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FRAMING THE DIALOGUE: A NEW, COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO THE HAZING DILEMMA

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The University of Michigan's disciplinary process requires bringing charges against individual students. An unexpected situation of nine simultaneous hazing cases during the 2004 fall term magnified the challenge of identifying responsible individuals in such cases. While the institution could have charged the leaders of the fraternities or sororities involved, instead it created and implemented the Community Education and Development Model to change the ingrained behavior and culture of the organizations. The focus was on enlivening the community-building potential of fraternities and sororities. What follows is a discussion of the intervention and subsequent assessment, which illustrates potential challenges and opportunities with this approach.

During the 2004 fall term, nine different fraternities and sororities were identified by members of the campus community as having engaged in hazing. The staff in the Office of Student Conflict Resolution (OSCR) confronted serious barriers to their work when they tried to address this dilemma. Despite evidence of hazing, OSCR's policies required either a victim of hazing to come forward or an individual to confess in order to bring charges and adjudicate the matters, neither of which occurred in these cases. Because OSCR held no jurisdiction over group behavior, OSCR staff explored other strategies to find the facts of the various situations. One option was to separate the groups into individual students in order to determine individual responsibility. While the logistics of distributing over 250 interviews across four staff members would have been overwhelming enough, this was the least of the actual concerns. No particular entity on campus (whether OSCR, or the Office of Greek Life with even less staff, or the student-led Greek Activities Review Panel) were situated to handle this kind of influx. The more pressing concern was how to act quickly, efficiently, and educationally to address community behavior. OSCR staff recognized that they needed creative strategies that remained true to the principles of rights and responsibilities, despite the absence of readily available tools for jurisdiction.

The History of Conduct Codes at the University of Michigan

The University of Michigan's (UM) use of behavioral codes has a unique history among institutions of higher education. While many UM students ascribe to the myth that the institution was code-free until the early 1990s, in reality a variety of behavioral codes has existed on campus since the early 1900s. At all times since then, there has been a mechanism for governing the non-academic behavior of students; however, with the incremental move away from an *in loco parentis* philosophy, UM's behavioral guidelines became less apparent and transparent on campus. Numerous code statements were proposed in the 1980s, resulting in a robust "no code" student movement on campus. UM gained national attention in 1988 when a "hate speech" policy approved by the University of Michigan Board of Regents was deemed unconstitutional by the United States District Court [*Doe v. University of Michigan*, 721 F. Supp. 852 (E.D. Mich. 1989)]. An interim discrimination policy was later put into place in late 1989 (Kawas, 1997).

In 1992, a Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities was implemented on campus, but functioned for only three years before students successfully advocated to the Regents that this statement was too legalistic and punitive in nature, advocating for a more educational tone to this statement. In response, the Regents charged the UM Vice President for Student Affairs to develop an explicit behavioral code that was less legalistic. In partnership with a team of students and staff, the Vice President obtained input from over 1,000 students, faculty, and staff through several channels including town hall meetings. This effort resulted in the largely student-authored Code of Student Conduct (the Code) that defined the expectations of the student community and was grounded in core institutional values. The Code created a complainant-driven process, attending to appropriate due process, while, at the same time, underscoring an educational rather than punitive philosophy. Emerging out of a cautious, student "no code" climate, the resulting document delimited its purview to individual students and specifically excluded group behavior from its oversight. The Regents ratified the Code and requested a comprehensive review after three years.

In 1998, a self-study, University-wide review, student government review, and external review of the Code and the administrating unit, the OSCR, were conducted and presented to the Regents. Based on these findings, the Regents voted to institutionalize the Code. The Regents created a mechanism for amendments to be recommended by students, faculty, and administrators. They empowered the faculty senate committee advisory to Student Affairs to gather and make recommendations to the President for any amendments to the Code. The committee, wishing to respect the student-driven nature of this instrument and to ensure that it remained alive and relevant to students, created a timeline to review amendments to the Code every other year. Over time, students advocated for the name to be changed to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities (the Statement). The most recent review was completed in 2007. At no time has group jurisdiction been suggested as an amendment; in fact there is considerable resistance in the campus community (particularly among faculty and students) to broadening the scope of the Statement beyond individual accountability. OSCR staff took the educational charge seriously, utilizing the Statement as a tool to engender ethical and moral development and to leverage teachable moments regarding the values and behaviors associated with being a fully contributing citizen of an academic community.

