

University of Oregon

External Review of Fraternity / Sorority Life

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Purpose

The purpose of the University of Oregon (UO) Division of Student Life External Review Process was to assess the impact of fraternity/sorority (F/S) chapters on the UO campus community and to identify issues challenges and limitations that need to be addressed and/or improved.

This report is intended to inform the Division of Student Life and the F/S advising team in their efforts to develop guidelines for planning, budgeting, services and programs that will most effectively meet these objectives.

Method

In preparation for the UO campus visit, the external review team acquired and reviewed documents, policies, procedures and reports pertaining to the F/S community, the F/S advising program, the Division of Student Life and the University of Oregon.

During the on-campus portion of the external review, the team held 15 separate meetings with faculty, staff, students, alumni, advisors and law enforcement officials and community representatives during a 48-hour period. More than 100 individuals provided direct feedback during these meetings.

These meetings were guided by a set of general prompts, but were facilitated in a manner that allowed participants to speak to their experiences relative to the F/S community, rather than responding to specific questions. During these meetings, the external review team recorded more than 60 pages of handwritten notes, containing observations, themes and questions for clarification and/or follow-up.

Following the on-campus portion of the external review, the team reviewed notes, coded data, identified themes and assembled a set of recommendations addressing the fundamental issues identified during the review process.

Assumptions / Philosophy

The external review team assumes the following regarding this process and the use of the recommendations presented in this document:

This report will yield optimal results if shared and discussed widely (among all contributing constituencies) and implemented collaboratively.

A focus on fundamentals (intentionality, consistency, clarity and interconnectedness of structures, processes, policies, programs and services) is more likely to achieve an exemplary F/S culture than a focus on products, compliance and “one shot” programming.

Best Practices are rarely the *best*, but are probably more aptly named *Most Common Practices*. We believe the *best* practice is one that is intentional, clearly connected to other practices, consistently applied (along with other practices) and recognizes the unique cultural, structural and political factors of a campus.

Alumni/chapter advisors are a relatively untapped resource to mobilize during the process of advancing this F/S community.

A values-based F/S community has the potential to provide a student experience that is difficult to match in terms of leadership development and campus impact. Conversely, a F/S community that is not aligned with the core values of member organizations and its host institution provides little lasting benefit to individual members or to the campus community. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that this process yields a strategic and well-executed effort to build an experience that adds value to the lives of UO students.

Active communication and clearly-articulated shared expectations are indispensable in the creation of trust between students and staff. The absence of these creates an incubator for misinformation, mistrust and misunderstanding.

Fraternities and Sororities are more unique than many faculty and staff would assume and less unique than many students and chapter advisors would assume. Therefore a well-tailored strategy is vital to balance along with solid educational practice and student development technique.

Student self-governance, while ideal, is difficult to fully achieve and requires the unwavering commitment of students, staff and alumni to engage in the articulation of shared expectations and the development of short-term and long-term strategies. It is important to remember the ever-revolving door of members and leaders. Simply because something was articulated last year does not mean it will be embedded into the F/S community’s collective consciousness. Progress ebbs and flows through the evolution of the leadership cycle of students.

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This community has the potential to become THE model for F/S communities nationwide. The commitment and passion exist. The students are of a high quality. The staff is of a high quality. The advisors are of a high quality. The method of combining these riches is simple, but certainly not easy.

There is much work to do.

Organization of the Report

Observations

This section is organized in four thematic areas that emerged during the data analysis phase of the external review. Observations included in this report were found to be common and consistent throughout the review process. They are included here for informational and contextual purposes.

Recommendations

The recommendations included in this section are derived from a consideration of all data (both written and verbal) collected during the external review process. They are organized in eight thematic areas. These recommendations are not intended to address each individual observation; rather they are intended to address the fundamental issues that the observations collectively represent.

Additional Resources

The Additional Resources section contains the documents that provided context for the external review.

OBSERVATIONS

This section is organized in four thematic areas that emerged during the data analysis phase of the external review. These observations are numbered for ease of reference (but do not necessarily correspond to the same number in the recommendations section). Observations included in this report were found to be common and consistent throughout the review process. They are included here for informational and contextual purposes.

High-Risk Behavior

1.1. The UO F/S community is regularly engaging in high-risk behavior. Further, the various stakeholders acknowledge the absolute necessity to address the problems swiftly.

1.2. Students readily acknowledge the unfortunate link between individual and organizational social capital with activities that are associated with high-risk behavior (i.e. the organizations atop the social hierarchy are often the ones that are more likely to participate in high-risk behavior).

