

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF SAFE INITIATION
ACTIVITIES AND TRAININGS OFFERED TO GREEK
LETTER ORGANIZATIONS AT LAND GRANT
UNIVERSITIES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
The Problem.....	4
Purpose.....	4
Research Questions to be Investigated	4
Limitations to the Study.....	5
Delimitations to the Study	5
Definitions of Terms	6
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	
History of Greek Life.....	8
History of Hazing.....	9
Psychological Theories	11
Sociological Theories.....	13
Prevention Strategies	17
Environmental Management Strategies	19
III. METHODOLOGY	
Research Sample.....	22
Instrumentation	23
Treatment of Data	24
Summary	25

IV. FINDINGS.....	26
Demographics	27
Educational Seminars.....	27
Pre-pledge Education	29
Pledge Education	29
Current Member Education.....	30
Executive Officer and Pledge Chair Education	31
Aggregate Survey Information	32
Chapter Advisor Education.....	33
Publication Material.....	35
Satisfaction	36
Resources	39
Number of Reported Hazing Incidents	42
V. CONCLUSION.....	44
Purpose.....	44
Methodology	45
Discussion	45
Educational Seminars.....	46
Material Information.....	49
Satisfaction.....	49
Resources	50
Recommendations for Further Research.....	51
Conclusion	52
REFERENCES	54
APPENDIXES	58
1 - Invited Sample Population.....	58
2 - Survey Instrument	60
3 - Emails to Participants	68

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1 – Demographic Information.....	1
2 – Pre-pledge Education.....	20
3 – Pledge Education	21
4 – Current Member Education.....	22
5 – Executive Officer and Pledge Chair Education	23
6 – Aggregate Survey Information	24
7 – Chapter Advisor Education	25
8 – Publication Materials for Students	26
9 – Participant Satisfaction with Educational Practices	27
10 – Resources Provided by Greek Life Offices	28

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For centuries, hazing has been a part of higher education either publicly or underground, but within the last 30 years hazing has become more violent and deadly. In 1970, a female sorority member died because of hazing activities at Eastern Illinois University, and thus marked the beginning of this violent time. Nuwer reported that from 1970 through 2003 there was at least one hazing related death (Nuwer, 2004, p. xxvi). Sweet (1999) commented that one literature review done by Nuwer's *Broken Pledges* in 1999 found "over 400 documented hazing incidents resulting in serious injury and death from 1900 to 1990" (p. 357). During the study conducted by Hoover (1999), of National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) sports teams, the researchers found that 79% of all athletes had been hazed. In the newest research study, preliminary results for Dr. Allen and Dr. Madden's *National Study of Student Hazing* have shown that 55% of college students who are involved with student organizations admit to being hazed. Hazing continues to be a problem on college campuses, even if university administrators are not aware of the problem (Allen & Madden, 2008).

Hazing practices have been illegal since the early Twentieth Century and according to the StopHazing.org website, 44 states have defined these activities as such

to help deter some of these practices (“State Anti-Hazing Laws”, 2005). Unfortunately, making hazing illegal alone has not solved the problem and is one reason hazing has been driven underground. Student affairs professionals have taken an expressed interest in hazing activities not only because of the physical and emotional damages that can occur with the activities, but also because of the legal duty that has been imposed upon them through court decisions (Hennessy & Huson, 1998).

Despite the increased legal ramifications and the educational programs student affairs professionals have given, hazing activities continue on college campuses. Hazing is hard to eliminate in part because of the long tradition and culture that now surrounds the events and activities wherein hazing occurs. Authors such as Nuwer (2004), and Arnold (2004) compared hazing to an addictive drug. Hansen (2004) quoted the President of Sigma Chi Fraternity, Mark Anderson, who said “Saying ‘Don’t Haze’ to some fraternity members is like saying ‘Don’t Smoke’ to a heavy smoker, it won’t work unless you replace what you’re taking away with something good” (p. 19). Currently, much of the efforts to eliminate hazing are built upon the education of leaders and new members about eradicating hazing and the illegality of the activities (Hansen, 2004). During the Hoover (1999) survey of NCAA sports teams, athletes, coaches, athletic directors, and deans were asked to identify the most effective prevention strategies. The final recommendation to prevent hazing from the study was to offer team-building initiation rites. Allen and Madden (2008) recommended that universities “generate strategies for building group unity and sense of accomplishment that do not involve hazing” (p. 39). To enhance efforts to reduce hazing, prevention plans need to become more comprehensive in their approach. Just as professional involvement with the

prevention of alcohol and other drugs has created comprehensive prevention plans; student affairs professionals involved with student leaders and organizations must do the same to more effectively address hazing. The alcohol and other drug professionals have adopted the Environmental Management Strategy from which hazing prevention plans could benefit. Environmental Management is “a broader approach to prevention that focuses on environmental change, to reduce both the appeal and availability of alcohol and other drugs” (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention, 2007, p. 7). One of the specific strategies suggested by the United States Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention (2007) is to “offer and promote social, recreational, extracurricular, and public service options that do not include alcohol and other drugs” (p. 7). By providing alternative environments for entertainment and socialization, environmental management strategies have changed the culture of alcohol with some students (Maney, Mortensen, Powell, Lozinska- Lee, Kennedy, & Moore, 2003)

Student organizations and leaders are searching for activities and ways to acculturate their new or potential members into their organizations (Bulter & Glennen, 1991; Hollmann, 2002). Without guidance and support from student affairs professionals, students will likely turn to their upperclassmen counterparts, who could potentially provide them with unsafe initiation activities (Butler & Glennen).

This study will look at the kinds and extent of education and training land-grant universities provide their students within their Greek Life areas concerning safe initiation

activities. Furthermore, the study seeks to identify the types of safe initiation activities employed at these institutions.

The Problem

As student affairs professionals focus on ways to prevent hazing, knowledge and application from alcohol and other drug prevention programs can be applied to create better and more comprehensive plans for preventing hazing activities. One key component that hazing prevention plans could benefit from further exploration and development is the substance-free programming portion of the Environment Management Strategies. Helping Greek chapters and their leaders identify acceptable and effective means to initiate new members into the organization will increase the effectiveness of the current anti-hazing strategies. This study will begin to identify such components that are currently being used by universities.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to record the extent to which training programs covered safe initiation activities for chapter members and executive officers provided by the Offices of Greek Life, and to explore the types of these activities and that these areas provide. By evaluating the current trends in educational programs regarding safe initiation activities, a benchmark was created for professionals to evaluate where their educational programs need to progress.

Research questions to be investigated

1. Determine current education practices for those students involved with predominantly White Greek chapters

- a. Determine the extent to which education is provided to potential new members.
 - b. Determine the extent to which education is provided to current members.
 - c. Determine the extent to which education is provided to executive officers, and pledge chairs
 - d. Determine the amount of education provided to chapter advisors
2. Determine the current resources and trends in types of safe initiation activities available for these Greek Life chapters.

Limitations of the study

The limitation to this study is the sample. With the delimitation of the sample to only 50 Land Grant Universities out of the over 3,000 universities nationwide, the information gathered in this study will not be automatically generalizable to the rest of the American higher education. However, the researcher chose this small sample size because of the exploratory nature of this study. No research focusing safe initiation activities provided by universities has been published in the past, and so this study was done in an effort to begin studying how these activities are incorporated into hazing prevention plans.

Delimitations of the study

This study has been delimited to the land grant universities of the United States excluding those that are classified as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (See Appendix 1 for a list of all participants invited to participate). This study is delimited to the land grant universities because this sample population provides a well-defined,

manageable sample size. Further, these universities are likely to have a sizeable number of fraternities and sororities on campus, as well as, an active Greek Life office.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities, National Pan-Hellenic Council and Multicultural Greek Council chapters have been excluded from this study because of the different dynamic these organizations have when initiating new members compared to predominantly White chapters. Many of the national organizations for the National Pan-Hellenic Council chapters have made a strong effort to reduce hazing by completely removing the pledge process. Also in some institutions the National Pan-Hellenic Council and Multicultural Greek Council are not advised through the Greek Life office. Because of these different dynamics and advising styles the researcher chose to exclude these groups from the study (Kimbrough, 2003; Parks, 2008).

Definitions of Terms

Safe Initiation Activities

Safe Initiation activities of Greek Life organizations for prospective members occur from the time an offer of membership is extended through the reception of full member status within the chapter. In order for these activities to qualify as safe initiation activities they must be acceptable to both student affairs professionals, and the court system. Initiation implies a shepherding process where the initiates are guided through a process of learning and understanding the cultural characteristics, group-relevant skills, and the hierarchical structure of the organization. Safe initiation activities should create both affiliative and affectional bonds, not only among the pledge class but also among the entire group.

Hazing

As defined by Allan and Madden (2008), “Hazing is any activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers them regardless of a person’s willingness to participate” (Allen & Madden, 2008, p. 14).

Pledge

A student that has been offered a bid of membership from a social organization but has not received full member status.