Additional Tools of Accountability

While a comprehensive behavioral code that currently applies to all students has a somewhat recent history on campus, members of various communities within the institution have relied upon similar but self-defined standards. Athletics, the residence halls, and fraternities and sororities have long-established codes of behavior to which members ascribe upon admittance to these communities, and which have varied accountability mechanisms.

Unless a student belonged to one or more of the established groups with defined behavioral expectations, such as those mentioned above, there was no direct method for establishing community guidelines and holding members accountable for behavior in the name of an organization. At the time of the exceptionally large number of hazing cases, the staff of the

Office of Student Activities and Leadership (SAL) provided organizational development support to the over 1,200 student organizations at the UM. SAL provided learning tools, training to group leaders, and an array of organizational supports, but did not hold any jurisdiction over groups. The student government had the role of "registering" organizations; registration involved satisfying minimal guidelines, such as demonstrating that at least five members belonged to the group, but did not provide for group behavioral accountability.

The fraternity and sorority system has a unique relationship with the University. Unlike some institutions where fraternities and sororities are directly integrated into campus life with houses on University property and direct institutional purview and jurisdiction, UM's relationship with fraternities and sororities is more indirect. Houses are situated within the immediate community, but not on University property, and are owned by individual house corporations. Individual fraternities and sororities choose to join one of four collective organizations for male, female, "Divine Nine," and multi-cultural Greek-affiliated groups from which they receive support and services (respectively, Interfraternity Council, Panhellenic Council, National Pan-Hellenic Council, and Multicultural Greek Council). Fraternities and sororities belonging to these councils ascribe to a set of rules provided by the specific council. In turn, the fraternities and sororities provide financial support for a small professional staff dedicated to providing continuity in support (known throughout this article as the Office of Greek Life, or Greek Life). These staff members receive supervision, professional development, benefits, and physical space from the University through the Division of Student Affairs. UM interactions with fraternities and sororities demonstrate a form of influence that relies upon relationships rather than control by direct oversight. Some fraternities and sororities have stronger relationships with their inter/national organizations than others and, in turn, similarly variable relationships with the University.

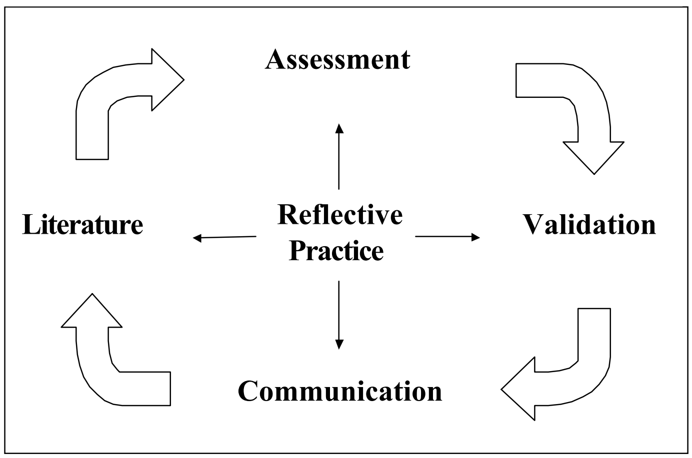
The Confluence of Learning and Managing Risks

As many other institutions have discovered over the years, student groups contribute measurably to defining the culture and climate of a campus. Student groups—especially at their present number—help to shape the on-campus community at UM. To take a *laissez-faire* approach to student groups would be to largely ignore one of the greatest opportunities to influence student learning beyond the classroom (Lowery, 2004).

