

## Report of the Greek Fact-Finding Commission September 2006

On April 21, 2006, the Board of Trustees unanimously endorsed a proposal from President Bottoms for the creation of a Greek Fact-Finding Commission. The charge to the Commission was to “identify an impartial set of facts about DePauw’s Greek system in the context of the important functions it provides and the constituencies it serves. The objective is to gather the most reliable information possible in an integrated framework which articulates impacts across the University.” The Commission was not asked to make specific recommendations for action. The President indicated his intention to review the report, assess the “effectiveness of the Greek system in fulfilling its obligation to the University community as well as the effectiveness of the support DePauw provides to fraternities and sororities,” and ask the Chairman of the Board of Trustees to appoint a committee to carry the discussion forward.

The complete text of the President’s charge to the Commission, which was chaired by Lisa Hollander, Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations, may be found as **Appendix A**. Work began in the days immediately following the announcement of President Bottoms’ charge. An ambitious plan for how to tackle the fact-finding in a concentrated period of eight weeks was presented by the chair at the first Commission meeting on Wednesday, May 3. The plan called for the collection, compilation, and analysis of existing descriptive data; the design, administration, and analysis of nine surveys (current Greek students, current independent students, current parents of Greek students, current parents of independent students, faculty members, staff members, admitted students, Greek alumni, and independent alumni); interviews and gathering of information from key staff, student leaders, chapter advisors, house corporations, and national organizations; visits to six benchmark schools (Davidson, Denison, Lehigh, University of the South, Wabash, and Washington and Lee); and numerous meetings of the full Commission and meetings of small working groups within the Commission in order to review progress toward fulfilling the charge.

From the surveys of key constituencies we obtained both quantitative and qualitative data. The appendices include the tabulated results of all nine surveys and a description of the methodology used to administer the surveys. We also gathered quantitative and qualitative data from the benchmark schools, and the appendices also include a summary of the benchmark school data, in the form of a summary report, a dashboard of comparative facts about each school’s Greek system and the support provided by the institutions for those systems, and a comparative “best practices” chart. From DePauw and from the organizations supporting DePauw’s chapters, we gathered a comprehensive collection of descriptive data about the Greek system and the University’s support of it. Much of this descriptive data is also included in the appendices, and is referred to often throughout the report.

Tables 1-3, on the following pages, represent quick at-a-glance facts about DePauw’s 26 Greek chapters. The University has 11 National Interfraternity Council (NIC) chapters,

all with chapter houses (see Table 1). There are seven National Panhellenic Council (NPC) sororities, again each with a chapter house; these are described in Table 2. The National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) governs the six historically black fraternities and sororities with chapters at DePauw; none have houses, though most have meeting space allocated by the University. The National Association of Latino Fraternal Organizations (NALFO) governs our two Latina sorority chapters, which again do not have houses. The NPHC and NALFO chapters are described in Table 3; because membership in these chapters is relatively small (fewer than 10), we do not include aggregated grade point average data. All of the 18 chapter houses are privately owned.

*Important note: Throughout this report, we use the word “chapter” to refer to the fraternity or sorority organization, and the term “house” (or “chapter house”) to refer to the physical structure as a living space. We find that all constituents tend to use these terms imprecisely.*

Seventy-two percent of our student body belongs to Greek chapters. Table 4 shows the percentage of degree-seeking students belonging to Greek chapters over the last ten years. After some volatility in the mid- and late-1990s, and a decline in membership in 2000, the percentage of Greek students has remained remarkably steady.

Based on data from fall 2005 provided to us by the Student Affairs office, 82% of NIC fraternity members lived in chapter houses, and 67% of NPC sorority members lived in chapter houses. In all, 41% of the total student body lived in the 18 chapter houses described in Tables 1 and 2 during the 2005 fall semester.