1.3. F/S leaders report being all-consumed with behavioral issues and ill-equipped to effectively control high-risk behavior among their chapter members.

1.4. There is a belief that fraternities have many more challenges than sororities, however there is also acknowledgement of how much the sororities support and influence the high-risk behavior of the fraternities.

1.5. Despite the myriad concerns related to high-risk behavior, F/S members and other constituents acknowledge there has been some progress in the community. However, they also acknowledge the dangers that remain.

1.6. Students are frustrated with what they perceive as unwillingness for the UO to acknowledge progress in dealing with high-risk behavior. While they do not believe they have solved everything, they articulate a desire to mark progress.

1.7. There is a belief that F/S are uniquely positioned to provide leadership in addressing high-risk behavior on campus.

1.8. Students acknowledge the problems are largely of their own creation and ultimately theirs to solve. However, they express frustration with the perceived expectation that they solve them alone, despite being largely ill-equipped to do so.

Sexual Violence

1.9. Sexual violence is roundly acknowledged as a problem in the UO F/S community.

1.10. Student leadership cites increased education / knowledge with increased reporting of incidences. They also believe the support network and close relationships that F/S provide can assist in helping victims access resources.

1.11. Staff members express concern that chapters are silencing their members and contributing to the culture of sexual assault in the F/S community.

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1.12. Students fear prosecution and/or sanctions, which regularly prevents them from seeking assistance from university officials, medical professionals or law enforcement. One sorority president describes the burden of weighing the abstract notion of safety against the concrete reality of chapter or individual sanctions.

1.13. There is an identified acknowledgement of peer pressure within sororities to not report sexual violence because of the negative impact on the social capital of the individual sororities within the fraternity environment.

1.14. It is believed that UO has a sexual assault issue as a whole, but it is easy to deflect and blame FSL for it.

Substance Abuse

1.15. It is widely acknowledged that there is a problem with substance abuse in the F/S community (particularly MDMA, cocaine, etc).

1.16. There is a notable “blackout” culture that is referenced often. Such a culture views drinking alcohol to the point of blackout as being normal. Such behavior is often rewarded with increased social status, but rarely results in consequences or decreased social status.

Unmanageable Chapters

1.17. The unintended consequence connected to the current ban on expansion of sorority chapters is that the current chapter sizes have grown beyond what student leadership and their advisors can effectively manage.

1.18. Sorority leaders describe structural issues that prevent them from being able to maintain control in their chapters. Specifically, the unwieldy size of chapters, the achievement of quota being the chapter’s primary aim (per inter/national HQ policy) and some chapters’ inability to remove problematic members (per inter/national HQ policy) were cited as major factors contributing to the current reality.

1.19. Physical space and location is an added challenge. Students consistently report a dearth of spaces large enough to accommodate the unwieldy chapter sizes. This is true for both meeting space on campus as well as space for quality social functions in the community. The result is a movement to spaces (both sanctioned and un-sanctioned) off campus.

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Hazing

1.20. Hazing continues to be a struggle within the F/S community, especially within fraternities.

1.21. Students believe that “we aren’t that bad” because of the legacy of “what was”.

1.22. Students demonstrate varying levels of understanding what constitutes hazing.

1.23. There is acknowledgement of underground and off-campus, live-out member houses being a hub of hazing activity. Those facilities allow “everything to be pushed underground and held behind closed doors”.

1.24. There is a clear frustration by current chapter leadership that these live-outs are impossible to regulate.

1.25. Students acknowledge that current chapter leadership simply avoids the “live-out” houses because it is easier to not know about the problems than it is to address them.

Additional Observations Related to High-Risk Behavior

There are a number of other issues contributing to confusion and frustration related to identifying, acknowledging and combatting high-risk behavior. Because of the scope and limitations of our inquiry, it is difficult for our team to explore the following in depth, but we believe they merit further discussion nonetheless:

1.26. Most stakeholders agreed that expectations related to high-risk behavior are more flexible on football Saturdays. The perception exists that the same behavior would be addressed differently if it occurred in the Autzen Stadium parking lot as opposed to in a F/S facility.

1.27. Most stakeholders agreed that F/S members need a social outlet. When the primary social outlet was pushed out of the fraternity houses, the need for it did not cease to exist.

1.28. Students cite education (related to high-risk behavior prevention) as being helpful, but question the effectiveness of it. Others question whether increased knowledge has really made a difference. It is difficult to know for sure based on our conversations and observations.

1.29. Medical amnesty was referenced on several occasions. Evidently, there is disagreement as to whether or not this is appropriate or effective.

