

To: John Smeaton, Vice-Provost for Student Affairs

From: Tom Dubreuil, Co-Chair of the System Wide Assessment Committee,  
Sharon Basso, Co-Chair of the System Wide Assessment Committee

Date: 8/16/12

SWAC Report 2011-2012

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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

Sharon Basso, Dean of Students and Associate Vice Provost for Student Affairs, Co-Chair

Tim Wilkinson, Assistant Dean of Students; Director, Fraternity and Sorority Affairs

Ozzie Breiner, Director, Office of Residential Services

Patrick Costa '13, President Interfraternity Council

Jill McElroy '13, Vice-President, Panhellenic Council

Jamel Haggins '14, President, Multi-Cultural Greek Council

Howard Foltz '77, 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. This report spans a period that covers the 2011 – 2012 academic year.

## **IV. Greek Community Status**

## A. Academics

For the fall 2011 semester, the Interfraternity Council all-fraternity GPA (2.928) was lower than the all-men's GPA (3.006) and the all-sorority GPA (3.302) was greater than the all-women's GPA (3.276). The all-greek GPA (3.115) was lower than the all-undergraduate GPA (3.155).

For the spring 2012 semester, the Interfraternity Council all-fraternity GPA (3.006) was close to the all-men's GPA (3.035) and the Panhellenic Council all-sorority GPA (3.260) was again greater than the all-women's GPA (3.236). The all-greek GPA (3.126) was slightly above the all-undergraduate GPA (3.119). Eight of 18 fraternities were above the all-men's average and six of the nine Panhellenic sororities were above the all-women's average. Both Multicultural Greek Council sorority GPA's (Mu Sigma Upsilon - 3.162 and Lambda Theta Alpha - 3.062) were below the all-women's GPA (3.236) and 2 of the 3 Multicultural Greek Council fraternity GPA's (Lambda Sigma Upsilon - 2.9 and Kappa Alpha Psi - 2.684) were below the all-men's GPA (3.035).

A troubling indicator was discovered by OFSA having to do with new member grade point averages. After reviewing all chapter new member class grade point averages from the spring 2012 semester, every single chapter new member class saw their GPA fall from their established GPAs from the fall 2011 semester. On the surface this is a troubling statistic, and further assessment is needed for proper context. OFSA is working with the Office of the Registrar to compare new member GPA's from the spring after new member education and the fall prior to new member education for the last three years. An additional recommendation is to review Greek new member grades versus non-Greek Grades over that same period of time.

Overall, the chapter and greek community's grade point averages and numerical spread are approximately the same as previous years.

Full fall 2011 and spring 2012 grade reports are attached as appendix 1.

Another area of academics the SWAC reaffirms the importance of is the use of tutoring programs in chapter facilities. As part of the *Residential Living Appreciate Inquiry Progress Report* issued in February of 2012 by the Offices of Residence Life, Residential Services and Fraternity and Sorority Affairs creating more effective campus-wide tutoring programs should be a priority for the Lehigh residential community, including the Fraternity and Sorority community. Per the "Recommendations to Further expand opportunities for Intellectual Development within living communities on campus:

- "Pilot the offering of tutoring programs in the residence halls and chapter facilities. We will work with Academic Support and specifically the Peer Tutoring Center to offer some tutoring in M&M in Fall 2012. Based on the success of the pilot, we will make a decision about further supporting the expansion of this type of program. In order for this pilot to have the greatest chance of success, we will assist with any supplemental funding needed to support the Tutoring Center and we will outfit the designated lounge with the equipment needed to run the program. Additionally, the Panhellenic and Multicultural Greek Councils have held several discussions regarding moving to community-wide tutoring options. This may also be considered for pilot status, especially Panhellenic; due to their residential status. This recommendation will also be rolled into the development and implementation of a new Residential

Curriculum. Additionally, all residential spaces, including fraternity and sorority facilities should “Begin taking inventory ... so that they can be outfitted with additional white boards and other academic equipment so that they may also be more effectively used for small group discussions and classroom experiences.”

The *Residential Living Appreciate Inquiry Progress Report* is attached as appendix 2.

## **B. Recruitment**

### **Panhellenic Recruitment:**

With Zeta Tau Alpha sorority colonizing on campus in the spring 2011 semester, as expected, accepted sorority bids were once again very high. 277 women accepted bids in the spring 2012 semester. This number is an increase from 229 in the spring of 2011. Women depledging sororities was down from 26 in 2011 to 15 in 2012.