With a lengthy history of violence and emotional distress hazing remains a problem within today’s higher education. Previous and current attempts to eliminate hazing through education and policy have only been minimally successful, therefore a more comprehensive approach must be considered for prevention. The Environmental Management Strategies used by alcohol and other drug professionals contains ideas and strategies that student affairs professionals can borrow in the effort to eliminate hazing. This study began to explore the usage of safe initiation practices and trainings that cover this topic offered by Greek Life offices, which begin to make prevention efforts more comprehensive.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

History of Greek Life

Greek letter organizations began in the America at the College of William and Mary in 1776, with the founding of Phi Beta Kappa. Through this organization, the precedence was set for many of the traditions that are still alive in today's chapters, such as Greek letters to be used in names, secret symbols to identify members, and rituals to bond members of the organization. Many of these early organizations were created as debate societies and literary clubs as a need to escape the formalities of their current education. During the early to mid 1800's these debate societies and literary clubs began to become more social organizations, as universities began to focus more on general education instead of moral education, and especially as they began to offer housing for members (Whipple, 1998). Today, the North-American Interfraternity Council (NIC) has "71 member organizations with approximately 5,500 chapters located on 800+ campuses in the United States and Canada with approximately 350,000 undergraduate members" (North-American Interfraternity Council, 2005). As well the National Panhellenic Conference (PHC) boasts numbers of around 250,000 undergraduate members in almost 3,000 chapter on 650 campuses nationwide (National Panhellenic Conference, 2007). According to both NIC and PHC membership numbers are increasing annually, and so the Greek population will continue to have an impact on college campuses.

History of Hazing

University and governmental officials until the 1900's have had differing opinions on the appropriateness, and approval of hazing activities. Some supported the ideas and activities, while others condemned the very same acts. Plato has been noted to be the first ever to "comment on the savagery of young boys he observed" (Nuwer, 2004, p.XXV), in 387 B.C. By around 530 C.E., Justinian, the Byzantine emperor, "decreed that the hazing of first-year law students must be ended" (Nuwer, 2004, p.XXV). In the 1600's, hazing was a requirement for graduation from many of the schools in the European area, and was referred to as pennialism. Pennialism was a one-time event for freshmen, who were seen as 'unworthy' of being a student, became polished enough to be attend the university. By 1700, these pennialism requirements were eradicated from schools because of the serious injuries and deaths that were occurring (Finkel, 2004). Harvard College made two students pay fines for their participation in hazing activities, in 1657. In 1684 Harvard went so far as to expel a student for hazing. However, during the 1800's, another form of hazing known as fagging was accepted and promoted by universities. Fagging consisted of upperclassmen using lowerclassmen as servants, making them do meaningless, degrading tasks. Most of which were, in the beginning, harmless but again as time progressed these activities became violent. In 1900, the U.S. House of Representatives began an investigation of hazing incidents at the United States Military Academy. By 1928, the National Interfraternity Council (NIC) released an official condemnation of hazing. Hazing activities continued with few deaths until the death of female sorority member at Eastern Illinois University in 1970 marked the beginning of a violent and lethal era (Nuwer, 2004).

The number of hazing incidents has grown dramatically within the past 30 years. Between 1838 and 1969 there were only 35 deaths, however, from 1970 to 2001 when Hank Nuwer (2001) published *Wrongs of Passage* there were 210 deaths (Hollmann, 2002). According to the Hoover's (1999) study *Initiation Rites and Athletics for NCAA Sports Teams* out of more than 325,000 students surveyed over 79% of them experienced some form of hazing to join a college athletic team. Also 20% of the students said they were subjected to illegal or unacceptable forms of hazing, while only 20% of the students participated in only positive initiation.

Hazing not only occurs in Greek Letter organizations or athletic teams, it is also a part of marching bands, military schools and groups, spirit squads, student organizations, high schools, theatre groups, ski clubs, church groups, club sports, freshman camp, orientation groups, residence living units and other social and academic clubs (Allen & Madden, 2006; Hollmann, 2002; Owen, Burke, & Vichesky, 2008).

In a study conducted by Owen, Burke, and Vichesky (2008), 67% of the students that were involved with a student organization within the university studied reported being victimized by activities that could be defined as hazing. This study also reported that 46.5% of the students reported committing these hazing activities. In another study of undergraduate students Campo, Poulos, and Sipple (2005) found that 81.6% of the Greek students participated in at least one activity that researchers could define as hazing. Owen, Burke, and Vichesky also reported that 71.9% of the students had heard about but not directly experienced hazing. While this number may be inflated because of the storytelling by older members or the prevalence of communication on public websites

such as Facebook, 67.3% of the students reported witnessing hazing behaviors (Owen, Burke, & Vichesky, 2008)

In the largest and most comprehensive study to date Allen and Madden (2008) reported data collected from 11,482 students from 53 universities and colleges across the nation. Fifty-five percent of the students surveyed had experienced hazing activities. Of these 55%, 95% of them did not report these events to university officials. Allen and Madden report 69% of students were aware of hazing activities, but that students reported limited exposure to prevention efforts beyond the policies against hazing. The most commonly reported hazing activity was participating in drinking games, with 26% of the sample reporting this behavior. This was followed by hazing activities including: singing or chanting, associating with specific people and not others, and drinking large amounts of alcohol to the point of being sick. More of the students surveyed perceived positive outcomes rather than negative outcomes from hazing activities. Of the 4 positive outcomes listed at least 15% of the students cited these as outcomes. However, for the 16 negative outcomes, no more than 11% of the students cited them as negative outcomes. (Allan & Madden, 2008)

Both psychological and sociological theories have been used to help explain why hazing activities have persisted through the years. The psychological theories explain how students perceive the hazing activities within themselves, and how these activities can be defined as a positive. The sociological theories define how hazing activities affect the cohesiveness of a group, and the interactions between the members.

Psychological Theories

One of the psychological theories that is used to help identify the reasoning for hazing is the Symbolic Interactionist theory. This theory encompasses a set of premises that include “1) human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings they have for them, 2) the meaning of things arise out of the social interaction people have with each other, 3) people engage in interpretation in dealing with the things they encounter” (Sweet, 1999, p. 355). The Symbolic Interactionist theory is focused on the ability of a person to define themselves through the interactions they have with other people, and objects. People are not just a single type of person; the self can be made up of two components: social and material. The material self is that of tangible objects such as clothes, vehicles, and money. Greek organizations use symbols such as pledge pins, t-shirts, specific clothing lines, paddles, rings, and many other objects to reinforce the idea that the pledge is now a part of the organization and the organization is a part of them. The social aspect of oneself is the relations that person builds with people around them. Much of a person’s identity is defined by who they have social interactions with. Often times if a group succeeds in some way, the members of that group also receive an ego boost; therefore creating more of an identity with the organization that is beneficial. Greek organizations often limit the social interaction that pledges have with persons that are not from that specific organization, particularly during the pledging period. This again encourages the social bonds between the pledge and the other pledges, and other members of that organization (Sweet, 1999).

Another psychological theory offered to explain why students will endure hazing is Cooley’s Looking Glass Theory (as cited in Sweet, 1999). This theory describes the effect that others view point of oneself has an establishing impact on a person’s identity.

If an outsider thinks that you are a good person, you will think you are a good person. The opposite is true also, if they think you are a bad person, you will see yourself as a bad person. Students that endure hazing look for the approval from the older members and will do just about anything to get that approval. (Sweet, 1999)

Sweet (1999) observed that another very important aspect to hazing and the situations encompassed by hazing is the use of different words to define the situation that surrounds the events. The Thomas theorem (as cited in Sweet) stated “if people define situations as real, they are real in their consequences” (Sweet, p. 380). The members committing the hazing acts often do not define the activities as hazing so therefore the pledges do not believe it is hazing. Institutions can be as guilty of this also; for example, when institutions defines a tragic event, such as a serious injury or even a death, as an unfortunate accident instead of what it actually was, hazing. These skewed definitions of the activities that take place are just one more obstacle to overcome in the elimination of hazing.

Sociological Theories

A study performed by Keating, Promerantz, Pommer, Ritt, Miller, and McCormick (2005) that looked at several measures to help distinguish what positive support systems were brought to an organization through hazing activities. One of the variables for this study was the intensity or threat that the subjects endured through hazing activities. In other research done on humans and other primates the studies that shown that in times of hardship or threat people will form affectionate bonds with others that are enduring the same experience and even with those that are inflecting the threat. The authors concluded, “Therefore events that stimulate threat may be used to trigger the

psychological processes that connect individuals to groups and their leaders” (Keating, et al., 2005, p. 195). Keating, et al. used two forms of hazing: physical challenge or pain, and social deviance, embarrassment, or humiliation to induce the feeling of threat. They wanted to prove, through their research, that initiations and threat or hazing “support and maintain groups in at least three ways: by promoting group-relevant skills and attitudes, by reinforcing the group’s status hierarchy, and by stimulating cognitive, behavioral, affective forms of social dependency in group members” (Keating, et al., p.105)

The first way initiations and hazing were thought to support groups was with promoting group relevant skills and attitudes. Keating, Promerantz, Pommer, Ritt, Miller, and McCormick, (2005) compared athletic teams to Greek organizations and the level of physical rituals compared to that of deviant actions. The hazing of athletic teams tended to have much more of a physical nature to the rituals than did the Greek organizations. This is partially explained by the fact that athletic teams require much more physical strength and endurance, where Greek organizations are not necessarily physically challenging. The Greek organizations were more likely to have initiations with more deviant activities (Keating, et al.).