Concurrently, mounting evidence from national and local developments showed that hazing incidents were becoming more prevalent (Gregory & Associates, 2003). Hazing, by definition, is a strategy for group initiation and socialization (Keating, et al, 2005). Consequently, tools of individual accountability such as the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibility could not be used to meet the campus need as the culture of group membership enables the avoidance of individualized responsibility. Many student affairs professionals became increasingly cognizant that they needed to take a more proactive role with student groups. Taken all together, UM needed to be much clearer about expectations, support, and accountability for and by groups. To that end, in 2004 SAL launched an effort to create a mechanism for "recognizing" student organizations. The concept was that each level of recognition would carry heightened levels of expectations for the student group and enhanced support from the institution. However, before this work was launched, several incidents of substantial hazing required creative intervention absent a mechanism for group jurisdiction. The focus of this article is to describe the pilot experiment intended to test a group-oriented intervention.

The Process and Guidance from the Literature
Utilizing the hazing situations as an opportunity to apply theory and research to inform practice, staff from OSCR, Greek Life, and SAL worked together following a Reflective Strategic Planning Process Model to address the situations. The model, depicted in Figure 1, is informed by the work of Strange and King (1990). It demonstrates an iterative process of becoming informed by the literature, engaging in assessment, validating the learning, and communicating the findings to inform the community at large. This process, in turn, informs future literature.

Figure 1. Reflective Strategic Planning Process



Following this reflective process required the team to be conscious of drawing from the appropriate literature, planning an intervention that was informed by theory and research, and ensuring that assessment mechanisms were in place to establish the efficacy of the intervention. Theory and research regarding students in general and fraternities and sororities in particular informed the approach. The team was also guided by the literature on professional good practice and sought to employ this knowledge in their approach to planning.

The principles guiding the planning approach were drawn chiefly from Blimling and Whitt's *Good Practice in Student Affairs* (1999), in which the authors outlined seven principles of good practice. Of those seven principles, the following were included in the planning:

- Engaging students in active learning;
- Helping students develop coherent values;
- Using systematic inquiry to improve performance;
- Forging educational partnerships that advance student learning;
- Creating inclusive communities; and
- Using principles to improve practice.

The theoretical grounding for the intervention derived from fundamental student development research. For example, Chickering and Reisser's (1993) work on the vectors and stages of psychosocial development were used, particularly because the participants in the intervention were largely underclass men and women in the early stages of their developmental journey. Among the most relevant vectors were Moving through Autonomy toward Interdependence and Developing Mature Interpersonal Relationships. This study was also mindful of Sanford's (1962) commonly used advice about the importance of balancing challenge and support. The need to build a healthy community was addressed utilizing Astin's (1984) concept of involvement that requires the combination of both physical and psychological energy.

Perhaps one of the most helpful frameworks guiding this approach was Schlossberg's (1989) conceptualization of marginality and mattering in building community. Schlossberg posited when students are in transition, they seek places where they matter and are less marginalized—they seek places where they "belong." She wrote, "mattering refers to our belief, whether right or wrong, that we matter to someone else" (p. 9). This theory helped explain why certain students might elect to participate in the fraternity or sorority experience and also linked well with Chickering and Reisser's (1993) vectors. This powerful urge to "belong" might potentially skew healthy communities by fostering a cloak of secrecy to protect community members from being held accountable for their behaviors. The Schlossberg model continues to be a compelling framework for considering the dynamics of the fraternity or sorority experience.

However, the theory and research literature that focused specifically on fraternity or sorority participation were somewhat minimal. A literature review by Danielson, Taylor, and Hartford (2001) examined the relationship between fraternity or sorority participation and alcohol use, which revealed that the research in this area fell largely within six key categories: drinking frequency, motivation/reasons to drink, predicting fraternal membership, culture of fraternities and sororities, perception biases, and consequences of drinking. After an extensive review of this literature they concluded that, "to be successful, intervention efforts must focus not only on individuals but also on organizational and institutional layers" (p. 451).

Findings from studies focusing on the culture of fraternities and sororities were particularly informative. For example, Kuh and Arnold's (1993) innovative ethnological study of the socialization of pledges revealed, "alcohol is a key element in a complicated system of rewards and sanctions used by Greek organizations to socialize newcomers" (p. 34).

Taken together, the literature helped clarify the work ahead. In short, staff members recognized that any intervention would need to address:

- Holding students accountable for their behavior;
- Garnering individual growth and development; and
- Identifying and addressing unhealthy patterns so that healthy communities could flourish.