### **Fraternity Recruitment:**

Interest in fraternity recruitment was down fairly significantly from 444 in 2011 to 345 in spring 2012. Even though interest was lower, accepted bids were up from 298 in 2011 to 320 in 2012. OFSA is working with Interactive Collegiate Services (ICS) to create a more centralized on-line registration system, hoping to create more accurate registration figures. Depledging numbers remained consistent with spring 16 depledges in 2011 and 16 in 2012.

### **Culturally-Based Chapter Intake:**

Interest in culturally based chapter intake continues to be strong, with 12 new students joining culturally-based chapters. The newly recognized multicultural sorority, Mu Sigma Upsilon initiated seven new members, Kappa Alpha Psi took three new members and Lambda Theta Alpha took two new members. Another positive sign was Lambda Theta Alpha's decision to conduct intake with two first year students. This decision is a departure from the traditional practice of upperclass recruitment only from culturally based chapters. While intake was fairly successful for 2011-12, the challenge remains that the traditional pattern of many students interested in culturally based chapters is that they demonstrate interest in one chapter only. This is often tied to family or community roots, and usually results in either the attempted founding of the chapter that is tied to these roots; or the student makes the decision not to join another chapter. As a result we observe fluid and somewhat unpredictable intake process. An example of this is the inactive status of Omega Psi Phi fraternity, due to membership. Therefore, the SWAC believes that we should remain committed to, and open to, future expansion of the culturally based chapter community.

### **General Recruitment Issues:**

Several questions about recruitment emerged during the committee meetings . One very simple question with a not so simple answer is "How much bigger does our fraternity and sorority community need to be?" The university currently has the largest percentage of students in chapters since 1997-1998 and there does not seem to be any signs of waning interest. This

question is beyond the scope of this committee and there should be discussions at a higher level: do we continue to let the market drive the size of the Fraternity and Sorority community or does there need to be some sort of imposed limit on growth?

Another item that was discussed was the financial obligation to join a fraternity or sorority. What does it cost? What is the variance between chapters? Often times parents end up calling University offices to ask about and complain about the high cost of affiliation. While the University can answer questions about room costs, questions about board, membership dues, social dues, parlor fees etc. cannot be answered because currently we do not require each chapter to publish their cost breakdown. Even though the men's recruitment period was shortened, it did not result in any cost reduction to new members and about the same amount of money is still being spent on recruitment by chapters.

With the University trustees spending more and more time discussing the cost of attendance at Lehigh and working to hold down tuition costs, there needs to be a look at the cost of Greek affiliation. As an important first step the SWAC recommends that chapters be required to disclose/publish their costs to students (dues, parlor fees, social costs, etc.). This was the practice years ago when the University published the Consumer Guide to Housing. Such a practice could help students and their parents make more informed decisions. OFSA has made this discussion a priority for the year, and will be collecting and tracking chapter financial obligations during the fall semester. This topic will also be introduced at the fall Greek Alumni Council meeting as a discussion point for the year.

### **C. Occupancy:**

#### **Sororities:**

All sorority chapters continue to be in good standing regarding occupancy. They have the opposite problem of over-occupied facilities as compared to the challenges some fraternities have to reach and maintain minimum occupancy requirements. Sororities continue to face a considerable challenge with some of them being over occupied by 30% or more. Chapters cannot fit all members in a facility which results in junior and senior women living off campus. Although we did just complete an expansion of the sorority community in the 2010-2011 academic year, it has yet to help lower the number of women per new member class, thus not alleviating housing issues. The SWAC discussed the fact that sorority membership numbers are incredibly high right now and tried to consider some options such as non-residential sororities and artificially lowering quota but both are not viable options under current NPC philosophy and practice. This issue needs to continue to be discussed as the University continues to move forward with the University Master Plan. Although it would not solve the problem, building another residence hall could help to alleviate the issue, as a potential on-campus housing opportunity for displaced upperclass students.