Accountability

The issue of accountability is as complicated as any issue we encountered. It is multi-faceted and difficult to “nail down”. There is a strong disconnect related to accountability and which entities are best positioned to provide it. What follows are a number of observations related to the challenges of accountability at multiple levels:

IFC

2.1. There is a perception that IFC lacks either the authority or the will to hold chapters accountable to a basic set of standards and/or expectations. However, it is believed that IFC *could* make a difference if it was more consistent and firm in its efforts to foster accountability.

University / Staff

2.2. Staff members express frustration with the relative difficulty of holding F/S accountable:

2.3. There is a disconnect between what is perceived as high expectations from the university and the failure of the university to hold F/S chapters accountable to high standards.

2.4. There is a perception among many staff and faculty that the F/S community has the unfair advantage of too many *free passes* that result in a culture that lacks accountability.

2.5. All stakeholders describe an uneasy and ill-defined relationship between the university and F/S chapters.

2.6. Students report having very few meaningful or consistent relationships with UO staff (with the exception of F/S advising staff).

2.7. Both students and staff perceive that the university’s relationship strategy has been to keep F/S chapters at a distance until/unless an incident occurs or a policy is violated.

2.8. Students and chapter advisors perceive university policy to be at odds with what they believe would be helpful steps toward a safer F/S community. Specifically, it is believed that a workable IFC social policy would likely be at odds with university policy.

2.9. F/S members feel targeted and perceive that their actions seem to elicit greater reactions, yield more significant consequences and receive more attention than a similar action that occurs elsewhere in the University community.

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2.10. UOPD reports success working with F/S leaders in the context of a relationship between the parties, but also acknowledges there is a limit to what they can do since they lack the jurisdiction to address the issues emanating from the “live-out” parties in the community.

2.11. The perception that the University has not invested enough time, people, or resources toward actually creating a positive influence on the current culture is loudly expressed by both students and alumni.

Inter/national Headquarters

2.12. Inter/national headquarters are not perceived to be viable partners in proactively assisting F/S chapters in creating a culture of accountability.

2.13. Chapter leaders perceive their inter/national policies to be barriers to creating a culture of accountability. Specifically, sorority members cite the primary requirement to meet quota (during recruitment) and the prohibition (in some, but not all chapters) from dismissing problematic members as major factors contributing to the problem of accountability.

Policy

2.14. Staff members are varied in their assumptions and unsure of the overarching philosophy related to the purpose and role of policy vs. the articulation of a set of shared expectations and responsibilities between the F/S community and the university.

2.15. Students report understanding the rules, but being unclear about what a positive relationship with the university would look like (aside from compliance with rules).

2.16. The focus on rules (as a basis for the relationship between F/S and the university) is a frustration for students. While they acknowledge that expectations are important, they challenge the notion that perfect compliance without a deeper relationship with the university will lead to different behavior.

2.17. Students, staff and law enforcement officials agree that there is not currently an infrastructure or mechanism for students to engage in an open and honest way regarding issues of policy.

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Conduct Process

2.18. Shifting the conduct process from the advising team to the conduct team is mostly acknowledged as a positive change, though there is still work to be done to develop trust between the conduct team and F/S leaders.

2.19. Faculty and Staff express that UO is perhaps too reliant on student self-governance. Connected to this is the acknowledgement that “Admins are the enemy”. Frustration exists that “for the most part, students are allowed to do what they want to do.”

2.20. Students describe frustration with the overall tenor of working with the conduct team to resolve issues. They describe a feeling of being patronized and marginalized.

2.21. There is consistent expressed confusion and acknowledgement of inconsistent approaches to off campus violations by the University.

2.22. There is confusion about policy, chain of command, and process for accountability. This is due in large part to the number of policies, expectations, accreditations, etc. that emanate from multiple organizations (F/S councils, Chapters, Headquarters, Dean of Student Office, Student Conduct and Community Standards, F/S Life, UOPD, etc).

2.23. Students report a degree of vagueness and inconsistency regarding expectations of Student Conduct and Community Standards -- even in the sanctions that are given.

2.24. There is a perception of “major” violations being treated the same as “minor” violations.

2.25. It appears that most (if not all) chapters on campus lack a functional, consistent and well-executed internal standards process for maintaining high standards within the chapter.

Chapter Advisors

2.26. Chapter advisors articulate a desire to be partners in fostering a culture of accountability in the F/S community. However, they acknowledge that they lack the authority and/or support to make an impact.

2.27. Chapter advisors further acknowledge that they lack the consistent relationship with university officials necessary for being partners in creating a culture of accountability.