The goal was to channel efforts toward the purposeful design of an educational intervention with intended learning outcomes that would not only impact the affected individuals, but the culture of the organizations to which they belonged.

Institutional Response

The purpose of the intervention was to craft lasting organizational change. Rather than focusing only on those issues that brought the organizations to the attention of the University, the intervention also sought to help all those involved reach an ideal. At the same time, the Division of Student Affairs aimed to build communities that were more interconnected with other university resources, as well as with their inter/national organizations. In this case, the goal was to build a strong network that would promote student learning and development at the center – goals that were already part of the mission of almost all fraternities and sororities. Through these goals, the intervention aimed to reducing high-risk behaviors, such as hazing and alcohol abuse, that can take hold in the absence of a centralized mission in fraternity or sorority life. Throughout, the role of students as authors or co-authors of the organization's existence was considered vital to the success of lasting change in these specific organizations.

To structure the implementation of this organizational change, the works of three particular authors were used. Astin's (1984) focus on involvement as the combination of physical and psychological energy guided the development of the intervention itself. In particular, students were asked to contribute a large amount of concentrated time in order to be invested in and to learn from an educational intervention. This process was designed to radiate beyond student leaders to include students throughout the groups. This radiating model of inclusion melded with Schlossberg's (1989) theories of "marginality and mattering" in building community. The concept of mattering argues that when students are in transition, they seek places where they matter and are less marginalized, where they belong. Coupled with this is the "belief, whether right or wrong, that we matter to someone else" (p. xx). Finally, Blimling and Whitt's (1999) *Good Practice in Student Affairs* articulated several elements of good practice that were adopted, including engaging students in active learning, helping students develop coherent values, using systematic inquiry to improve performance, forging educational partnerships that advance learning, creating inclusive communities, and using principles to improve practice. These principles of good practice aligned with most of the mission statements authored by the various inter/national organizations represented, which focused on justice, personal and intellectual growth, and integration into a longer-term community. The University mission (University of Michigan, 1992) stated similar aspirations:

> The mission of the University of Michigan is to serve the people of Michigan and the world through preeminence in creating, communicating, preserving and applying knowledge, art, and academic values, and in developing leaders and citizens who will challenge the present and enrich the future. (1 ¶)

This confluence of student affairs good practice statements, fraternity/sorority missions, and the University mission articulated the ideal to which this intervention sought to guide fraternities and sororities at Michigan.

Theory to Practice: Getting Started

Two approaches to the University's dilemma were launched simultaneously. One approach, to be briefly described later in this paper, was to create guidelines and expectations for student group recognition. The second approach, which is the primary focus of this paper, was to launch a Community Education and Development Model (CEDM) on an experimental basis. While group recognition was a proactive plan designed as a preventative measure to educate student groups about standards before any possible issues arose, the CEDM was designed as an intervention or reaction following negative situations, such as allegations of hazing.

The CEDM was designed at UM by Amber Garrison, then the Investigations Coordinator for the OSCR. The purpose was to locate teaching and learning within a broad coalition of stakeholders, including students, university staff members, local alumni, and inter/national fraternity/sorority leadership. This was a well-structured group focused on its founding mission and tied closely to well-trained leaders and surrounding communities. Its goal was to be a group focused on a set of core values and attentive to the needs of its members. The CEDM was in many ways an Individualized Educational Plan at an organizational level; the needs evident in behavior, as well as stated by stakeholders, shaped the content and direction of tasks for each organization's plan.

Meetings were held with each fraternity and sorority to discuss the reports of hazing and the behavior concerns that brought each to the attention of the University. Students were given two options. One option was to continue with what would be the standard practice, having an OSCR investigation of individual members (including the officers of each fraternity and sorority) and a subsequent judicial process as appropriate. The other option was to engage with the CEDM and focus on revitalizing the fraternity or sorority. All organizations involved chose the CEDM. The CEDM was not intended as a substitute for liability concerns, but rather an educational plan to change the organizations culture.