The second way initiations help support organizations is to reinforce the hierarchical structure of the group. Initiations provide an early opportunity for old members and leaders to establish dominance, and power over the pledges. Keating, Promerantz, Pommer, Ritt, Miller, and McCormick, (2005) found that initiations that included deviant actions help increase the social distance between the pledges and the leaders. And the more often these actions are required the greater the distance became between the two. However, when the initiations were of physical nature the social

distance between the leaders and pledges was actually diminished. This is thought to be because “rather than undermining group members’ sense of power, harsh treatment requiring initiates to prevail under physical and psychological duress actually seemed to empower them by diminishing perceptions of in-group power differentials” (Keating, et al., p. 123). The pledges felt they were on a more equal playing field because they had endured the punishment just as the people previous to them (Keating, et al.).

The third way initiations were reported to help support organizations was by stimulating cognitive behavior and effective forms of social dependency. Two theories that described how harsh environments created social dependency are the Maltreatment Effects and the Stockholm Syndrome. Keating, Promerantz, Pommer, Ritt, Miller, and McCormick, (2005) noted, “Maltreatment Effects describe the phenomenon whereby harsh conditions trigger goal-directed responses in organisms seeking refuge from duress” (p. 107). In times of duress an organism will reach out to a caregiver even if that caregiver is the very cause of the duress. These effects have been seen in other non-human species such as chickens, dogs, sheep and monkeys. In other words, an environment that offers both duress and support will likely produce the most benefit according to this theory. The Stockholm Syndrome was developed to define the affection that hostages during World War II developed for their captors. Even though a person is enduring much physical and emotional stress because of a particular person, they can and will develop affection for that person. Captives, after the war, went as far as searching for and marrying their captors (Keating, et al., 2005). As seen through these two theories, the harsh environment of hazing can create a psychological response in members.

To measure the social dependencies of participants the researchers measured the importance of the group to the individual. The results showed that harsh initiations were associated with the most importance to the individual. Close behind harsh initiations, fun activities done by members created feelings of importance. Social deviance showed no significant increase in importance of group to the individual. Thus providing some form of fun activities and a harsh environment can increase the social dependency of the initiates. Keating, Promerantz, Pommer, Ritt, Miller, and McCormick, (2005) also proved that men who experienced a discomfoting initiation conformed the most to group ideas. The greater the degree of harshness was for the initiates the more conformity they exhibited. These initiates also tended to report the people that were initiating them as more powerful and friendlier as compared to the initiates who received and innocuous initiation. Harsh initiation participants also reported having more fun during the exercises and than did the innocuous participants (Keating, et al.).

This research conducted by Keating, Promerantz, Pommer, Ritt, Miller, and McCormick, (2005) provides a very useful insight as to what effects initiations have on participants. With this knowledge, student affairs professionals can evaluate the importance of these rites of passage and adapt new initiation activities that can elicit the same responses as some of the more brutal activities. The importance of these rites of passage to the organizations must be considered when creating alternative forms of initiation. It must be recognized that even though the severity of initiation does not increase cohesion, the very aspect of a perceived threat during the activity does increase the attractiveness of a group. As noted initiations are used to create conformity and loyalty to the group and thus we as student affairs professionals must create ways to

generate this loyalty. Five elements are essential to creating this loyalty: domination, identification, commitment, integration, and alignment. All initiation activities should be judged against these five elements to make sure that they are generating the loyalty these student groups require.

Hollmann (2002) proposed questions that ask why has the severity of hazing increased within the last 20 to 30 years. Hollmann argued that professionals must look at the generation of students they are interacting with. Millennial students as a culture are becoming more extreme. With TV shows like Fear Factor, Amazing Race, and a plethora of extreme sports being created, students are getting more and more extreme in their behaviors. The case can be made that if this trend continues, these extreme behaviors may emerge in initiation activities, therefore, the elimination of hazing is becoming more pressing (Hollmann).

Prevention Strategies

During the Hoover (1999) survey of NCAA sports teams, athletes, coaches, athletic directors, and deans were asked to identify the most effective prevention strategies. The top three strategies were the same for all four groups, 1) Send a clear anti-hazing message, 2) Expect responsibility, integrity, and civility, and 3) offer team-building initiation rites. (Hoover, 1999, p. 21). Even though these were the top three most effective strategies only 25% of athletes knew there was clear staff expectation to monitor and report hazing incidents and only 36% of athletes knew that their institutions provided alternatives to hazing. The first recommendation offered by the study, a clear anti-hazing message, recommends a policy with a clear and concise definition of what hazing entails and the consequences for engaging in such activities was vital to begin

preventing hazing. Also as part of this clear message, education for all students involved with organizations, and a way to keep people accountable for their actions was important. The second recommendation, expect responsibility, integrity, and civility, is explains that people will often live up to higher standards if they are just challenged with them. Just as mentioned previously in Cooley's Looking Glass Theory, people define themselves by the way others define them. The study recommended that coaches should treat and expect their students to be responsible, have integrity, and act civil. The final recommendation to prevent hazing was to offer team-building initiation rites; these practices were included in the recommendation:

- Write a policy on the philosophy and goals of initiation rites in athletics
- Train coaches and athletes on the importance of initiation rites and the ways to conduct them.
- Integrate initiation philosophy and goals into team goal-setting and problem-solving.
- Develop community events for the entire athletic department
- Require organized initiation events for each team prior to each season
- Recognize athletes as leaders in academic, personal, business and community arenas.
- Rely on the Student Athletic Advisory Committee to promote acceptable initiation rites. (Hoover, 1999, p 21)

Another important part of eliminating hazing is changing the culture around initiations for student organizations. Nuwer (2004) identified five essential steps to bring about the cultural change. The first step is to notice the event. People have to

acknowledge that the event is occurring in their environment. The second step is to interpret the event as a problem. People may acknowledge that hazing occurs but if they do not believe that it is a problem change will never occur. The third step is for people to recognize that they have the ability and the responsibility to change the culture. The fourth step is to educate people about how to affect change in a society and give them the skills to face the problem of hazing. The fifth and final step is to get people to take action. If actions are not taken, the problem will linger and continue to haunt the culture. Since hazing has become such an epidemic and an addiction the only way it can be eliminated is to change the culture of all that participate in initiations.

Environmental Management Strategies

Allan and Madden (2008) recommended that universities design prevention plans that are more comprehensive than a one-time presentation. As part of this comprehensive plan universities need to: “Generate strategies for building group unity and sense of accomplishment that do not involve hazing, [and] align group membership behavior with the purpose and values espoused by their organizations and teams” (Allan & Madden, p. 39). To achieve this change in the culture of hazing, universities need to examine an idea taken from prevention programs for alcohol and other drugs (AOD) (Campo, Poulos, & Sipple, 2005). This idea is to manage the environment within which initiations take place. Environmental Management Strategies are “a broader approach to prevention that focuses on environmental change, to reduce both the appeal and availability of alcohol and other drugs” (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention, 2007, p. 7) If universities can focus on offering safe initiation activities that are more

appealing, effective and more easily available than hazing activities, then change can begin to positively impact these initiation environments. Of the five specific strategies for environmental management the first is to “offer and promote social, recreational, extracurricular, and public service options that do not include alcohol and other drugs” (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention, 2007, p. 7). Each of these broad areas of activities are options that can be offered to students as safe initiation activities. As these new activities are incorporated into the traditions of these Greek chapters, the culture will begin to be that of using these safe initiation activities.

One of the 22 programs that has been highlighted by the U.S. Department of Education is The LateNight Penn State (LNPS) program as part of the department’s Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Models on College Campus Grants. As part of the grant, the participants at the LateNight Penn State programs for two weeks were surveyed. The authors (Maney, Mortensen, Powell, Lozinska-Lee, Kennedy, & Moore, 2003) concluded, “Today, many institutions of higher education are considering the social economy of providing alcohol-free options as a means to off-set high-risk drinking practices” (p. 245). The study showed that the late night programming offered a positive alternative to drinking.

Approximately two-thirds (65.4%) of respondents believed that LNPS results in less alcohol use among attendees, More than half (51.7%) of respondents said that LNPS results in less alcohol use for them personally. Nearly all (85.4%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that LNPS programs were good examples of having fun without alcohol. (Maney, et al., 2003)

The research also found that students who regularly attended the programs were 20% less likely to party than those students you did not attend regularly. This study of one specific university's late night programming was able to find that these activities created "a safe and enjoyable environment in which to live and learn" (Maney, et al., 2002, p. 232).

Hazing itself has aspects that create both positive and negative effects on the participants. The violence and risk to health that can occur during some of these hazing rituals is not what should be occurring in today's society. The team building, group cohesion, loyalty, and self image created by some of the initiation practices are vital to students' success in college and life, and the positive effects that are desired.