#### **Fraternities:**

This spring, two chapters had their first failure to reach the 90% occupancy standard (Kappa Sigma; 83% and Lambda Chi Alpha; 71%). Two chapters had their second failure (Phi Gamma Delta; 81% and Phi Sigma Kappa; 80%) and one chapter had its third failure (Theta Chi; 70%). All these chapters' alumni have been notified of the occupancy issues. Given the successful recruitment period in the spring 2012 semester, all these chapters are comfortable that they will meet the occupancy requirement. Each chapter has a plan in place for members to move back into the house from off campus if necessary. The only concern is for Phi Gamma Delta who may undertake a second member review in the fall semester. They just completed a chapter review in the spring 2012 semester but it does not appear to have met the outcomes that their alumni corporation and inter/national Headquarters were hoping for and no members were removed from the chapter. If a member review does occur and members are removed, they could face occupancy difficulties.

#### **D. New Member Education:**

During new member education in 2011-12, there were fewer overall reports of potential hazing allegations compared to the 2010-11 academic year. Reports included are ones made to LUPD, OFSA, Office of Residence Life and the anonymous hazing hotline). Although it is difficult to know if fewer incidents of hazing actually occurred, according to many students, the University's strong anti-hazing stance has served as a deterrent. Additionally, many chapters were still on probation with their inter/national organizations from spring 2011, so they may have been more cautious. Generally speaking, alumni leadership has been very supportive of anti-hazing efforts. The key for chapters is to make sure that if alumni are coming back to discuss hazing, that it is a blended age group to discuss the topic. There should be many different generations leading discussions. Often time's young alumni do not find hazing to be an issue and older alumni are not necessarily as in touch with what life is currently like on a college campus.

While the Campus Hazing Assessment is still in the coding stages, there are some very clear indicators regarding the need to increase both hazing and bystander education and awareness to first year students. This, plus the previously discussed warning signs with new member grades makes a continued evolution of values based education for first semester students as well as the role of the new member education process in augmenting the academic development of new members.

Per the Office of Institutional Research *Analysis of the Campus Hazing Assessment Analysis of Greeks:*

- “The analysis so far has pointed out that there are major differences in the perspective of first-year students compared to older students (upperclassmen/grad students). What is interesting amongst Greeks, however, is that there is less of a difference by year in the belief that hazing is an issue of Lehigh. Although exposure to hazing grows significantly by length of time in school, Greek opinions about hazing as an issue at Lehigh do not grow as significantly as do the attitudes towards hazing for the overall sample of first-year students vs. upperclassmen and grad students.”

This recommendation is also reinforced in recommendations made regarding the transition that students face when moving from Residence Hall facilities into chapter facilities. As discussed in as part of the *Residential Living Appreciate Inquiry Progress Report:*

- **“Place a significant emphasis placed on the transition between Residence Hall living and living in Fraternity and Sorority Housing.** Some ways in which this could be explored are:
  1. As part of the Residential Curriculum model that is developed, we should further define the sophomore experience, as to assure sophomores, regardless of chapter affiliation or not, are exposed thoroughly to the core competencies.
  2. Also as part of a new Residential Curriculum model, education on the exploration and development of personal values should be placed in the first semester for first year students. This will benefit them in transitioning to college, help them develop values-based decision making skills and help guide their decision regarding whether or not to join a fraternity or sorority.
  3. Strengthen the education provided to students moving into chapter facilities about the obligations and responsibilities that come with living in this type of environment.”

## **E. Conduct**

During the academic year, there were sixteen conduct cases that led to chapters being placed on disciplinary probation for a period of time. The vast majority of these cases were due to unregistered parties and the irresponsible distribution of alcohol.

There were two chapters this year that were assigned more serious sanctions that put their chapter recognition in jeopardy. During the fall semester, Lambda Chi Alpha was found responsible for providing alcohol to an underage non-student who had to be taken to the hospital for severe intoxication. The chapter was placed on disciplinary deferred dissolution until May 2012 and will be on probation until May 2013. Additionally the chapter was made alcohol free until the end of December 2012.

During the spring 2012 semester, Kappa Alpha was found responsible of several violations of the Code of Conduct, including but not limited to causing an emergency, vandalism, gross disregard for university property and unauthorized consumption of alcohol. The chapter is on disciplinary deferred dissolution until May 2013, at which point they will be placed on probation until December 2014. Kappa Alpha is also an alcohol free chapter until the end of December 2012. Finally, all seniors were removed as active members of the organization.