Each stakeholder had a clearly defined role. The role of the University was to facilitate the process used to create individual organizational plans. The University and the inter/national fraternity/sorority sought to coordinate resources as organizational needs were identified. The officers of the given fraternity or sorority were to attend each meeting and actively engage in developing the organization's plan. Local alumni who advised chapters were invited to attend each meeting and to develop plans to mentor members. Each week, meetings would take place with all stakeholders, including chapter members, officers, and advisors. Earlier meetings were focused on identifying goal areas where improvements could be made, while subsequent meetings were focused on providing education and identifying tasks that would complement goal areas.

At a typical first meeting, a strong focus was placed on creating a collaborative tone and an environment for honest conversations about the variety of causes of the current situation. The stakeholders would introduce themselves and the group would discuss each of their roles. Everyone would then take part in a group activity focused on eliciting individual reflections on the current state of the local chapter and the potential for the group. After the activity, the group would identify gaps between current state and potential.

As gaps were identified, a theme that emerged in almost every group highlighted students' lack of clarity of their organizational mission, values, and policies. The following gaps were identified across groups:

- Recruitment and retention;
- Community involvement;
- Membership and leadership development;
- Chapter development;

- Risk management; and
- Alumni involvement.

While each organization had its own self-sustaining culture, it often had little to do with organization mission and values. Each was grounded in a set of assumptions, beliefs, and behaviors that focused almost exclusively on a cycle of hazing, rather than a pattern of growth and healthy community development.

Throughout the CEDM, each gap area was a focus of one meeting. This allowed for assumptions and beliefs to be challenged through dialogue, with students actively engaging in exploring how assumptions came to be. Specific tasks were identified for completion for each goal area, both in the short and long term. The students created timelines, identified steps to complete specific tasks, and determined who should be involved in each task. These tasks included:

- Discussing their inter/national mission and values, as well as their basic operational directives, including risk management policies;
- Offering hazing and alcohol prevention and awareness programming for members and the fraternal community as a whole;
- Training an entire chapter in risk management;
- Developing non-hazing, group-building activities for fall 2005 new members with the help of alumni, the Office of Greek Life, and other leaders in the fraternal community;
- Holding informal focus groups for freshmen members and encouraging their feedback on their new member experience and comfort level;
- Identifying ways to retain senior members by providing a meaningful membership experience beyond the new member period;
- Creating avenues for participation in the leadership and activity of the chapter (i.e. committees, well-run chapter meetings);
- Specifying ways to be involved in the campus community;
- Identifying and securing a faculty advisor;
- Programming leadership development and officer training;
- Developing alumni involvement/mentoring programs;
- Recognizing members for academic involvement and community service each semester;
- Choosing new members based on interest in service and in the organization's values;
- Creating clearer bylaws with member standards and a member review process to prevent group harm from individual misbehavior; and
- Encouraging individuality by spotlighting the achievements of graduating seniors each year at a dinner for their families and friends.

Through these tasks, the goal was to align the local chapters more closely with their inter/national organizational missions and values, which would complement the expectations of students in the UM community.

Incorporation of Assessment

Remaining true to the Reflective Practice Process Model (Strange & King, 1990), the Division of Student Affairs designed an assessment strategy to correlate with all phases of the CEDM. Assessment was necessary to see how much, and in what ways, participating fraternities and sororities changed throughout the course of this program. There were substantial barriers to the measurement of change, such as the students' willingness to be honest, their investment in the change process, and the depth of the inter/national organizations' involvement in the intervention.

Since the CEDM was customized to each fraternity or sorority, a qualitative strategy was utilized to allow student voices to drive the analysis. In the initial design, three focus groups were planned. The first focus group sessions would be at the beginning (winter 2005), just as fraternities and sororities were starting to participate; the second set of focus group sessions would take place at the end of the program itself (fall 2005); and the third set of focus group sessions would take place at the beginning of the next semester (early winter 2006), allowing the possibility to see more medium-term effects of the intervention.

Each focus group session lasted one hour and included first year students, sophomores, or a combined group of juniors and seniors representing each fraternity or sorority. Each session was conducted by the same researcher from the Division of Student Affairs and included a scribe to make notes of the conversation. This research design created three focus groups for each fraternity and sorority at each assessment point, for a total of 12 focus groups each time (representing the four fraternities/sororities participating in the CEDM). The Institutional Review Board of the University of Michigan and the representatives of each fraternity and sorority, including their advisors and inter/national organization, approved this protocol.