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2.28. Chapter advisors articulate a difficult paradox related to member accountability.

2.29. Chapter advisors (and more broadly speaking, alumni) are perceived as barriers to addressing the new realities of campus life (Title IX issues, mental health, etc). They understand that something changed since their time on campus, but they are not always sure of the “what” or the “why.”

2.30. Advisors articulated unstable support from the University and a lack of understanding of the UO vision or goals for F/S life.

2.31. The absence of active local alumni was identified as a real challenge in advising the chapters. Connected to this was a request for greater involvement and support from the University.

Resource Allocation

F/S Advising Staff

3.1. The consensus among all stakeholders is that the F/S advising staff is effective, present, helpful and invested. While students are largely skeptical of faculty and other university officials, they believe the F/S advising staff to be one that is fully committed to helping them build a productive experience.

3.2. The other notable consensus of all stakeholders is that the F/S advising program is inadequately resourced or staffed to meet the demands, much less to shift the culture to the extent that everyone believes is necessary.

3.3. There are questions as to the sustainability or effectiveness of ceding the preponderance of the financial burden (for supporting FSL staff) to the F/S councils/chapters. This continues to be a source of confusion. Ultimately, for whom does the staff work?

3.4. While acknowledging the inadequate staffing, many question whether additional staffing would make a difference.

3.5. It is believed that Student Life staff (outside F/S Life) should work together to have a larger impact on the FSL Community, provided they were properly trained, informed and clear about their role.

Programming

3.6. There is not a shared understanding related to the purpose, focus, priorities or intended outcomes of programmatic efforts. The program (broadly defined) lacks a coherent strategy.

3.7. Students believe some programmatic efforts to be effective, while they classify other efforts as a “waste of time.”

3.8. Collectively there is not a quantitative deficiency of programming in the F/S community, however, much of the programming is perceived to be of the “checklist” variety (i.e. do it to say we did it), thus the impact of programming remains disproportionate to the effort required to produce it.

3.9. There exists a loud call for values-based education and infrastructure to inform and persuade the overall F/S culture. There exists a perception that F/S members are “acting out of fear” as opposed to doing it because it’s the right thing to do.

3.10. There is an expressed need for an extensive, coherent and focused leadership development program within the F/S community that showcases what it means to be part of the larger community.

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3.11. Students believe there is an opportunity to focus more on membership development programming (as opposed to programming focused on chapter operations).

3.12. There is an expressed need to identify best practices. What are they? And how do they apply to the U of O?

3.13. Campus and Inter/National Headquarters are not coordinated nor are they usually complementary.

Community Culture

4.1. Despite its many shortcomings, issues and challenges, the F/S community is meeting a need for UO students and is therefore growing and increasing in popularity.

4.2. The F/S culture is representative of a more “conservative” culture that is at odds with the UO’s long history of progressive thought and action.

4.3. The F/S experience has become a first-year and second-year experience. Very few seniors seem to retain the interest necessary to contribute a measure of maturity to the community.

Institutional Attitudes and Contributing Factors

4.4. There are as many opinions related to F/S community as there are participants in this process. Some staff view the F/S community as an invaluable component of a vibrant student community, while others view it as a safe environment for students to do what they want to do.

4.5. There is no shared understanding of why the F/S community exists, what it contributes to campus, what the major issues are or who is responsible for solving them.

4.6. Individuals acknowledge the impact of the larger campus environment on the party culture of the campus as a whole. The strong impact of football on the community as well as the lack of Friday classes were also cited as contributing factors in a party atmosphere.

4.7. There is a recognition of the impact F/S has on all student groups on campus, as they are often the leaders of all those orgs as well.

4.8. F/S members report living “in a Greek Closet”. They do not believe they are able to proudly display their membership in the classroom or on campus for fear of acts of bias and prejudice from faculty.

4.9. Students report not having support on campus in general, from faculty or staff.

Diversity and Inclusiveness

4.10. The membership of the F/S community is not representative of the diversity of the campus. There was an expressed need for greater diverse opportunities (i.e. chapters representing diverse cultures) within the community.

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4.11. There is a perception that NPHC F/S lack access to resources that other F/S have.

4.12. There is a perception that certain policies (e.g. numerical requirements for membership) are arbitrary and impose an unnecessary burden on NPHC groups.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations included in this section are derived from a consideration of all data (both written and verbal) collected during the external review process.

They are organized into eight thematic areas and numbered for ease of reference (but do not necessarily correspond to the same number in the observation section). These recommendations are not intended to address each individual observation; rather they are intended to address the *fundamental issues* that the observations collectively represent.