Similar to many colleges and universities, the abuse of hard alcohol has become a major issue at Lehigh. The greek community has taken a lead in efforts to combat this culture. Sororities banned all new members from using hard alcohol during their new member education period, and Panhel and IFC have created and implemented an alcohol policy banning hard alcohol from greek social events and banning the use of chapter funds to pay for hard alcohol. The student leadership met with President Gast to present the policy and she was fully supportive of it and wrote a letter published in the Brown and White stating such. While enforcement and holding groups accountable will continue to be a challenge, IFC and Panhel should be commended and have the full support of the University in their efforts.

## **F. Accreditation:**

This was the second year of the new Accreditation process and the expectations for each chapter were higher. Throughout the process, there were two recurring themes. First, groups seemed to struggle with what is meant by Intellectual Development, as opposed to the previous iteration of Accreditation, Scholarship. Chapters that struggled in this area still tend to focus only on Grade

Point Average and scholarship planning for active and new members. Struggling chapters still have not embraced or understood the idea of intellectual pursuits. The second theme was that groups were also having difficulty identifying or understanding the concept of inclusion in both the Intellectual Development and Community Development Sections, as chapters have been challenged to educate their membership on understanding the role of inclusion both in the chapter, the fraternity and sorority community and the Lehigh community.

This year, the most chapters (five fraternities) were rated Poor that we have had since inception of the Accreditation process. None of the previous year's Poor Chapters received a second Poor rating. OFSA staff has notified Alumni Corporation presidents of Poor Chapters and is setting up conference calls with chapter presidents. There will also be notification sent to parents and general alumni members of those fraternities in conjunction with the beginning of the new academic year.

Moving forward, in addition to working closely with the chapters rated Poor, there needs to be efforts to make sure that chapters truly understand the overall Accreditation process. One thought and recommendation from the SWAC group is to discuss the process and the specific organizational development questions with the entire chapter. This recommendation is being implemented through Assistant Directors; faculty/staff advisers; and Accreditation Liaisons and will occur throughout the academic year. OFSA is currently beginning work on a monthly Accreditation chapter self-reflection program, which will allow faculty/staff advisers or Accreditation Liaisons to lead conversations with the entire chapter leadership in regards to the intrinsic nature of the process. This will supplement the Accreditation Boot Camp program, which provides structure and advice for new chapter leaders on the specifics of the overall Accreditation process, the Chapter Standards and the Chapter Development Questions.

## 2011-2012 Accreditation Results

### Fraternities:

Gold: 3

Silver: 7

Bronze: 5

Poor: 5

Unacceptable: 0

### Sororities:

Gold: 5

Silver: 4

Bronze: 1

Poor: 0

Unacceptable: 0

## **V. Recommendations:**

### **A. Recruitment issues**



- The Office of Fraternity Sorority Affairs should work with the financial aid office to identify what percentage of greek affiliated students are on financial aid to have a better sense of how cost might be effecting affiliation, and to make comparisons with the LU general student population.

- Groups should be required to list and itemize their costs to affiliate

- The President of the Greek Alumni Council will bring the topic up to the leadership to see what if anything GAC wants to do regarding rising costs.

## **B. Occupancy**

- The issue of over-crowding sororities should remain on the fore front of continued discussions about the University's Master Plan as building a new residence hall might alleviate some of the space issues.

## **C. Conduct**

- The University should continue to lend its support to the IFC and Panhellenic in their effort to combat the use and abuse of hard alcohol.

## **D. Accreditation**

- The office of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs should work to make sure that chapters truly understand what is meant by Intellectual Development and Inclusion, as well as the overall Accreditation process. Use of Accreditation chapter self-reflection and the Accreditation Boot Camps will supplement this recommendation.

## **E. 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. As required by the Strengthening Greek Life Report, the committee will continue to discuss this on a yearly basis.

## **F. Expansion**

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

### **1. North-American Interfraternity Conference (NIC) and/or social fraternities:**

The committee supports the recommendation that was made and accepted in last year's report that the University expand the non-residential fraternities by one using the same process that was used during the last non-residential expansion. It should be noted as

with the last non-residential expansion, there is no promise of, or timeline for, a non-residential chapter to become residential.

2. National Pan-Hellenic (NPHC); North-American Latino/a Fraternal Organization (NALFO) 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.

3. National Panhellenic Conference (NPC) community:

Given the recent expansion (ZTA), the committee does not recommend further expansion at this time.