The focus group questions for each fraternity or sorority member were as follows:

- What were student expectations of the fraternity/sorority before joining?
- What do they like most about fraternity/sorority experience?
- In what ways has the chapter discussed the ongoing work with OSCR?
- What chapter activities have been directly linked to the plan?
- In what ways has the chapter changed in the past year?

Many assessment challenges throughout this process provided important information about the organizational structure of these groups. Few juniors or seniors participated in focus groups; only one organization was able to convene such a group. This was reflective of the lack of junior and senior involvement in most fraternities and sororities at the University. Simply put, once they departed the house (where they lived during sophomore year), older members detached themselves from most business of the fraternity or sorority. A general level of disorganization on the part of most of these fraternities and sororities also hampered the focus group scheduling and attendance. This situation was complicated by the fact that some groups were closed by their inter/national organizations before participating in the intervention, with one group being closed during the intervention process. Finally, during the focus group meetings, chapter leaders would often dominate the conversation. This happened with less frequency with first-year groups, but with greater frequency with sophomore groups. This tendency to dominate conversation was especially notable when these students were markedly late for the group and made a "dramatic entrance" during the focus group time. This could have reflected some of the structural weaknesses in the leadership of these organizations; chapter leaders were not particularly accountable to their membership, yet they were capable of exercising substantial control over the culture of communication within their organization. Being able to examine the conversation before and after the entrance helped to understand the chapter dynamics in a way that the actual answers do not fully illustrate.

On the other hand, there were also structural supports for assessment inherent to these fraternities and sororities. The inter/national organization support for the assessment was generally strong, counter to what is reported in many studies of fraternities and sororities. The collaboration with the educational intervention effort from the beginning was essential to success, both in terms of the content of the assessment (removing the need to "retrofit" a preliminary assessment or instrument) and in terms of integrating the assessment as a necessary part of the educational plan in the eyes of the students. This was true of interactions both with the OSCR and Greek Life.

Results from Assessment

The results from the assessment revealed several key issues had a substantial impact on the educational value of the organizations and their foundation for success as lasting groups. These were issues of organizational structure, characteristics of members, usage of support systems, self-perception of individuals in relation to the larger fraternity or sorority, and the incorporation of a perpetual hazing system that went beyond pledgeship.

Organizational Structure. The organizational structure of all fraternities and sororities at UM can be described in one-year phases. In the first year new students become *pledges* and are selected and led through a series of activities (both educational and hazing) in their quest for membership. During the sophomore year, members become *officers*. Many of these officers are actually tapped by the previous class during their pledgeship, with only nominal elections by the whole fraternity or sorority ratifying this result. The sophomore year is also the year that members spend in residence, living in the fraternity or sorority house. The junior year for many is largely an *absent* year, with many members choosing to participate in study abroad, internships, or other activities. For many juniors remaining on campus, it is also the first year of coursework in the academic major as they get their bearings in their professional schools. The senior year is a year for *detached membership*, with most interaction with the fraternity or sorority being in the form of party attendance or other visits in which younger members entertain them. The fact that these four separate cultures operate as part of one common organization creates and encourages fissures in the common culture.

Member Characteristics. Members of these fraternities and sororities believed that they came from diverse backgrounds. When pressed on what made them diverse, members pointed to their majors and their geographic backgrounds, being inclusive of "someone from Michigan and someone from California and someone from Chicago (a refrain heard frequently). " In reality, an examination of their records indicated that most fraternities and sororities at UM drew from a specific zip code, high school, or summer camp experience before attending the University. Rather than being diverse, members were actually replicating their home neighborhoods while at UM. While they had learned to speak a language of diversity at the University (and state "diversity of membership" as one of the things they liked best about their fraternity or sorority experience), the reality was that they created self-segregated organizations at UM that buffered the diversity offered by the rest of the campus.