	<b>Alpha Tau Omega</b>	<b>Beta Theta Pi</b>	<b>Delta Chi</b>	<b>Delta Tau Delta</b>	<b>Delta Upsilon</b>	<b>Phi Delta Theta</b>	<b>Phi Gamma Delta</b>	<b>Phi Kappa Psi</b>	<b>Sigma Alpha Epsilon</b>	<b>Sigma Chi</b>	<b>Sigma Nu</b>
<b>Address</b>	504 E. Seminary built - 1927	415 Anderson built - 1957	912 S. Locust built - 1928	1 Taylor Place built - 1928	626 E. Seminary built - 1929	446 Anderson built - 1920s	916 S. College built - 1965	110 E. Larabee built -1922, add. 1960	509 S. Locust built - 1922	311 S. Locust built - 1920s, add. - 1999	500 Anderson built - 1928
<b>Founded at DePauw</b>	1924	1845	1892	1882	1887	1868	1856	1865	1949	1859	1890
<b>Chapter</b>	Delta Rho	Delta	DePauw	Beta Beta	DePauw	Indiana Zeta	Lambda	Indiana Alpha	Indiana Delta	Xi	Beta Beta
<b>Description &amp; size of facility</b>	3-story brick 27 rooms	3-story brick 18 rooms	3-story brick 24 rooms	3-story brick 30 rooms	3-story brick Tudor 32 rooms	3-story brick 31 rooms	3-story brick 31 rooms	3-story limestone 22 rooms	3-story brick 26 rooms	3-story brick 21 rooms	3-story brick 18 rooms
<b>Sleeping dorms</b>	4	2	None-but at capacity would use at least 2	None	2	None	None	Some "suite style"	Lg. rooms have sep. sleeping rooms attached	3	None
<b>Total # of members Fall 05/Spring 06</b>	66/88	51/60	24/30	59/76	65/88	55/87	41/52	70/69	64/81	61/83	18/18
<b>Capacity/Occupancy/% Occupied Fall 2005</b>	62/61/98%	54/39/78%	48/20/42%	60/49/82%	65/55/85%	59/51/86%	65/32/49%	58/56/97%	53/52/98%	49/43/88%	36/13/36%
<b>Fall 05 GPA/Rank Spring 06 GPA/Rank All fraternity avgs. Fall 05 3.18 Spring 06 3.19</b>	3.16/7 3.13/8	3.02/11 3.08/9	3.05/9 2.87/11	3.03/10 2.99/10	3.34/2 3.26/3	3.25/3 3.14/7	3.41/1 3.43/1	3.13/8 3.18/5	3.17/6 3.17/6	3.19/5 3.24/4	3.19/4 3.27/2
<b># of reported judicial issues 04-05/05-06</b>	0/5	2/1	0/0	2/1	0/0	1/1	0/0	1/1	0/1	3/0	0/0
<b>Annual Room &amp; Board Fees &amp; Chapter Dues</b>	\$8,532	\$8,200	\$8,400	\$8,850	\$8,710	\$8,850	\$8,200	\$7,800	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$5,220 w/ no food charge
<b>Chapter Leadership Structure</b>	President, 15 member exec. board (beginning Fall '06)	President, 6 exec.officers, 6 other officers or chairmen	President, 6 exec.officers, 6 other officers or chairmen	President, 4 exec. officers, 12 officers or chairmen	President, 6 exec. members, 8 officers	President, 12 other officers	President, 4 exec. board officers, 7 officers or chairmen	President, 8 exec. board officers, 6 officers or chairmen	President, 11 exec. board officers	President, 9 exec. board officers, 10 officers or chairmen	President, 3 exec. board officers, 6 officers or chairmen
<b>Year of current president</b>	Junior	Sophomore	½ Junior, ½ Senior	Junior	½ Junior, ½ Senior	½ Soph., ½ Junior	½ Soph., ½ Junior	Junior	Senior	½ Soph., ½ Junior	Junior
<b>In addition to House Corporation Boards - Other Alumni or Advisory Boards</b>	Appointed frat. advisor (Fall '06), advisory bd has 3-4 mbrs	Adv. bd w/7 alumni + about 10 other involved alumni	Alumni bd of Trustees. 1 advisor + 5-6 involved alumni	Advisory bd, one advisor and 5-6 alumni members	Advisory board with 4-5 members	Advisory board with 3-4 members	Board of Chapter Advisers w/about 11 members	Advisory board with 3-4 members	Advisory board with 4-5 members	Advisory board with 6 mbrs incl. house corp. board	Advisory board with 2-3 members

