

A. Second Year Recruitment:

This is an action item that needs to have a recommendation made each year. The committee recommends that we do not move second semester recruitment to second year recruitment at this time. Overall, we continue to see the community moving in a positive direction, despite issues with hazing this past year. As required by the Strengthening Greek Life Report, the committee will continue to discuss this on a yearly basis.

B. Expansion

Each year the System Wide Assessment Committee needs to determine if there is a need to expand our Greek Community.

As for NIC and/or social fraternities, the committee was asked by the Greek Partnership Council to try to better define when the appropriate time for expansion is. While the committee discussed this, there is not a simple answer. The following factors need to be examined every time expansion is considered: accreditation ratings, conduct issues throughout the Greek community, recruitment numbers, and loss of a chapter, Lehigh community culture issues, and space in the community for a non-residential vs. residential chapter. At this time, the committee does not recommend the expansion of the fraternity community. Rather, the committee recommends that the one of the two current non-residential NIC fraternities be offered the house

formerly occupied by Delta Tau Delta. The OFSA, with consultation from the Greek Partnership Council, should work during the fall semester to determine criteria to determine which chapter should have the privilege of becoming a residential chapter. The hope would be to select the chapter early in the second semester, before University room selection, and have the group occupy the house beginning in the fall 2012 semester. The committee felt the two non-residential groups who have a proven track record of success as an organization should have the first opportunity for housing. It is understood that the use of this house as a fraternity needs to be approved by the University space committee, but the recommendation has the support of the Office of Residential Services. Once a chapter has moved in to the house, the committee also recommends expanding the non-residential fraternities by one using the same process that was used during the last non-residential expansion.

Regarding Multicultural Greek chapters, the committee recommends we retain the current policy of keeping the option to expand open with the decision being made on a case by case basis. Moving into the 2011-2012 academic year, the committee recommends the expansion of the community by adding Alpha Phi Alpha, a historically African-American fraternity and Mu Sigma Upsilon, a historically multicultural sorority. While there were questions about membership numbers of our current MGC chapters, the fact is that multicultural chapters by their nature are very fluid in their existence, coming and going with varying levels of membership. The OFSA has done a great deal of education about multicultural Greek groups and the committee recommends that the education continue. Additionally the committee agrees with the OFSA recommendation to do away with MGC Associate Member Status. Associate Member Status was created to assist culturally based interest groups with probationary status recognition while a larger membership base was recruited. The one case of Associate Member Status being utilized was Omega Psi Phi. However, due to the already fluid nature of culturally based chapters, OFSA and the committee believe that an established base of students is necessary in order to allow for organizational continuity.

Finally, regarding the expansion of the Panhellenic community, given the expansion of the sorority community last year by recognizing ZTA, the committee does not recommend further expansion at this time.