Support Systems. Throughout the focus group sessions, fraternity and sorority members expressed little connection with their inter/national organizations. They might send one member to an inter/national event with required attendance, but there was no guarantee that this person would implement sponsored programs when he or she returned to campus. The fraternity or sorority members also reported little alumni or faculty advisor presence in the regular operations of their groups. If these elements were in place, they could ease the difficulty of membership transitions in an organization where membership effectively exists in an active way in student lives for only two years. Without these elements, there was little organizational memory or knowledge transfer. Instead, it was assumed that what one sees once as a new member is the "tradition" of the fraternity or sorority. As an example, students expressed surprise at hearing from friends at other universities that juniors and seniors lived in the houses and participated in activities. They could not understand what they perceived to be a violation of "tradition" by these campuses (even though they themselves were the outliers).

Self-Perception. The challenges created by the organizational structure caused problems in self-perception among the members. It would seem that removing two classes from the fraternity or sorority and having only first year and sophomore students would not reduce the self-perceived age by much. By contrast, the outcomes of discussion often revealed how young the members considered themselves to be. The following student self-descriptions describe individuals who were little removed from high school, and who had not yet fully embraced university life or a more mature set of adult responsibilities:

- "We're here to help kids blow off steam."
- "Our grade is cleaning up after last year's kids."
- "We're creating a smaller group in the university."
- "We need a chance to learn the lesson."

This last comment was a frequent refrain – a desire to have a "second chance" to correct what students perceived to be a one-time problem. This was one of the ways a lack of organizational memory was harmful. At the same time, students perceived all activities to be "traditions," but all violations to be "one time mistakes." In the extreme cases, students were avoiding responsibility for actions by not having multiple years of students together, not interacting with the inter/national organizations at a high level, and not studying the history of their own organizations. This was one example of the harm caused by a lack of organizational memory.

Perpetual Hazing. One of the detrimental outgrowths of this organizational structure, the lack of engagement with support systems, and the memberships' self-perception was a state of perpetual hazing. While it was easy to infer that others haze pledges, sophomores were also enduring hazing even while serving as fraternity or sorority officers. The seniors and few juniors who returned to engage with the group issued their own demands and expectations on these officers. Effectively, this created a culture that was not one multi-aged group. Instead, it was four groups who competed against each other (with a hierarchy very similar to class year) under the umbrella of one group name.

Where Are They Now?

It is instructive to look at the specific fraternity and sorority chapters that were scheduled to start the CEDM (although only two fraternities and two sororities actually participated in the assessment). Their paths were illustrative of the foundations they had in place before trouble arose and the CEDM process began.

Fraternity Chapter 1 (CEDM participant). This chapter is no longer in the IFC, having been removed by the student membership after multiple, continued issues of hazing, social policy violations, and terms of previous IFC suspension. This fraternity continues to operate on campus without university support, but with the support of its inter/national fraternity. The inter/national fraternity declares this action by the University and by the peer fraternities to be "unconstitutional."

Fraternity Chapter 2 (CEDM participant). Greek Life characterizes this chapter as generally a success. It is still operating with the action plan devised through the CEDM, and the only activity not satisfied in the plan is a retreat with alumni leaders. However, all parties agree that this is because the organization of alumni is in disarray, and that the students have made a good faith effort to complete all elements of the plan. The students are in conversation with their inter/national fraternity about this aspect of their plan, and the inter/national fraternity is also trying to reorganize the housing corporation (the group that owns and manages the physical property), although the alumni situation complicates this goal.

Fraternity Chapter 3. This chapter is characterized by Greek Life as doing better, although it continues to operate under suspension from the IFC. It operates under supervision of an alumni probation committee, and must do all activities under alumni supervision. The IFC's primary complaint is that this chapter continues to hold parties with alcohol at a satellite house, in violation of its inter/national fraternity's alcohol free policy.

Fraternity Chapter 4. This chapter, still a colony with its inter/national fraternity at the time of the intervention, lost recognition of its inter/national fraternity. The new members of this colony petitioned the Fraternity to continue to operate under its name, and the Fraternity declined to grant this permission. This group operates under a different name (and has incorporated under this name with the financial and legal support of the members' parents). This group lives in another fraternity's former residence, funded by members' parents. They continue to socialize within the University's fraternity and sorority community. The fraternity whose house this group uses is ending the lease next year to renovate for its own return to campus, leaving this group with housing issues to address.

Sorority Chapter 1 (CEDM Participant). This chapter, which had minor issues originally, is doing well. It is well represented within the Panhellenic executive board. There is no awareness of any lingering problems.