It is possible that similar or closely-related recommendations will be offered in different sections. This further underscores that the process of moving forward will require an intentional and inter-connected approach.

The recommendations that follow are intended to build a fundamentally sound, sustainable infrastructure for the support of fraternities and sororities. Unfortunately, there are no magic bullets or quick fixes. However, if implemented, these recommendations provide the University of Oregon fraternity/sorority community with a greater likelihood of success than responding to crises and staying the course.

Focus Area 1:

University Relationship with Fraternities / Sororities

While many of the recommendations presented in this document are of an actionable nature, it is necessary to preface those with a set of recommendations that are of a philosophical nature. Clarity regarding the University of Oregon's relationship with fraternities and sororities will inform how or if the remaining recommendations are implemented.

The external review team acknowledges that philosophical questions are not often questions of dichotomies, but of degrees. The dichotomies presented represent the opposite ends of these philosophical questions and are simply offered as a framework for a far more nuanced conversation.

It is recommended that the University of Oregon Division of Student Life, in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders:

1.1. Clearly and unequivocally define the relationship between UO and F/S. In doing so, it is further recommended that two guiding questions are considered:

1.1.1. Should the nature of the relationship between UO and its F/S be of a close and active nature or of a distant and passive nature?

1.1.2. Should the nature of the relationship between UO and its F/S be educational and developmental or legal and compliance oriented.

1.2. Determine the appropriate level and source of funding, given the scope of the issues, the number of students involved and the intended outcomes of the F/S community.

The external review team recognizes that the aforementioned philosophical questions are impossible for us to answer, given the nature of our role in the process. However, we would be remiss if we failed to offer what we believe to be the most appropriate answers, given what we have learned about the desired outcomes of the F/S community.

It is recommended that the University of Oregon:

1.3. Articulate, design and commit to a close and active relationship with the F/S councils, their member organizations, chapter advisors and alumni.

1.4. Review all current policies, procedures and practices to ensure that the relationship with F/S councils, their member organizations is of a proactive, educational and developmental nature.

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1.5. Commit adequate university funding toward the implementation of this plan while also maintaining the level of support the F/S community has been contributing.

Focus Area 2:

Division of Student Life

The success of this F/S community depends heavily on the full investment of the entire Division of Student Life. While the F/S advising team is talented, committed and doing great work, the responsibility for advising F/S cannot be theirs alone. What follows are a set of recommendations that the Division of Student Life is uniquely positioned to consider:

It is recommended that the Division of Student Life:

2.1. Identify and commit to utilizing ongoing and consistent opportunities for building proactive, transparent and collaborative relationships with F/S members, leaders, alumni and advisors. Regular “town hall” meetings in chapter facilities with senior staff, Q & A sessions with alumni and standing invitations for face-to-face communication are examples of possible methods for strengthening communication and building relationships necessary for sustained F/S community change.

2.2. Review, revise and broadly communicate the roles, responsibilities, expectations and interface of Division of Student Life staff as they relate to advising/interfaces with F/S and their governing councils.

2.2.1. Articulate clear outcomes and measures of success for the F/S community and ensure shared understanding and articulate clear outcomes among Division of Student Life staff who have a role in advising, programming or service provision for the F/S community.

2.2.2. Articulate a clear and consistent model, framework and/or set of expectations for advising the F/S community (e.g. Public Health Model).

2.3. Increase dedicated funding and staffing for the F/S advising program to a level proportionate to the desired outcomes of this student population.

2.4. In collaboration with F/S council leaders, alumni, chapter advisors, house corporation members and local law enforcement, review the policies and/or practices pertaining to “dry” fraternity houses to determine the extent to which they are contributing to desired outcomes.

2.5. In collaboration with F/S council leaders, local law enforcement and university health personnel, review policies and/or practices pertaining to “medical amnesty” to determine the extent to which they are contributing to desired outcomes.

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2.6. In collaboration with the Associated Students of the University of Oregon (ASUO), review policies and/or practices pertaining to recognizing Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) to determine the extent to which they are contributing to desired outcomes vis a' vis F/S.

2.7. In collaboration with the Division of Academic Affairs, review policies and/or practices pertaining to limited provision of Friday classes to determine the extent to which they are contributing to the desired outcomes related to student well-being.

2.8. In collaboration with the Division of Academic Affairs and other relevant stakeholders, work diligently toward ending the moratorium on sorority extension. Forthcoming research suggests that sorority chapters exceeding 150 members consistently provide a less developmental and less purposeful experience.