Professionals in the student affairs field need to understand the reasoning, and purpose behind the initiation rituals and rites of passage for student groups. An understanding of these aspects will allow for the creation of more appropriate activities that foster the same responses as previous hazing activities.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

For this study, the researcher collected data about the extent to which trainings offered to the student leaders about hazing covered safe initiation alternatives, and on the various types of safe initiation activities being offered by the Greek Life offices. The researcher then used descriptive statistics to analyze and report the data collected through internet surveys.

Research sample

The sample population that was surveyed for this study is the most senior position within the Greek Life area at the Land Grant Universities created by the 1862 Morrill Act. (See Appendix 1 for invited schools.) The researcher selected land grant universities because this sample population provides a well defined, manageable sample size of universities that have a similar history, mission, and vision for students. The researcher chose this small sample size because of the exploratory nature of this study. No research focusing on universities providing safe initiation activities has been published in the past, and so this study was done in an effort to begin incorporating these activities into hazing prevention plans. Historically Black Colleges and Universities, National Pan-Hellenic, and Multicultural Greek Councils have been excluded from this study because of the different dynamics these types of organizations have regarding

hazing compared to those of a predominately White social organizations (Kimbrough, 2003; Parks, 2008).

Instrumentation

The survey instrument used for this study was developed by the researcher (See Appendix 2 for survey instrument). The online survey was hosted by Survey Monkey. Survey Monkey was chosen because of the availability of services. Online surveys were chosen because of the ease of delivery to participants and the ease for participants to access the survey. The online survey decreases the resources, such as stamps and envelopes, required for participants to return the survey to the researcher. Therefore, the survey was more likely to be completed and returned to the researcher. The survey consisted of three sections. The first section gathered the demographics of each university such as population sizes of undergraduates, and those involved with Greek Life, as well as the size of the staff within the Greek Life office. The second section of the survey consisted of educational programs that the offices offer to both students, and chapter advisors. The third and final section of the survey covered the resources that are provided for the chapters.

The information for which the questions were created came from the literature reviewed as well as the *Stop Hazing.org* website, and Cornell University's hazing prevention website (www.hazing.cornell.edu).

The survey instrument was sent to 2 professionals within the field of Greek Life for comments and evaluation. One of the professionals works directly within the Greek Life area, while the other professional is a Dean of Student Affairs. This survey was available from March 28, 2008 through April 11, 2008. An email to the participants (See

Appendix 3 for emails to participants) was sent to inform them that they were selected to receive the survey two days prior to sending the email that contained the link to the survey. Within the second email there was the consent information for participation in this study. A third email was sent to the participants on Friday April 11, 2008, that asked them to complete the survey before the end date or thanking them for already completing the survey. All email contact was done through the researcher's personal email.

Treatment of Data

The data collected was anonymous, no email addresses or other institutional information was linked to the survey responses, so that no answers to the questions can be linked back to a university. This confidentiality was maintained by the survey software.

Since the data collected for this survey was based on ordinal scale measurements, and for this study the researcher was only looking for trends, the results were subjected to descriptive statistics: mean, and standard deviations. The standard deviations for the mean scores show how close to a normal curve the data is. The closer the standard deviation is to 1 the closer the data is to a normal curve. The qualitative questions of this study were analyzed according to the comparative method described by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Lincoln and Guba described four techniques for analyzing qualitative data. The first of the four techniques was to compare the incidents of response in-order to place them into categories. Each incident was compared to all categories and placed into the appropriate category, if no appropriate category was present then a new category was created. The second technique was to look at the categories created, and to begin to combine the categories based on the rules used to group the incidents within the category.

This second technique was used to get rid of category overlap. The third technique was to analyze the categories based on relationships between each category. Categories were not the same but were related to each other and therefore could be combined. The final step of the constant comparative method was for the researcher to summarize the findings of the analysis. This includes direct quotes from the participants.

Summary

This study sought to further describe the availability of trainings that are provided to the student leaders about safe initiation activities and the current trends in such activities. The researcher chose a mixed method internet survey to collect data for this study. The quantitative data was then analyzed with descriptive statistics, and the qualitative data was analyzed according to the comparative method described by Lincoln and Guba (1985).

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to record the prevalence of training programs regarding safe initiation activities for chapter members and executives provided by Offices of Greek Life, and to explore the types of these activities that are offered by the Offices of Greek Life. For this study 50 electronic mail invitations were sent to the senior member of the Greek Life area at land grant universities across the nations. This chapter will describe the results of the survey. First will be the demographics about the participating universities and offices of Greek Life, followed by the description of the data about educational seminars for each of the levels of membership for students from pre-pledge to executive officer and pledge chair as well as that of the chapter advisors. Following that will be the data about materials available to students about safe initiation activities. The penultimate section will report the level of satisfaction that the participants have in their universities educational practices about safe initiation activities. The final section will cover the types of resources offered to students at these institutions for safe initiation activities will be described.

Of the 50 invitations sent 24 participants responded to at least one question in the survey for an overall response rate of 48%. Responses to each question were not mandatory; therefore response rates for each question may be lower. Three of participants only provided demographic information.

Demographics

Survey participants were asked to provide demographics about the university and Greek Life areas which they are employed. Twenty-four universities provided the researcher with demographic information. The mean reported undergraduate population for these institutions was 19,912 with a range for 9,454 to 40,000. The mean number of chapters that were on responding campuses was 30 chapters with a range from 3 to 71. The mean number of active members was 2,037 with a range from 120 to 6,400. Based on the data collected the mean chapter size was 62 members with a smallest average chapter size of 27 and a largest average chapter size of 119. Also based on the data, students that are involved with Greek life make up 10% of the student body. As these numbers show, land grant universities typically have an active Greek life system and thus the reason they were chosen for this study. The universities surveyed averaged two full-time staff members, two graduate assistants, and one part-time employee. The full time staff members ranged from 0 staff members to 8 full-time staff members. The graduate assistants ranged from 0 to 12, and the part-time employees ranged from 0 to 4 (see Table 1).

Educational Seminars

Each survey participant was asked to rank the extent as to which the four topics were covered during their educational seminars for each level of membership (pre-pledge, pledge, current member, executive officer and pledge chair). The four topics included: the university's policies against hazing, the state's laws regarding hazing, identifying hazing activities, and safe initiation activities. A four level Likert Scale was used to evaluate the extent, the participants choices were: great extent, some extent, small

Table 1

Demographic Information

Undergraduate		Number of Active
Population	Number of Chapters	Members
26,000	25	2,700
38,000	50	2,500
18,000	35	3,300
19,500	42	5,000
25,000	38	2,800
17,000	31	1,600
25,000	44	2,300
25,000	44	2,300
25,000	44	--
13,600	56	3,500
25,000	31	--
9,454	13	650
19,000	19	800
12,000	3	120
28,645	35	1,500
13,000	14	490
40,000	71	6,400
9,900	10	320
20,765	23	1,175

	17,000	30	2,873
	11,000	17	880
	11,000	25	2,010
	13,000	11	300
	16,036	20	1,300
Mean Score	19,912.50	30.46	2,037.18

extent, and not at all. For analysis purposes the scale was given numeric values of: 1- great extent, 2- some extent, 3- small extent, and 4- not at all.

Pre-pledge Education

In regards to the educational programs for students interested in joining fraternities or sororities of the 21 responses 76.2% of the universities provide seminars that address hazing to some extent. Therefore 24.8% of the universities surveyed do not offer seminars that address hazing to students. University policy is the most covered topic among for pre-pledge students with a mean score of 2.05. Defining hazing activities and state laws regarding hazing were next with mean scores of 2.2 and 2.65 respectively. Safe Initiation Activities were covered the least with a mean score of 3.1 or to only a small extent (see Table 2).

Pledge Education

Seventeen of the 19 respondents, which make up 89.5%, provide educational seminars that address hazing for students that are in the pledge process. The most covered topic for this group was identifying hazing activities followed by university least during educational seminars with a mean score of 2.65. State laws regarding policies,

state laws regarding hazing, and safe initiation activities with mean scores of 1.77, 1.82, 2.41, and 2.82 respectively (see Table 3).

Table 2

Pre-pledge Education

To what extent are these topics covered in your educational seminars for pre-pledge students?				
	The university's policy against hazing	The state's laws regarding hazing	Identifying hazing activities	Safe initiation activities
Number of Responses	20	20	20	20
Mean Score	2.05	2.65	2.2	3.1
Standard Deviation	0.94	1.09	1.10	0.79

The definition of hazing and what constitutes hazing is very important for pledges to understand, since they will possibly be exposed or asked to endure such behaviors. They need to know that hazing is not acceptable by the university and the state, and they should then remove themselves from the situation (see Table 3).

Current Member Education

For the current members of the Greek chapters, 84.2% of the 19 respondents provide educational seminars that address hazing for this group. As with previous

groups, safe initiation activities were reported to be covered with current members the hazing were covered to some extent with current members with a mean score of 2.35. University policies and defining hazing had the same mean scores of 1.94 (see Table 4).