Table 1. DePauw University Fraternities At a Glance.

	<b>Alpha Chi Omega</b>	<b>Alpha Phi</b>	<b>Delta Gamma</b>	<b>Delta Zeta</b>	<b>Kappa Alpha Theta</b>	<b>Kappa Kappa Gamma</b>	<b>Pi Beta Phi</b>
<b>Address</b>	403 E. Seminary	202 E. Hanna St.	801 S. Locust	201 E. Seminary St.	904 S. College St.	507 S. Locust St.	303 S. Locust St.
<b>Founded at DePauw</b>	1885	1887	1949	1909	1870	1875	1942
<b>Chapter</b>	Alpha Chapter	Gamma Chapter	Gamma Iota Chapter	Delta Chapter	Alpha Chapter	Iota Chapter	Indiana Epsilon Chapter
<b>Description and size of facility</b>	3-story brick	3-story brick	3-story brick	3-story brick built in 1921	3-story brick	3-story brick	3-story brick
<b>Sleeping dorms</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, some suite style	Yes	Yes
<b>Total #of members Fall 05/Spring 06</b>	96/133	108/147	81/114	47/57	94/129	107/146	106/145
<b>Capacity/Occupancy/% Occupied Fall 2005</b>	62/59/95%	63/57/91%	60/56/93%	72/37/51%	81/78/96%	66/68/103%	69/70/101%
<b>Fall 05 GPA/Rank Spring 06 GPA/Rank All sorority averages Fall 05 3.35 Spring 06 3.32</b>	3.45/1 3.44/2	3.41/3 3.47/1	3.31/6 3.21/6	3.32/5 3.15/7	3.41/2 3.27/5	3.35/4 3.37/3	3.29/7 3.28/4
<b># of reported judicial issues 04-05/05-06</b>	0 / 0	0 / 0	0 / 0	0 / 0	0 / 1	0 / 0	0 / 0
<b>Annual Room &amp; Board Fees &amp; Chapter Dues</b>	\$6,512	\$6,200	\$7,304	\$7,600	\$7,200	\$7,640	\$7,920
<b>Chapter Leadership Structure</b>	President, 10 vice presidents	President, 4 vice presidents, 15 directors	President, 8 vice presidents, 15 chairwomen	President, 3 vice presidents, 12 officers or chairwomen	President, 6 vice presidents, 9 chairwomen	President, 3 vice presidents, 15 officers	President, 8 vice presidents
<b>Other Alumni or Advisory Boards</b>	Advisory board with 9 alumnae members	Advisory board with 4 alumnae members	Advisory board with 6 alumnae members	Advisory board with 4 alumnae members	Advisory board with 8 alumnae members	Advisory board with 16 alumnae members	Advisory board with 7 alumnae members