Sorority Chapter 2 (CEDM Participant). This chapter was removed from campus in the winter of 2005 by its inter/national staff. After substantial issues with termination of activities, risk-related or not, the inter/national sorority may be ready to return to the University in the immediate future. However, this return will be under the condition that the underground groups that are acting in the name (or similar name) cease to exist.

The Future: Student Organizations and Recognition (SOAR)

This paper made reference to an effort launched by the Office of Student Activities and SAL to establish community guidelines for student organizations. Following a highly inclusive process that actively engaged students in problem-solving and decision-making (employing the Blimling and Whitt Principles of Good Practice, 1999), a model was created to not simply register, but to "recognize" student groups. A mechanism now exists, drawing on best practices nationally and sensitive to the unique culture of the institution, that places the responsibility of seeking a desired level of institutional recognition in the control of individual student organizations. As the level of recognition increases, so do the rights and responsibilities. The lowest level of recognition offers the least institutional support and requires the most modest accountability; and, indeed, some student groups may choose not to be recognized at all. However, for those seeking space, financial support, accounting assistance, and other benefits of recognition, the expectations are clearly delineated. Organizations not only need to demonstrate membership, but also need to abide by the Standards of Conduct (2006), which include but are not limited to:

1. The adoption of a mission consistent with the University's mission and the goals and objectives of the sponsoring unit;
2. Not fostering, promoting, or participating in activities that unreasonably threaten the safety or well-being of organization members, other people, or animals;
3. Compliance with the University of Michigan policy on hazing;
4. The proper use of funds (which preclude their use for political campaigning, lobbying, staff salaries, business activity, donations to non-UM charities, purchasing tobacco or alcohol, and any other illegal activity);
5. Not improperly discriminating in recruiting, membership, hiring, or group activities because of race, sex (includes gender identity and gender expression), color, religion, creed, national origin or ancestry, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, or Vietnam-era veteran status;
6. Compliance with the constitution submitted during the registration process;
7. Compliance with other University policies and all Federal, State, and local laws; and
8. Not intentionally interfering with other registered student organization or University units;

In effect, a model has now been put into place by students and for students. It holds groups accountable for their behavior and consequently is a valuable group-based complement to the individually oriented Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities. It can also be understood as an institutional tool that encourages the development and maintenance of healthy student community groups, following on the work of Boyer (1990) in advocating for the concept of community to pervade all aspects of campus life. This model is critically needed, as Kuh & Arnold (1993) indicated that organizational-level interventions such as this represent one of the primary ways to effect cultural change within an organization.

Conclusion

The work ahead for the University Of Michigan Division Of Student Affairs is daunting, but much clearer as a result of this experience. What came most to the fore as a result of this assessment was that the CEDM had potential for success with fraternities or sororities (or other student organizations) that were not in the final stages of decay. The level of unawareness of mission or purpose for some organizations proved to be an insurmountable obstacle. By contrast, those organizations with greater clarity about why they existed were more likely to benefit, and in fact prosper, from CEDM participation.

Bandura (1977) described social learning theory as not just an exchange of cause and effect, but rather as a continuous reciprocal interaction that creates learning. That is, rather than the exchange of one action and one consequence, it is the series of reactions to events that creates learning. When students are only actively engaged with an organization for 18-24 months (as is typical of participation in UM fraternities and sororities), this type of learning does not have an opportunity to become completely established. While administrators and the greater community react to a series of events, students are oriented toward reacting to a single event without understanding the history of interaction. The frequent absence of advisors from the central actions of the fraternity or sorority extends the problem, since no one is present to provide and transmit "institutional memory."

In addition to the content knowledge this study provided, it also demonstrated the viability of the Reflective Practice Process Model (Strange & King, 1990) as a planning tool. The approach to the work was systematic and informed, with consideration for the literature at the front end. The intervention was designed with the desired outcomes in mind and was intended primarily as an educational initiative. This approach would not be utilized if there were any immediate threats to the health, safety, and welfare of those involved. Finally, an assessment model provided for intentionally capturing the learning along the way. This approach models good practice to conducting student affairs work.

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