Table 3

Pledge Education

To what extent are these topics covered in your educational seminars for pledge students?				
	The university's policy against hazing	The state's laws regarding hazing	Identifying hazing activities	Safe initiation activities
Number of Responses	17	17	17	17
Mean Score	1.82	2.41	1.77	2.82
Standard Deviation	0.64	0.87	0.66	0.88

Executive Officer and Pledge Chair Education

Of the 17 universities that responded to whether or not they provide educational seminars for executive officers and pledge chairs that addresses hazing, 23.5% responded they did not provided these seminars. The response rate for the series of questions asking to what extent each topic is covered decreased to 13 respondents in this section. The mean scores for all four topics have decreased again compared to the previous categories of membership. Within this category identifying hazing activities has the lowest mean

score with 1.46. Next is universities' policies with a means score of 1.54, then it is state laws regarding hazing with mean score of 1.77, and at highest mean score again was safe initiation activities with 2.33 (see Table 5).

Table 4

Current Member Education

To what extent are these topics covered in your educational seminars for current members?				
	The university's policy against hazing	The state's laws regarding hazing	Identifying hazing activities	Safe initiation activities
Number of Responses	17	17	17	16
Mean Score	1.94	2.35	1.94	2.63
Standard Deviation	0.82	0.996	0.83	1.02

Aggregate Student Education

The researcher combined the data for the level of coverage about each topic from all four categories of membership (pre-pledge, pledge, current member, and executive officer and pledge chairs) in order to analyze how much each topic was covered across the organizations. With these categories combined the total number of responses was equal to 49 for university policy, state law, and defining hazing; safe initiation activities

had 48 total responses. Defining hazing was the topic that was covered the most across categories with a mean score of 1.92 which was followed closely behind by discussion of university policy

Table 5

Executive Officer and Pledge Chair Education

To what extent are these topics covered in your educational seminars for executive officers and pledge chairs?				
	The university's policy against hazing	The state's laws regarding hazing	Identifying hazing activities	Safe initiation activities
Number of Responses	13	13	13	12
Mean Score	1.54	1.77	1.46	2.33
Standard Deviation	0.66	0.93	0.52	0.98

with a mean of 1.96. With a mean score of 2.31, state laws regarding hazing was next; and again safe initiation activities was covered the least with a mean score of 2.79 (see Table 6).

Chapter Advisors Education

Of the 17 respondents which provided answers to this section, 64.75% of the schools do not offer trainings for their chapter advisors addressing hazing. The response

rate for the question about the level of coverage for each topic dropped to only 12 responses because 5 of the respondents that answered they do not provide education to

Table 6
Aggregate Student Education

	The university's policy against hazing	The state's regarding laws	Identifying hazing activities	Safe initiation practices
Number of Responses	49	49	49	48
Mean Score	1.96	2.31	1.92	2.79
Standard Deviation	0.87	0.98	0.93	0.97

Chapter advisors did not respond. The topics that were covered also changed for this group they included: defining hazing, identifying hazing activities, safe initiation activities, and facilitating safe initiation activities. Identifying hazing activities was the most covered topic with a mean score of 2.67. Followed by defining hazing with a mean score of 2.75, then safe initiation activities with 3.08 and least covered were facilitating safe initiation activities with 3.18. Four participants responded how often educational seminars were conducted for chapter advisor. Three of the four participants said seminars were held once per year. The other university held seminars once a semester. (see Table 7)

Publication Material

Participants were asked to indicate all the ways they provide information about safe initiation activities to each level of membership. Websites were the most commonly used forms of media available to students with information about safe initiation activities. Websites had the highest number of uses for the pre-pledge and pledge categories. For pre-pledge students 61% of the 18 respondents provide a website, 44.4% provide brochures, 16.7% provide handbooks, 50% provide flyers or posters, 27.8% provide articles, and 22.2% of the universities provide no publications about safe initiation activities. For pledges, behind websites, brochures, handbooks, and flyers/posters were

Table 7

Chapter Advisor Education

To what extent have you chapter advisors been trained on issues covering?				
		Identifying	Safe	Facilitating
	Defining	hazing	initiation	safe
	Hazing	activities	activities	initiation
	activities			activities
Number of Responses	12	12	12	11
Mean Score	2.75	2.67	3.08	3.18
Standard Deviation	1.14	1.07	0.79	0.75

used by 40% of the universities. Articles about safe initiation activities were provided by 33.3%. Only 6.7% of the universities provided no publication material.

Publication material for current members was most commonly brochures with 66.7% of the universities providing this material. Websites were used by 53.3% of the universities; while handbooks, flyers/posters, and articles were only used by 33.3% of them.

Executive officers and pledge chairs received publication materials in the form of brochures with 75% of the universities providing information this way. Websites, handbooks, flyers/posters, and articles were used by 58.3%, 50%, 33.3%, and 33.3% respectively. The survey question asking for information on publications provided for chapter advisors had the least response with only 7 respondents. Of the 7 respondents 57.1% of the universities provided information through their websites. Brochures, handbooks, and articles were used by 28.6% of the universities, and flyers/ poster were used by 14.3%. Another 14.3% of these 7 respondents do not provide publication materials for chapter advisors.

Satisfaction

Participants were asked to rate their satisfaction of their university's effectiveness in educating students about safe initiation activities. The scale was satisfied, slightly satisfied, slightly unsatisfied, and unsatisfied. For analysis each of these was given a numerical number, 1 was satisfied and 4 was unsatisfied. The 15 respondents reported a mean score of 2.4, with only one respondent reporting they were satisfied with their education on safe initiation activities. (see Table 9)

Table 8

Publication Materials for Students

Answer Options	Pre-pledge		Pledge		Current Member		Executive Officer and Pledge Chair		Chapter Advisor	
	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
Websites	61.1%	11	53.3%	8	53.3%	8	58.3%	7	57.1%	4
Brochures	44.4%	8	40.0%	6	66.7%	10	75.0%	9	28.6%	2
Handbooks	16.7%	3	40.0%	6	33.3%	5	50.0%	6	28.6%	2
Flyers/Posters	50.0%	9	40.0%	6	33.3%	5	33.3%	4	14.3%	1
Articles	27.8%	5	33.3%	5	33.3%	5	33.3%	4	28.6%	2
No publication material	22.2%	4	6.7%	1	13.3%	2	0.0%	0	14.3%	1

Table 9

Participant Satisfaction with Educational Practices

How satisfied are you with the effectiveness of your university's current educational practices about safe initiation activities?

Number of Responses	15
Mean Score	2.4
Standard Deviation	0.83

Participants were asked to answer an open-ended question about how they would change their educational practices about safe initiation activities if they could. Two main themes were observed from the responses: Education and Programming. Five of the eleven participants would increase the education giving responses of:

“Multimedia presentations for all new members and yearly refreshers,”

“More education on women groups helping in the hazing of men groups,”

“Seminars where students can discuss the issues and learn how to confront their peers,”

“More educational activities to provide safe bonding and initiation exercises,”

“More hands on, face to face education.”

Four of the participants would provide more programming or activities if they were to change their educational practices. Participants offered these suggestions:

“Provide a variety of activities that would consist of workshops, retreats, speakers, simulations, etc.”

“We need to offer more programming to groups,”

“I would increase the programming to Greek and non-Greek students,”

“More outreach to various constituencies.”

One of the participants recommended increasing current efforts with this response: “More education, stricter laws, stricter university policy, [and] equal policy for ALL student orgs.” Another respondent offered this advice to help change: “Building a network of students who believe that hazing must end – and providing them with tools to effect change.” Other responses were to “Fully participate in National Hazing Prevention Week,” and “Send message that hazing activities are dysfunctionally functional.” There was a striking statement made by one of the participants, “Currently hazing is not an issue that we face on our campus,” hopefully this statement is true, and their university does not have hazing; not that it is hidden.

Resources

Participants were asked to identify types of resources or activities that their offices provide for Greek chapters. The first question provided a list of activities, while the second and third questions asked for them to give examples of their efforts to support safe initiation activities and specific activities chapters have used within the last academic year. From the first list the top two most commonly used safe initiation activities were leadership seminars with 69.2% of the 13 respondents, and community service projects with 61.5%. Refer to Table 10 for other safe initiation activities. (see Table 10)

The first of the open-ended responses asked participants to provide efforts that their office has that support safe initiation activities. There were 12 participants that responded to this question. The themes that came out of the responses included

Table 10

Resources Provided by Greek Life Office

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Provide access to a Challenge Course	46.2%	6
Leadership seminars	69.2%	9
Community service projects geared toward Greek Life	61.5%	8
Social gatherings in campus facilities	53.8%	7
National or Regional workshops or seminars	53.8%	7
New member workshops	53.8%	7
None of these	15.4%	2

participation in National Hazing Prevention Week, better education, and providing students with information and resources through the office.

Three participants discussed participating in National Hazing Prevention Week with these statements:

“[T]he Office of Greek Life works collaboratively with the Office of Student Organization Services, Campus Recreation, and various national organizations to sponsor programming for the National Hazing Prevention Week.”