2.9. Engage the inter/national headquarters in partnership focused on the implementation of this plan.

2.9.1. Invite headquarters representatives to participate in an on-campus summit to consider the challenges, opportunities and strategies for moving forward.

2.9.2. Invite headquarters to identify and commit to supporting the resulting plan and clarifying the areas they are uniquely positioned to address.

Focus Area 3:

Fraternity / Sorority Advising Program Infrastructure

There are a number of potential approaches to the task at hand. One is to address the problems / incidences individually. However, this external review team believes the long-term success of this F/S community depends on building a philosophically consistent, clear and simple F/S advising program.

While the next several recommendations are not individually meant to solve a particular problem uncovered during our inquiry, it is our firm belief that these recommendations (if implemented well and maintained over time), will collectively result in a F/S community that more closely resembles the desired state. As such, the following is a set of recommendations related to the F/S advising program that supports the F/S community on a day-to-day basis.

It is recommended that the F/S advising program:

- 3.1. Articulate a clear and concise mission that provides a sense of focus and clarity related to what the program is uniquely positioned to accomplish.
- 3.2. In cooperation with the F/S councils, their member organizations and chapter advisors, articulate a set of 3-4 community (aspirational) values that represent the ideal F/S community. These aspirational values then become the cornerstone of each program, advising session and/or training -- the purpose of which is to build the community and its chapters in a manner that consistently mobilizes the community values.
- 3.3. Articulate a set of 3-4 concrete operational values (separate and distinct from the aforementioned aspirational community values). These operational values then serve to assist the F/S advising team in prioritizing work, setting clear goals and developing intentional professional development strategies.
- 3.4. Partner with teaching/learning experts (e.g. UO Teaching and Learning Center) to articulate a clear set of *Program Level Outcomes* (PLOs) for the F/S advising program. Additionally, develop a clear set of *Course Level Outcomes* (CLOs) for each program and service.
- 3.5. Use this framework to evaluate existing programs and services and to develop future programs and services to ensure focus, consistency, intentionality and clarity in both the overall F/S advising program and in its associated programs and services. **This is the identical process that a new academic program might utilize to ensure that an individual course session contributes to course-level outcomes and that an individual course contributes to program-level outcomes.*

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3.6. Review all recognition, endorsement, minimum standards, chapter development, etc. documents to ensure consistency, clarity and relevance. Using the aforementioned PLOs, determine which (if any) of these are necessary for assessing progress/success.

And / or

3.7. In cooperation with the F/S councils, their member organizations and chapter advisors, develop a formal statement of relationship, shared expectations and community standards. This statement should include: conditions and responsibilities of recognition, mutual expectations regarding housing facilities, reference to all relevant policy and governing documents, explicit institutional expectations and rationale for expectations that exceed general student organization expectations and a thorough record of organizational accountability mechanisms.

3.8. Engage in a consistent assessment cycle, utilizing the Fraternity/Sorority Experience Survey (Center for the Study of the College Fraternity) the EBI (Educational Benchmarking Inc.) survey, the UniLOA Survey (University Learning Outcomes Assessment), the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership or a combination of these. The findings should then be utilized to inform practice, programming, educational initiatives and further assessment. Commitment to this ongoing practice is important to create a longitudinal tracking of progress and change within the F/S community.

3.9. Identify the unique struggles of the underrepresented ethnically diverse population within the larger F/S community and develop strategies dedicated to improving and expanding the opportunities for involvement in the F/S community. Whereas much of this report is targeted at both NIC and NPC chapters, it is important to both acknowledge and intentionally dedicate action toward expanding opportunities for inclusivity in the current environment as well as specifically focusing on meeting the needs of culturally-based organizations.

3.10 Add a staff member whose primary focus is work with alumni, chapter advisors house directors and house corporation members. Specifically, the work of this staff member should focus on the following tasks to develop and maintain a comprehensive alumni/chapter advisor and house corporation relations program:

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3.10.1. Formally identify active alumni/chapter advisors, house directors and house corporation members (building a team).

3.10.2. Develop a forum/mechanism for alumni/chapter advisors, house directors and house corporation members to interact and train with colleagues, F/S advising staff and UO administrators on an ongoing and consistent basis.

3.10.3. Establish consistent and thorough communication with alumni / chapter advisors and house directors related to UO issues, local and national trends, and items related to college-student development.

3.10.4. Provide baseline and ongoing, philosophically consistent training and development for alumni/chapter advisors and house directors related to advising college students, accessing local and university resources and/or other topics relevant to creating the desired UO F/S community.