**Table 2. DePauw University Sororities At a Glance.**

	Sororities					Fraternities		
	Alpha Kappa Alpha	Delta Sigma Theta	Gamma Phi Omega	Omega Phi Beta	Zeta Phi Beta	Alpha Phi Alpha	Kappa Alpha Psi	Phi Beta Sigma
<b>Council</b>	NPHC	NPHC	NALFO	NALFO	NPHC	NPHC	NPHC	NPHC
<b>Founded at DePauw</b>	1991	1992	1994, revived 2002	Spring 2006	2002	Spring 2005	1993	2004
<b>Chapter</b>	Pi Lambda Chapter	Chi Chapter	Gamma Chapter	DePauw Colony	Omicron Pi Chapter	Rho Tau Chapter	Xi Rho Chapter	Xi Sigma Chapter
<b>Multi-campus chapter?</b>	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
<b>DePauw Members Spring 2006</b>	8	4	3	4	3	1	5	1
<b># of reported judicial issues 04-05/05-06</b>	0 / 0	0 / 0	0 / 0	0 / 0	0 / 0	0 / 0	0 / 0	0 / 0
<b>Meeting/Social Space</b>	Bishop-Roberts Chapter Room (Spring & Fall '06)	Bishop-Roberts Chapter Room (Spring & Fall '06)	405 W. Jackson St. (Spring '06/ No mbrs. returning Fall '06)	None in Spring '06 (organized April '06/ 610 S. Jackson (Fall '06)	Bishop-Roberts Chapter Room (Spring & Fall '06)	Bishop-Roberts Chapter Room (Spring & Fall '06)	510 S. Jackson St. (Fall '06/None in Spring '06)	Coan Apts. (Fall '06/None in Spring '06—just returned to DPU)
<b>GPA and Rank</b>	Because of the small number of members per chapter, to protect individual student privacy, chapter GPA and rank are not released to the public.							

**Table 3. DePauw University NPHC and NALFO Chapters At a Glance.**

1996-1997	76%
1997-1998	73%
1998-1999	75%
1999-2000	71%
2000-2001	71%
2001-2002	71%
2002-2003	71%
2003-2004	71%
2004-2005	71%
2005-2006	72%

**Table 4. Percentage of Degree-Seeking Students Belonging to Greek Organizations.**

**OVERVIEW**

Obviously we are not the first group that has been asked to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of our Greek system. A report of past initiatives to strengthen the system is included as **Appendix O**. In our case, we were asked to assess the system in light of the University’s new strategic plan and its three objectives.

From the very beginning of our work, we were reminded of the extraordinary degree of polarization among varying constituencies about the value of the Greek system. This is a topic about which students, parents, alumni, faculty, and staff have strongly held opinions, and about which there is little consensus among constituents. We have read and discussed the more than 600 (!) single-spaced pages of comments from survey respondents and found few people whose views we would characterize as neutral. We suggest that the DePauw staff review this rich source of qualitative information carefully as the process moves forward over the next several months. In the meantime, suffice it to say that the polarization of opinion is a “fact” about which we must all be aware.

DePauw has a tradition of Greek life going back more than 150 years. Many people are proud of the legacy of life-long friendships, the development of leadership skills prized by our alumni, and the value of communal living experiences in chapter houses. These experiences remain important to our current students, as well.

The Greek system has been and remains the core of the DePauw social experience. We know from surveys of alumni and current students that the quality of that collegiate social experience is second only to the quality of the academic experience in importance.

For decades, Greek chapter houses have played an important role in the University’s commitment to residential liberal arts education. Today, they share a spot on the spectrum of living options available for our students, one that has been diversified considerably in the last ten years.

As a group, Greek students are performing well academically, and there is evidence that Greek chapters value strong academic performance. There appears to be a positive correlation between Greek membership and retention of Greek students at the University.

For the small subset of Greek students who are in positions of executive leadership in their chapters, the leadership experiences and honing of communication skills are frequently transformative, and pay dividends throughout their professional careers and personal lives.

Among Greek alumni, there is a positive correlation between that affiliation and alumni connections to the University. Greek alumni are more likely than independent alumni to come to reunions, to volunteer for service to DePauw, to send their children to DePauw, and to support the University financially.

However, today's DePauw Greek system faces several challenges.

Some—though not all—of the house corporations, which own our chapter houses, face significant financial challenges. The house corporations seek to run the houses in the black, despite high fixed costs and the need for resources with which to make ongoing and necessary improvements and regular repairs. Without resources the house corporations can't compete with other high-quality DePauw living spaces. Clearly there are also imbalances in housing supply and demand among fraternities and sororities.