“Coordination of National Hazing Prevention Week activities, messages, and programs for our campus (which includes: Office of Student Affairs, the department of Intercollegiate Athletics, the Interfraternity Council, the U of M

Marching Band, the department of Recreational Sports, the Army Reserve Officer Training Corp, Student Judicial Affairs and Legal Services.”

“Participate in NHPW [National Hazing Prevention Week].”

Five of the respondents made statements concerning educating students about safe initiation activities. Statements included:

“Education, during fraternity recruitment, education with [New Member] Educators.”

“We educate students on how to host effective and safe events.”

“We need to do a better job talking about the issues and educating our members of ways to better address the problem with their chapters.”

“We address issues through meeting with officers.”

“Education program.”

Five of the respondents also made statements about being a resource either for lists of activities or for providing the activities.

“The office is used as a resource for students to gain more knowledge in regard to safe initiation activities.”

“We have a safe initiation resource list that we review with all presidents once a semester during a regularly scheduled meeting. Additionally we point out various resources for help with hazing (e.g. hazingprevention.org).”

“Very limited; our office does not have a formal Greek advising program. Instead, we offer these workshops for all registered clubs and organizations.”

“We do provide the resources listed”

“The department works with the governing councils to provide the [activities listed].”

The 5 out of 12 responses in the theme of being a resource for students reveal the commitment these schools have towards safe initiation activities. They go beyond the typical education to provide the resources for the students. Other comments that were made by respondents included:

“Hazing policy is on all new member cards. They sign that they understood and accept.”

“Relationships with [Headquarters].”

The second open-ended response question asked participants to provide specific safe initiation activities that chapters had used within the past academic year. Some of the activities included: ropes courses, retreats for new members, and retreats for whole membership with either a university representative or a Headquarters representative, service projects, oratory competitions. Other responses included seminars, or speakers, oratory competitions, bowling brotherhood events, camping, and golf outings.

Number of Reported Hazing Incidents

The last question on the survey was how many incidents of hazing were reported during the 2006-2007 academic year. Fourteen participants responded to the question; a total of 29 hazing incidents were reported with a minimum number of 0, and a maximum of 6.

Even with the limited response rate for this survey the information that was provided seemed to be consistent across participants. University policies and defining hazing were the two most covered topics across the levels of members, and safe initiation

activities were consistently covered the least. While chapter advisors are designed to be a resource for student leaders based on this survey seem to be provided with the least amount of education. Students are receiving the information about safe initiation activities most commonly through websites, and brochures provided by the offices of Greek Life. Participants were between slightly satisfied and slightly unsatisfied as a group with their current educational practices about safe initiation activities, and through their responses to the open-ended question I believe they feel that safe initiation activities education and resource need to be increased.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to record the extent to which training programs covered hazing and safe initiation activities for chapter members and executives provided by Offices of Greek Life, and to explore the types of activities and that these areas provide. The research evaluated the extent to which topics about hazing, and hazing prevention were covered in educational seminars for categories of Greek students. The data for this study was collected through an internet based survey hosted by Survey Monkey. The objectives of the study were to:

1. Determine current education practices for those students involved with Greek Life
 - a. Determine the extent to which education is provided to potential new members
 - b. Determine the extent to which education is provided to current members.
 - c. Determine the extent to which education is provided to executive officers, and pledge chairs
 - d. Determine the amount of education provided to chapter advisors.

2. Determine the current resources and trends in types of safe initiation activities available for Greek Life Chapters.

Hazing itself has aspects that create both positive and negative effects on the participants. The negative effects from the physical and emotional violence are not what should be occurring. The team building, group cohesion, loyalty, and self image created during are vital to students' success in college and life. Professionals in the student affairs field need to understand the reasoning, and purpose behind the initiation rituals and rites of passage for student groups. An understanding of these aspects will allow for the creation of more appropriate activities that foster the same responses as previous hazing activities.

Methodology

The sample population that was surveyed for this study was the senior most position within the Greek Life area at the Land Grant Universities authorized by the 1862 Morrill Act. The survey consisted of three sections: demographics, educational programs, and resources that are provided for the chapters by the offices of Greek Life. Since the data collected for this survey was based on ordinal scale measurements, and for this study the researcher was only looking for trends, the result were subjected to descriptive statistics: mean, and standard deviations. The qualitative questions of this study were analyzed according to the comparative method described by Lincoln and Guba (1985).

Discussion

Current prevention programs are focused on creating policies against hazing and the education of students about such policies, while helping deter hazing these efforts

have not been successful in the elimination of hazing. There must be more that can be done to satisfy the desire of organizational leaders for ways to induct students into their organizations. Providing these safe initiation alternatives may not eliminate hazing in and of themselves but their inclusion in prevention programs have been noted by researchers such as Hoover (1999) and Allen and Madden (2008) as important aspects to a comprehensive prevention plan. As seen through this survey education and resources about safe initiation activities are included in some prevention programs but in a minor degree. Education about policies and laws are covered noticeable more than safe initiation activities.

Educational Seminars

Through all categories of student membership and with chapter advisors safe initiation practices as a topic was covered the least. These results indicate that safe initiation activities are being covered only to a small extent. As expected pre-pledge students did not receive as much information about safe initiation activities, and membership levels increased so did the amount of education about safe initiation activities.

For pre-pledge students the most important topics for them to understand are the university policies, defining hazing, and state laws regarding hazing, and this information is being covered at least to a small and mostly to some extent with mean scores of 2.05, 2.2 and 2.65. Pre-pledges need to know what hazing is and that it is against not only universities policies but that there can be criminal charges that accompany such actions. However, I would recommend that the earlier students can learn what universities expect

as behaviors, such as safe initiation activities, the more likely a change in the hazing culture will happen.

For pledges they need the same information as the pre-pledges, only more extensively, since they are now actually going through the process of joining a fraternity or sorority. This is happening as shown from the survey data by the three topics, defining hazing, university policies, and state laws regarding hazing, being covered noticeably more than they were with the pre-pledge category. Now that the students are in the pledge process they need specifics about what they should and should not be experiencing. Since there is a potential that some of these students in future years will be leading the recruitment and initiation process, I believe it is a good idea to start putting safe initiation activities into their thoughts even at this stage. So that when they are leading the organizations it is not a new topic for them to learn.

For the current members of Greek chapters, university policy and defining hazing were the most covered topics with mean scores of 1.941, which says that schools are covering them at least to some extent if not more. There is however a noticeable difference between the amounts of coverage for those 2 topics compared to that of safe initiation activities with a mean score of 2.65. Current members may not lead the recruitment and initiation efforts but they participate and have a voice within the organizations, and are potentially the next leaders. So I would recommend that it is at this level of involvement that students receive more than a small extent of information about safe initiation activities. If educational seminars about safe initiation activities can be given early in a members membership, before they have the chance to haze another student, there is a possibility of breaking the cycle of 'Well I was hazed so now I want to

haze others'. If they can be taught the value of safe initiation activities, and how they are more beneficial than hazing, the culture can change.

As with most information, executive officers and pledge chairs receive the most information, but again there is a meaningful difference between the amount of information about safe initiation activities and the other topics. Safe initiation activities are still only covered between a small extent and to some extent, while the other topics are covered between to some extent and a great extent. These are the students we should be covering safe initiation activities with to a great extent. They are the students that choose and decide what type of initiation their organization will go through for the year. By this time in their career they have heard about the university's policy against hazing, and the state laws that prohibit these actions, and they probably even know how hazing is defined. However as of yet these students have not been given the information about the alternatives to hazing. As with the students in the Hoover (1999) study only 36% of them knew about alternatives to hazing activities. As the President of Sigma Chi, Mark Anderson, said "Saying 'Don't Haze' to some fraternity members is like saying 'Don't Smoke' to a heavy smoker, it won't work unless you replace what you're taking away with something good" (Hansen, 2004, p. 19). These students have been told that hazing is wrong and against the law, but it may be all they know. So my recommendation is that at this level of membership, education and resources about safe initiation activities is vital to the implementation of such activities and therefore the elimination of hazing.

The mean score for the advisors of 3.08 was unexpected. Chapter advisors often can have much influence on the students within the chapter, and this person is receiving one of the least amounts of education. Chapter advisors are in place to provide chapters

with advice about ways to lead the organizations, and yet almost 65% of the universities that responded do not offer trainings to advisors that cover any part of hazing much less safe initiation activities. Chapter advisors trainings cover the topics in similar extent to a pre-pledge student, and meaningfully less than current members and executive officers and pledge chairs. The chapter advisor is likely to be one of the first people student leaders ask for advice of how to change the hazing culture. I believe that universities should be providing chapter advisors with the latest information about hazing, and safe initiation activities.

Material Information

With students becoming increasingly technological, websites have become the best method of communicating with them. As the results from this survey show, Greek Life areas are using this medium to pass on information about safe initiation activities. Brochures are used by a large percentage of universities for the current members and executive officers and pledge chairs. I would recommend Greek Life areas to explore the usage of websites more. While a high percentage use them currently, web sites are easily designed and maintained with the most current trends in safe initiation activities. As well as, today's students would rather find the information on the internet than to seek out an office to pick up a brochure.