3.11. In partnership with the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards develop a framework, curriculum implementation plan and advising structure for F/S *internal standards board* training for standards chairs and chapter leaders.

3.12. Identify and document viable third-party vendors in the Eugene area. Facilitate relationships and clarify expectations between third-party vendors and F/S chapters. Facilitate opportunities for safe and effective chapter social events in an effort to better position chapters to follow policy/guidelines.

3.13. In cooperation with the F/S councils, their member organizations and Law Enforcement, develop a user-friendly (online preferred) party registration system that is informative and provides real-time notification to all stakeholders.

Focus Area 4:

Fraternity/Sorority Chapters and Governing Councils

While separate and distinct from the F/S advising program, the F/S chapters and governing councils must do their part to ensure the intentionality, consistency and clarity that will be necessary to foster the desired F/S community.

It is recommended that:

4.1. Each F/S governing council conduct a thorough internal review of documents, structures, policies, procedures and programs to ensure relevance to the community, clarity of purpose and connection to PLOs. Currently, governing documents (particularly council governing documents) are unnecessarily long, complex and cumbersome.

4.1.1. The purpose of each governing council should be reviewed, redefined (if necessary) and communicated in a manner that articulates alignment with community purpose and PLOs.

4.1.2. The structure of each governing council should be designed in a manner that efficiently mobilizes the purpose of the council. Past policies, titles and/or executive board/committee positions should not necessarily dictate future structure.

4.1.3. The F/S governing councils should be positioned as a representative “voice” and coordination mechanism for campus F/S and their members.

4.2. F/S chapters review Inter/National risk management policies to ensure compliance and to determine needed areas of clarification and/or member education.

4.3. F/S governing councils and their member organizations initiate a dialogue with the UO officials regarding the concept of self-governance and the responsibilities, expectations, limitations and boundaries associated with such a philosophy. Such a discussion will inform the development of a statement of relationship, shared expectations and community standards.

4.4. F/S governing councils, member organizations and their individual members commit to a shift from a philanthropy/fundraising orientation to one of hands-on service to the community, accompanied by education and reflection. It is further recommended that a purposeful relationship is built with the Service Learning Program and/or Holden Center as a resources for education and support during this philosophical shift.

Focus Area 5:

Fraternity / Sorority Programming

The previous recommendations have largely focused on philosophy, structure, policy, etc. The role of intentional, connected, focused programming cannot be underestimated. The following recommendations relate to building and maintaining a menu of programming that socializes students into the community and provides growth opportunities throughout their experience.

This menu of programs is not intended to address basic campus operations, but to build capacity among F/S members.

It is recommended that the F/S advising program:

5.1. In cooperation with the F/S councils, their member organizations, develop a comprehensive plan for member education and leadership development, that is rooted in in the aforementioned PLOs, aspirational values, etc. Recommended tenets of such a plan are as follows:

5.1.1. Proactive communication with potential new members of F/S – This communication should frame the F/S experience as purpose-based and in alignment with a set of articulated core values. Such communication can serve to positively frame the perceptions and expectations of students prior to joining.

5.1.2. Review and revision of New Member Orientation Program – The program should be revised as an interactive, curriculum-based program that illuminates the purpose of of F/S in the context of the UO. Following the program, participants should report a basic understanding of the purpose of F/S at UO and their role in maintaining a purpose-based community.

5.1.3. Review and revision of Emerging Leaders Retreat – Interactive and curriculum-based, this program should be available as an advanced level of the New Member Orientation for F/S members who aspire to seek leadership positions in the F/S community. The PLOs, concepts of organizational purpose and community values should be reinforced during this program.

5.1.4. Chapter Presidents and Council Retreat – This program should facilitate the development of individual and collective goals, plans and initiatives within the framework of PLOs, community values and core purposes of F/S.

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5.2. In collaboration with F/S council leaders, alumni and advisors identify and develop a strategy for increasing utilization of external opportunities that increase the leadership capacity of the UO F/S community. Among these are the LeaderShape Institute, CATALYST, the Undergraduate Interfraternity Institute (UIFI) and the Association of Fraternal Leadership and Values (AFLV) Conference. Once introduced to the F/S community and embedded in the culture, these and other similar programs, can serve as an important compliment to campus member education and leadership programs.

Focus Area 6:

Sexual Violence Prevention

While sexual violence prevention is neither the focus of this inquiry nor the area of expertise for the review team, it is important to note relevant items that should be included in the planning processes that result from this external review.