Greek students drink more than independent students do, and alcohol use and abuse is centralized in the fraternities in an unhealthy and dangerous way. High-risk drinking at colleges is clearly a national problem, not exclusively a DePauw problem, and it is certainly not solely a Greek problem. But the fraternities are the hub of our campus social culture.

The affiliation process is not working well, particularly for women. Too many women want to join just a few chapters, and a significant number of independent women had hoped to join a sorority, but were not accepted at the chapter of their choice. Affiliation takes place during the academic (spring) semester, and is disruptive to teaching and learning on a campus in which the vast majority of students are in some way involved in the process.

Though Greek chapters and the University have numerous policies, procedures, standards, statements of principle, codes of conduct, and the like, student behavior that runs counter to these community standards occurs regularly at DePauw. When aware of policy violations, the University's and chapters' judicial processes take over, but virtually all of the constituencies we surveyed believe that these processes are ineffective at deterring policy violations. Inconsistent philosophy among stakeholders as to the purpose of judicial processes for groups confounds the situation.

Finally, resources to support Greek students and the Greek system—financial resources to make improvements to the houses, staff resources to support the Greek system and its

functions and activities, and dedicated programming resources—are clearly stretched to the limit and are failing to deliver the high-quality support we value. Programming resources for independent students also are not adequate currently.

## **SPECIFIC FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

The following sections of our report deal in some depth with the specific issues that the President’s charge asks us to address. The organization loosely parallels that of the charge.

### Housing

DePauw’s operative principle of residential life, the “Philosophical Statement of Residential Life,” (included as **Appendix B**) was adopted by the Board of Trustees in 1998:

DePauw University, through its residential living units, seeks to create a safe and challenging learning environment that supports and complements the DePauw academic experience. To that end, we strive to:

- Maintain high physical standards for residential living that are consistently applied to all DePauw University students wherever they may live;
- Assure that all residential living units (including fraternities and sororities) foster an environment that is supportive of academic excellence and social development;
- Promote programs and activities in all residential living units that encourage a strong sense of community among all students, faculty and staff;
- Develop alternative living options and create programs and services that allow for greater individual choice and autonomy with concomitant individual responsibility; and
- Create living environments that recognize human differences but advocate respect for and a tolerance and celebration of such differences.

In keeping with our residential living philosophy, the University provides a wide array of housing options to all of its students. In addition to the 18 fraternity and sorority houses approved by the University as student housing, students choose from among University-owned residence halls, duplexes, suites, apartments, and houses, many of which are new and attractive. Though we do not have precise information to show why some Greek students live in University-owned housing, we do know that a significant number do so by choice. For Greek women, lack of capacity within the houses is often the reason.

The student survey data show that Greek students generally have higher levels of satisfaction with housing conditions than do independent students. Greek men and women living in their chapter houses rate their overall living conditions favorably both in terms of importance and quality, as is shown in Table 5, below, which compares Greek and independent students’ perceptions of the importance and quality of their current living conditions. The full set of survey results appears in **Appendix S**. (To be precise, the perceptions of the Greek students include responses from those living in University properties. At the time this survey was administered (Spring 2006), two-thirds of the



Greek student respondents lived in chapter houses, and one-third lived in University properties. Two-thirds of the independent student respondents lived in residence halls, and one-third lived in apartments, duplexes, or houses.)