Satisfaction

The survey respondents generally are slightly unsatisfied with the effectiveness of education about safe initiation activities. This is a positive sign. As long as educators realize and understand that hazing is still a problem and that something needs to change in the approach to eliminating it, there will be changes in prevention programs. When

asked what respondents would change about their educational practices, they responded with more education as well as, with increased programming. Four of the 15 respondents understand the message that Allen and Madden (2008), Hoover (1999), and Campo, Poulos, and Sipple (2005) present for the need of more activities and programming or safe initiation activities, and not just an increase in education. One respondent gave a good suggestion of “building a network of students who believe that hazing must end – and providing them with tools to effect change.” This suggestion will help change the cultures that it is not just the university trying to discourage hazing, students also are against hazing.

Resources

The resources that are provided by universities the most were leadership seminars, and community service projects, with both being offered by over 60% of the respondents. Of the 6 activities listed 5 items are being offered by at least 50% of the respondents. While this number is a positive sign, more universities should be offering these types of activities for organizations. As one respondent described, the university is offering these types of activities not just to the Greek life, but offers them to all organizations, there are not special programs just for Greek Life. Participation in National Hazing Prevention Week was listed by 3 respondents as part of their efforts to support safe initiation activities. National Hazing Prevention Week is a good resource for programming and education to help deter hazing. This program provides a nationwide campaign for schools to get behind and show they are serious about elimination hazing. Some of the respondents reported that their office is used as a place to find resources such as list of safe initiation activities, and the facilitation of these activities. This is what the literature

recommends for these offices to be, not just a source of educational seminars but a resources for a comprehensive approach. Education was the dominant effort for supporting safe initiation activities; it is a positive sign that there are universities that are looking beyond just education.

Attending ropes courses facilitated by professionals, and retreats were noticeably more used by chapters than other types of safe initiation activities. Both of these activities are good events, I would highly recommend the ropes courses because this is the intention and design of these facilities. The professionals that work at courses know how to stretch and challenge groups to bond and work as teams. Retreats also offer a great experience for students to get away from campus and focus on building relationships. I do recommend that if a chapter is doing a retreat especially off-campus, that a university official is in attendance, because of the possibility that hazing activities can happen while at most likely a remote setting. Oratory competitions, golf outing, and bowling events are creative ways that chapters can spend time building relationships and forming those affectional and affiliative bonds that are desired by the leadership.

The amount of reported hazing events in this small sample size of 14 respondents was striking for me. A total of 29 incidents reported, with one institution hazing 6 incidents. These numbers just add to those of other researchers to prove that hazing is a problem on campuses.

Recommendations for further research

As described earlier, this study was exploratory and so much more research is needed in the area of not only hazing but prevention through safe initiation activities. Researchers should further explore the extent to which education covers safe initiation

activities with a larger sample population. With this small population the data is not statistically significant, so a larger and broader sample would be beneficial. Researchers should explore when the best time would be to begin presenting safe initiation activities information to students in order to make these activities appropriate alternatives to hazing. More research should be conducted to compare the results of these Greek Life offices from land grant universities to those offices at other types of universities. Researchers should explore the outcomes of safe initiation activities compared to those found by hazing activities. A comprehensive list of safe initiation activities needs to be developed and shared throughout higher education. As part of this list each activity should be described by the outcomes that it can provide.

Conclusion

Even with the small sample size and limited response rate, this study was able to begin to show that even though safe initiation practices have been recommended for years, their inclusion into prevention strategies has been limited. I recommend to professionals involved with Greek organization that they seriously consider implementing more education, as well as implementing more resources for students to use involving safe initiation practices. At minimum universities need to improve the education provided to the executive officers and chair persons, and the Chapter Advisors. These two groups have the most impact on the prevention of hazing. The executive officers and pledge chairs make the decisions about that year's initiation rituals, and the Chapter Advisors may very well be the only non-student that is involved with the planning and execution of the initiation rituals. Chapter advisors can have the largest influence on the students, and yet these are the people that are given some of the least

education and resources about safe initiation activities. While there is much room for improvement in the area of hazing prevention, there have been noticeable steps towards incorporating safe initiation activities into hazing prevention programs.

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APPENDIX -1

Invited Sample Population

State	School
Alabama	Auburn University
Alaska	University of Alaska Anchorage
Arizona	University of Arizona
Arkansas	University of Arkansas-Fayetteville
California	University of California - Davis
Colorado	Colorado State University
Connecticut	University of Connecticut
Delaware	University of Delaware
Florida	University of Florida
Georgia	University of Georgia
Hawaii	University of Hawaii
Idaho	University of Idaho
Illinois	University of Illinois - Champagne
Indiana	Purdue University
Iowa	Iowa State University
Kansas	Kansas State University
Kentucky	University of Kentucky
Louisiana	Louisiana State University
Maine	University of Maine
Maryland	University of Maryland - College Park
Massachusetts	University of Massachusetts
Michigan	Michigan State University
Minnesota	University of Minnesota
Mississippi	Mississippi State University
Missouri	University of Missouri
Montana	Montana State University
Nebraska	University of Nebraska
Nevada	University of Nevada-Reno
New Hampshire	University of New Hampshire
New Jersey	Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
New Mexico	New Mexico State University
New York	Cornell University
North Carolina	North Carolina State University
North Dakota	North Dakota State University

Ohio	The Ohio State University
Oklahoma	Oklahoma State University
Oregon	Oregon State University
Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania State University
Rhode Island	University of Rhode Island
South Carolina	Clemson University
South Dakota	South Dakota State University
Tennessee	University of Tennessee
Texas	Texas A&M University
Utah	Utah State University
Vermont	University of Vermont
Virginia	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Washington	Washington State University
West Virginia	West Virginia University
Wisconsin	University of Wisconsin - Madison
Wyoming	University of Wyoming

Appendix 2

Safe Initiation Practices Survey

1. University Demographics

Safe initiation activities are those activities that occur from the time an offer of membership is extended to a pledge through their reception of full member status within the chapter and they must be acceptable to both student affairs professionals and the court system.

1. What is your institution's current undergraduate enrollment?

2. How many fraternity and sorority chapters are on your campus excluding NPHC and MGC groups?

3. What is the total number of Active Members within the fraternity and sorority chapters excluding NPHC and MGC groups?

4. How many staff members are there within the fraternity and sorority offices?

Full-Time

Graduate Assistant(s)

Part-Time

Safe Initiation Practices Survey

2. Current Educational Practices for Pre-Pledges

Safe initiation activities are those activities that occur from the time an offer of membership is extended to a pledge through their reception of full member status within the chapter and they must be acceptable to both student affairs professionals and the court system.

1. Does your university provide educational seminars which address hazing during the recruitment or rush process for students interested in joining a fraternity or sorority?

- Yes
 No

2. To what extent are these topics covered in your educational seminars for pre-pledge students?

	Great Extent	To Some Extent	A Small Extent	Not At All
The university's policy against hazing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The state's laws regarding hazing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying hazing activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safe initiation activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. What types of publication materials are designed and available from your office for pre-pledge students that cover safe initiation activities? (Check all that apply)

- Websites
 Brochures
 Handbooks
 Flyers/Posters
 Articles
 No publication material about safe initiation practices

4. OPTIONAL: If your university provides this information through a website please provide the address here.

Safe Initiation Practices Survey

3. Current Educational Practices for Pledges

Safe initiation activities are those activities that occur from the time an offer of membership is extended to a pledge through their reception of full member status within the chapter and they must be acceptable to both student affairs professionals and the court system.

1. Does your university provide educational seminars which address hazing during the pledge process for pledges?

- Yes
 No

2. To what extent are these topics covered in your educational seminars for pledge students?

	Great Extent	To Some Extent	A Small Extent	Not At All
The university's policy against hazing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The state's laws regarding hazing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying hazing activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safe initiation activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. What types of publication materials are designed and available from your office for pledge students that cover safe initiation activities? (Check all that apply)

- Websites
 Brochures
 Handbooks
 Flyers/Posters
 Articles
 No publication material about safe initiation practices

4. OPTIONAL: If your university provides this information through a website please provide the address here.

Safe Initiation Practices Survey

4. Current Educational Practices for Current Members

Safe initiation activities are those activities that occur from the time an offer of membership is extended to a pledge through their reception of full member status within the chapter and they must be acceptable to both student affairs professionals and the court system.

1. Does your university provide educational seminars which address hazing for current members?

- Yes
 No

2. To what extent are these topics covered in your educational seminars for current members?

	Great Extent	To Some Extent	A Small Extent	Not At All
The university's policy against hazing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The state's laws regarding hazing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying hazing activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safe initiation activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. What types of publication materials are designed and available from your office for current members that cover safe initiation activities? (Check all that apply)

- Websites
 Brochures
 Handbooks
 Flyers/Posters
 Articles
 No publication material about safe initiation practices

4. OPTIONAL: If your university provides this information through a website please provide the address here.

Safe Initiation Practices Survey

5. Current Educational Practices for Executive Officers and Pledge Chairs

Safe initiation activities are those activities that occur from the time an offer of membership is extended to a pledge through their reception of full member status within the chapter and they must be acceptable to both student affairs professionals and the court system.