It is recommended that:

6.1. The University extend and amplify proactive, educational strategies related to sexual violence intervention with deliberate action focused on the F/S community. Specifically, these strategies should address:

6.1.1. Policy Development: Review and revise current policies (F/S Life, council, chapter etc.) related to sexual violence to ensure alignment of F/S policies/practices with the larger UO community efforts.

6.1.2. Education & Training: Develop and embed a comprehensive sexual violence prevention education and training program for the F/S community. The White House Task Force has identified Bystander intervention training as one of the strategies with the greatest promise for reducing incidents of sexual violence.

6.1.3. Victim Support: Integrate resources for victim advocacy with a particular focus on the F/S community. Partner with designated departments within the UO and Eugene community to educate members about available resources and how to effectively access them. Facilitate ongoing relationships to ensure that F/S members know individuals who can provide safe spaces for incident reporting, victim support, training and education.

6.1.4. Campus and F/S Community Climate Assessment: Conduct a formal assessment of both the campus and the F/S community current climate related to attitudes and perceptions of sexual conduct, attitudes about sexual activity, and sexual assault prevention. Longitudinal impact of prevention strategies should be measured through this same ongoing assessment. Outcomes of the climate assessment should guide programmatic and attitudinal prevention strategies.

Focus Area 7:

Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention

Alcohol and other drug prevention at the center of addressing the high-risk behaviors that plague the community. This is one of the most vexing and pressing issues being faced by colleges and universities across the nation. While the external review team does not believe the problem can be eliminated (e.g college students stop drinking), we do believe that it can be more effectively managed, resulting in positive outcomes for the health and safety of students.

It is recommended that:

7.1. UO builds a comprehensive prevention approach for F/S that combines traditional education programs with strategies aimed at changing the physical, social, legal, and economic environment in the F/S houses, on campus, and in the surrounding community.

This environmental management approach recognizes that student behavior is influenced at multiple levels: personal, peer, institutional, community, and public policy. The reality is that Fraternities and Sororities have the capacity to serve as powerful learning communities, providing an environment that presents both peer pressure and creates norms within the larger community. Shifting the focus and direction of this peer pressure and creating new norms is paramount to success.

7.2. A task force comprised of faculty, administrators, staff, students, parents, alumni and local community members be formed to identify core issues and develop intentional, targeted interventions and preventative measures.

7.2.1. The aforementioned task force reviews the U.S. Department of Education guidelines for the effective development of alcohol and drug abuse on college campuses:

7.3. Leaders in the Division of Student Life coordinate with leaders in the Division of Academic Affairs to explore the feasibility of a consistent five-day academic week. This strategy emphasizes the importance of academics and discourages the alcohol-fueled social culture that often occurs mid-week, in the absence of academic responsibilities.

7.4. The Division of Student Life partners with Athletics, Alumni Association and other necessary stakeholders to engage in a comprehensive review of the alcohol culture surrounding athletic events and to develop practices and policies that are positioned to foster the desired student culture

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7.5. The Dean of Students Office, in cooperation with AOD educators and law enforcement, review and revise current alcohol policies for F/S. Particular attention should be devoted to addressing off-campus live-out facilities.

7.5.1. The aforementioned team specifically and explicitly define what is considered be considered a F/S chapter-affiliated event.

7.5.2. The aforementioned team develop a clear and consistent strategy for addressing off-campus social events.

Focus Area 8:

Hazing Prevention

It is evident that members of F/S lack a clear understanding and definition of hazing and hazing practices. In order to effectively tackle this problem, the campus community should invest significant time, energy, and resources to create a comprehensive hazing education and prevention program.

It is recommended that:

8.1. The UO enter into a partnership with StopHazing.org, potentially leading to an application to be a member of the 2016 Consortium Cohort¹. Cohort members work with StopHazing's team and affiliated prevention experts during a three-year period, during which they receive extensive coaching and technical assistance to develop, implement, and evaluate innovative hazing prevention strategies

And/Or

8.2. The F/S advising program, in consultation with hazing experts, develop an overarching hazing cultural assessment to understand the current reality related to hazing in the F/S community. This assessment would then inform the development of a set of comprehensive strategies for prevention.

8.3. The F/S advising program, in consultation with hazing experts, develop ongoing and consistent education and training dedicated to defining hazing and providing viable alternatives to hazing.

8.4. The Division of Student Life, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, articulate clear expectations and accountability measures for F/S, athletics, club sports, marching band and any other relevant student group.

¹ <http://www.stophazing.org/research/consortium-project/>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Additional Resources section contains the documents that provided context for the external review.