<b>Greek Students</b>		
	Importance % Very Important/Essential	Quality % Good/Excellent
General living conditions	83.2	86.0
Food quality	64.5	71.3
Support for academics	71.5	84.2
Social activities	74.0	92.2
Fire safety	39.0	87.3
Grounds maintenance	25.9	84.8
Sleeping arrangements	62.2	89.0
Hours of meal service	38.5	73.6
Cleanliness	72.1	82.3
Access to high-speed computing networks	67.6	82.2
Air conditioning	42.8	63.3
Security against intruders	67.8	71.3
Cost	53.7	69.0
<b>Independent Students</b>		
	Importance % Very Important/Essential	Quality % Good/Excellent
General living conditions	89.1	65.9
Food quality	69.0	42.1
Support for academics	90.2	61.1
Social activities	41.2	45.5
Fire safety	38.0	79.6
Grounds maintenance	31.8	69.4
Sleeping arrangements	80.1	83.0
Hours of meal service	48.2	72.3
Cleanliness	73.9	67.6
Access to high-speed computing networks	83.8	70.5
Air conditioning	61.2	64.2
Security against intruders	66.5	66.3
Cost	61.4	42.6

**Table 5. Students' Perceptions of Their Current Living Conditions.**

The University's array of attractive housing options does not sit well with the house corporation officers with whom we met. Mistrustful of the University's motives regarding the Greek system, these officers argue that attractive housing options for students challenge the abilities of most chapters to compete for tenants and reach maximum occupancy, one of their primary goals. They feel disenfranchised by what they

see as a history of the University-initiated housing changes that have “weakened the Greek system.”

The Student Affairs office provided us with Greek chapter house capacity/occupancy data for 2005-2006. For the fall 2005 semester, two sorority houses were at capacity or over capacity, two were at 95% occupancy or higher, two were between 90-94% occupancy, and one was at 51% occupancy. Among the 11 fraternity houses, three were 97% or 98% occupied, four were between 82-88% occupancy, one was at 78% occupancy, one was at 49% occupancy, one was at 42% occupancy, and one was at 36% occupancy. (See **Appendix J** for the complete data on fraternity and sorority capacities and occupancies for the academic year 2005-2006.)

These data are instructive, and suggest the possibility of imbalances in supply and demand. Some of the more than 200 upper-class sorority women who lived out of their chapter houses this past year did so because of lack of space. This, along with data suggesting that some number of independent women wished to join sororities, as well as the fact that we have a solid majority of female students (about 55%, entirely in keeping with national demographic trends), may indicate that there is enough pent-up demand to support an eighth NPC sorority with a chapter house. It is not, however, a simple matter to add a national chapter; we have been told that the NPC would be unwilling to agree to any such expansion because one of our sorority houses is currently significantly under capacity. Conversely, in the case of the fraternities, there may well be an oversupply of housing.

Despite the high degree of satisfaction reported in the student surveys, we found that the quality of the living conditions varies from chapter house to chapter house, particularly among the fraternities (not so much among the sororities). The variations in quality appear mainly to be a function of available resources, now just as in the past, which in turn is partly a function of membership levels and relatively high fixed costs, as well as the behavior of members and guests. The comments of parents of Greek students generally support this perception. Many parents express dismay over the living conditions of the fraternity houses, and question how the University could consider the houses adequately habitable. Some openly expressed dissatisfaction with the ratio of value to cost.

The venerable institution of the “cold dorm,” in which all the residents sleep, bunk-bed style, in a single room, is a prominent feature of our houses. At our benchmark schools cold dorms have been eliminated, with the exception of Wabash. Despite the fact that our students appear to adjust to sleeping in cold dorms (from the data we gathered), and seem quite satisfied with their sleeping arrangements, there is very little choice within chapter houses about sleeping arrangements. Single rooms are rare, and unless a chapter house is quite under-occupied, cold dorms are where the majority of Greek students living in chapter houses will sleep. From a safety perspective, only 8 of 18 houses have fire-prevention indoor sprinkling systems throughout the house; two houses have basement-only sprinkling systems.