1. Does your university provide educational seminars which address hazing for executive officers and pledge chairs?

- Yes
 No

2. To what extent are these topics covered in your educational seminars for current members?

	Great Extent	To Some Extent	A Small Extent	Not At All
The university's policy against hazing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The state's laws regarding hazing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying hazing activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safe initiation activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. What types of publication materials are designed and available from your office for executive officers and pledge chairs that cover safe initiation activities? (Check all that apply)

- Websites
 Brochures
 Handbooks
 Flyers/Posters
 Articles
 No publication material about safe initiation practices

4. OPTIONAL: If your university provides this information through a website please provide the address here.

Safe Initiation Practices Survey

6. Current Educational Practices for Chapter Advisors

1. Does your office provide educational seminars for chapter advisors which address hazing?

- Yes
 No

2. To what extent have you chapter advisors been trained on issues covering?

	Great Extent	To Some Extent	A Small Extent	Not At All
Defining Hazing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying hazing activities within chapters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safe initiation activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilitating safe initiation activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. How often are these educational seminars conducted which address hazing?

4. What types of publication materials are designed and available from your office for chapter advisors that cover safe initiation activities? (Check all that apply)

- Websites
 Brochures
 Handbooks
 Flyers/Posters
 Articles
 No publication material about safe initiation practices

5. OPTIONAL: If your university provides this information through a website please provide the address here.

Safe Initiation Practices Survey

7. Current Educational Practices

Safe initiation activities are those activities that occur from the time an offer of membership is extended to a pledge through their reception of full member status within the chapter and they must be acceptable to both student affairs professionals and the court system.

1. How satisfied are you with the effectiveness of your university's current educational practices about safe initiation activities?

- Satisfied
- Slightly Satisfied
- Slightly Unsatisfied
- Unsatisfied

2. If you were to change your educational practices about safe initiation activities, how would you change them?

Safe Initiation Practices Survey

8. Resources

1. Does your Department provide: (check all that apply)

- Provide access to a Challenge Course as a safe initiation activity
- Leadership seminars as a safe initiation activity
- Community service projects geared toward Greek Life as a safe initiation activity
- Social gatherings in campus facilities as a safe initiation activity
- National or Regional workshops or seminars as a safe initiation activity
- New member workshops as a safe initiation activity
- None of these

2. Please describe your office's efforts to support safe initiation activities in fraternities and sororities.

3. Please provide examples of safe initiation activities that fraternities and sororities have used within the last academic year.

4. How many hazing incidents were reported to your university during the 2006-2007 academic year involving fraternities and sororities excluding the NPHC and MGC groups?

Appendix 3

«GreetingLine»»

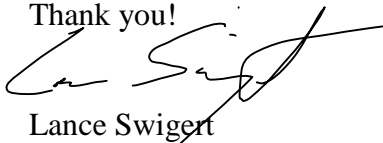
My name is Lance Swigert and I am a master's student at Oklahoma State University in the College Student Development Program. I am conducting a study for my master's thesis of safe initiation activities at the land grant universities across the United States.

The purpose of this study will be to explore the types of safe initiation activities and the prevalence of training programs regarding these activities. Safe initiation activities are those activities that occur from the time an offer of membership is extended to a pledge through their reception of full member status within the chapter and they must be acceptable to both student affairs professionals and the court system.

.....
You are invited to consider to voluntarily participate in this project. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to fill out an online survey of around 20 questions. Within a few days, you will receive an email with the link to the online survey.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at lance.swigert@okstate.edu, or (979) 219-4902 or my thesis advisor, Dr. John Wesley Lowery at john.lowery@okstate.edu or (405) 744-9798. If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact Dr. Sheila Kennison, IRB Chair, 219 Cordell North, Stillwater, OK 74078, 405-744-1676 or irb@okstate.edu.

Thank you!



Lance Swigert
Master's Degree Candidate
Oklahoma State University
(979) 219-4902
Lance.swigert@okstate.edu

«GreetingLine»

I am writing you this email to invite you in participating in this research study. The purpose of this research study is to explore the prevalence of training programs regarding safe initiation activities and the types of these activities that are currently being used by land grant universities. Safe initiation activities are those activities that occur from the time an offer of membership is extended to a pledge through their reception of full member status within the chapter and they must be acceptable to both student affairs professionals and the court system.

This survey consists of 22 questions divided into 3 sections. This first section is demographics about your institution. The second section covers your current educational practices on safe initiation activities. The third and final section asks about the safe initiation activities your university provides for the fraternity and sorority chapters excluding the National Pan-Hellenic Council and Multicultural Greek Council groups. The survey is expected to take you less than 10 minutes to complete.

There are no known risks associated with this project which are greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life. The benefits from participating in this research will be the advancement of knowledge about anti-hazing efforts across the United States, as well as the identification of safe initiation activities that are being offered by your colleagues across the nation. There will be no compensation received for completing this survey. Your participation in this survey is purely voluntary and if you so choose you can discontinue the research activity at any time.

No data will be collected that identifies you or your institution. No email addresses will be saved with the data or other contact information. Your participation in this research study will be anonymous. The data collected from this study will be maintained on the Survey Monkey website and the researcher's personal computer. The records of this study will be kept private. Any written results will discuss group findings and will not include information that will identify you or your institution. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers and individuals responsible for research oversight will have access to the records. This data will be stored for 3 years. There is no foreseeable risk in to your participation in this research

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at lance.swigert@okstate.edu, or (979) 219-4902 or my thesis advisor, Dr. John Wesley Lowery at john.lowery@okstate.edu or (405) 744-9798. If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact Dr. Sheila Kennison, IRB Chair, 219 Cordell North, Stillwater, OK 74078, 405-744-1676 or irb@okstate.edu.

Please follow this link to begin the survey. By clicking this link, you are consenting to participate in this survey freely and voluntarily. Please complete the survey by April 18, 2008.

[CLICK HERE](#)

Thank you very much for your participation in my research and all that you do to support fraternities and sororities on your campus.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lance Swigert', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Lance Swigert
Masters Degree Candidate
Oklahoma State University

«GreetingLine»

I am writing this email first to thank you if you have already completed my survey over safe initiation practices. Secondly, if you have not completed the survey, I encourage you to complete the survey today, as it will be ending this evening.

Please follow this link to the survey. By clicking this link, you are consenting to participate in this survey freely and voluntarily.

[CLICK HERE](#)

For questions concerning the survey itself or about the research in general please feel free to contact Lance Swigert by email (lance.swigert@okstate.edu) or by telephone 979-219-4902 or my thesis advisor John Lowery at (john.lowery@okstate.edu) or 405-744-9798. If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact Dr. Sheila Kennison, IRB Chair, 219 Cordell North, Stillwater, OK 74078, 405-744-1676 or irb@okstate.edu.

Thank you very much for your participation in my research and all that you do to support fraternities and sororities on your campus

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lance Swigert', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Lance Swigert
Masters Degree Candidate
Oklahoma State University
(979) 219-4902
lance.swigert@okstate.edu

VITA

Lance Patrick Swigert

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF SAFE INITIATION ACTIVITIES AND TRAININGS OFFERED TO GREEK LETTER ORGANIZATIONS AT LAND GRANT UNIVERSITIES

Major Field: Educational Leadership

Biographical:

Personal Data: Raised in College Station, Texas by parent Jim and Pat Swigert.

Education:

Graduated from A&M Consolidated High School in May of 2000, Went on to complete a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture Development and Animal Science from Texas A&M University , College Station, Texas in May of 2005. Completed the requirements for the Master of Science in Educational Leadership with an emphasis on College Student Development at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in December, July, 2008.

Experience:

As a graduate student employed by Oklahoma State University as a Graduate Assistant for the Student Union Activities Board from August 2005 to May 2008.

Professional Memberships:

Association of College Unions International
National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association

Name: Lance Patrick Swigert

Date of Degree: July, 2008

Institution: Oklahoma State University

Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF SAFE INITIATION ACTIVITIES
AND TRAININGS OFFERED TO GREEK LETTER
ORGANIZATIONS AT LAND GRANT UNIVERSITIES

Pages in Study: 71

Candidate for the Degree of Master of Science

Major Field: Educational Leadership

Scope and Method of Study:

The purpose was to record the extent to which training programs covered safe initiation activities for students and staff members provided by the Offices of Greek Life, and to explore the types of these activities and that these areas provide. The sample population was the senior most position within the Greek Life area at the Land Grant Universities. The quantitative data collected were subjected to descriptive statistics; the qualitative questions were analyzed according to the comparative method.

Findings and Conclusions:

This study was able to begin to show that even though safe initiation practices have been recommended for years, their inclusion into prevention strategies has been limited. It is recommend to professionals that they seriously consider implementing more education, as well as implementing more resources for students to use involving safe initiation practices. At minimum universities need to improve the education provided to the executive officers and chair persons, and the Chapter Advisors.

ADVISER'S APPROVAL: Dr. John Wesley Lowery