In order to receive recognition from the University as approved living units, Greek chapter houses undergo an inspection at the end of each semester, and chapters are assessed against the University's "Standards for Living Units at DePauw University," which is included as **Appendix C**. Only common areas of the houses are inspected (parents' comments may in part reflect discomfort with the condition of their students' private spaces; further dissection of the data reveals that Greek men rate the cleanliness of their houses much lower than Greek women do). University staff doesn't inspect private living or sleeping quarters in Greek units, but does inspect similar spaces in University-owned residences. The University has never failed a Greek chapter house, although some have needed multiple inspections in order to pass. Passing chapter-house inspections is required as part of the Greek Standards Initiative (GSI), which is included in its entirety as **Appendix G**. The GSI, first implemented in fall 2005, is the product of more than a year's work by the Coalition for a Responsible Community, students, house corporations, national organizations, faculty, and the administration.

Just as there are differences in housing quality among the Greek houses, some of the house corporations are in better financial shape than others. We asked the house corporation presidents to complete a questionnaire (see **Appendix T**), and we collected other financial information about the house corporations from the public record to flesh out our perspective. All but three of our 18 house corporations carry some kind of debt in the form of mortgages or capital improvement loans. Most of that debt, which totals about \$5 million, was financed recently. All of the house corporations have significant fixed operational costs, and the fraternity house corporations must also carry expensive liability insurance. Even with nearly full occupancies among sororities and a couple of fraternities, keeping up with fixed costs and having resources for capital investments is clearly a challenge (this is much tougher for fraternities because the houses experience much more wear-and-tear during parties and daily life).

Since house corporations contract for operational services individually, they receive no economy-of-scale benefits; they must purchase food, hire a cook or cooks, contract for cleaning, maintenance, yard work, and more. House directors (the adult weekday live-in staff member employed by the house corporation) are paid fairly well. Annual room, board, and fees among DePauw's different fraternity and sorority chapters vary somewhat, as Tables 1 and 2 show, but fraternity rates are generally higher than University room and board rates, and sorority rates, on average, are fairly close to those of the University.

There are some University programs already in place that support house corporations directly, in an attempt to help with these financial challenges. One example is the interest-free loan program (under which house corporations may borrow up to \$200,000 for up to 15 years to finance improvements, with the ability to defer principal payments up to five years, and the waiving of interest if the house passes inspections.) Houses have access to the University's telephone system (13 houses participate in this currently), DePauw's computing network (although the house corporations reported that the implementation has been not entirely satisfactory), and billing services to collect room

and board charges from members (16 of the 18 houses take advantage of this service, for which DePauw charges nothing).

Given the financial challenges, it is difficult for sorority or fraternity houses to create living conditions that can compete effectively with the array of University-owned residence halls, duplexes, suites, apartments, and houses. As we toured the University-owned spaces along with Greek living units, we wondered what might happen under a true “free-market” housing system? Would more Greek members opt to live in the relative luxury, cleanliness, and privacy of University-owned housing, simply paying their chapters’ social fees? The house corporations clearly fear that such a shift in demand might prove the death knell for some chapters, since perceived viability as a chapter at DePauw is linked to a viable house. Some house corporation members told us that fraternities (in particular) haven’t kept pace with the changing housing needs and demands of students over the years. Without an influx of financial resources, or healthier, more efficient operating budgets, how could they be expected to?

Our visits to benchmark schools and our tours of their Greek properties yielded some useful information. None of these six schools follows our model of privately-owned residential Greek chapter houses. (See **Appendix V** for the benchmark school report.) Among the benchmark schools that used their Greek houses to house students (as opposed to using them only for social and meeting space), we found three examples of significant recent University investment of resources designed to bring houses up to University standards and create more equity among residential living spaces:

1. Lehigh recently committed \$6 million to bring its University-owned Greek properties up to par, and installed a minimum occupancy requirement of 90% in order to receive University recognition as approved housing. Lehigh funded its investment from University resources after the trustees were taken on a tour of the houses and saw for themselves the conditions in which students were living.
2. Washington and Lee also invested \$35 million to bring its University-owned fraternities up to par, and to build five new sororities, and now limits occupancy to about 20-25 students per living unit in an effort to maintain its University-wide living standards. At Washington and Lee, which has a two-year residential requirement rather than a four-year requirement, it has become something of a privilege to “live-in,” with preference going to juniors and seniors, and with spots being doled out according to grade point average rank. Washington and Lee tried to raise the funds necessary to make these investments, but that proved to be a non-starter.
3. In 2009, Wabash will complete a \$30-million investment in its ten fraternity houses, on which the College relies heavily for student housing. Wabash, too, tried initially to raise funds to underwrite the improvements, but weak results led to a decision to fund the renovations primarily from College resources, with an agreed-to plan for soliciting alumni support if planned renovations or costs for rebuilding exceed a certain level.

The central challenge for DePauw is to carefully consider and balance such disparate factors as the number of fraternity and sorority houses, the capacity and occupancy rates, the quality of the living conditions, particularly from the perspective of health and safety, the financial state of the house corporations, and the available resources.

### The Affiliation Process

Though the processes by which students become affiliated with fraternities and sororities have undergone some improvements in recent years, in general the affiliation process remains a significant weakness of the Greek system. There are three stages, all of which currently take place in the spring semester of the first year. The first stage, by which the affinity group selection process occurs, is called rush (for NIC fraternities), recruitment (for NPC sororities), or intake (for NPHC and NALFO chapters). A period of new-member education follows that varies in length from chapter to chapter, and the process is completed by some kind of formal initiation.

The fundamentals of the affiliation process for NIC fraternities and NPC sororities are probably well-known to most readers: over a series of several days or evenings, the chapters and students who are eligible (participants must have achieved a minimum 2.25 grade point average after the first semester with no outstanding judicial infractions) and who have registered to go through rush or recruitment, engage in a reciprocal process of wooing. Groups of potential Greek members are formed and guided to each chapter house for the first round; chapters and prospective new members whittle their choices down in further rounds of visits. Finally, after about four days of intense activity, a student knows which chapter wants him or her, and the chapters know which students have accepted their bids. When no match occurs in this process, it is referred to as a “cross-cut.”

The intake process for DePauw’s NPHC and NALFO chapters is similar, in some ways, though there is no formal recruitment week in the spring semester in which all chapters participate. Many aspects of it also are quite secretive. The intake process begins with informal conversations with potential new members. The first formal activity is a meeting called an informational, which chapters host for students interested in learning more about the chapter. This is followed by interest meetings where potential new members make a more formal statement of interest in joining a chapter. The chapter then makes a selection of those interested students, who by this point are called “aspirants.” A new-member education process begins for each aspirant, generally lasting six to twelve weeks. The aspirant completes application forms which are reviewed by the chapter’s national office. Once all new-member requirements are complete, the aspirants are initiated into the chapter in a ceremony termed “crossing.” They are then presented as new members, or “neophytes,” in a public event called a probate, often taking part in a performance they have rehearsed with members and new members of the chapter to entertain those attending the show.

For NIC and NPC organizations, the period of new-member education lasts six to ten weeks during the spring. The curriculum for new-member education is designed by the

national organizations and implemented at the chapter level. It includes programs about the importance of academic achievement (called “scholarship” by the Greeks), fraternity and sorority history, education about the structure of the organization, an anti-hazing module, and chapter rules and operations. In addition, all of the chapters have some form of mentoring program that pairs current members with new members.

As we note above, the affiliation processes have improved in the last several years. The time allowed for affiliation has been shortened somewhat, and the DePauw Panhellenic Council (Panhel), in particular, has undertaken efforts to implement a scaled-back recruitment process. Still, the process requires much time and energy from all participants during the academic semester, and on a small campus with the high percentage of students involved, there are significant disruptions to the academic program. Faculty comments about the rush/recruitment process and its impact on teaching and learning, in particular, are strongly negative.

A significant number of women students feel disenfranchised by the recruitment process; these students wanted to pledge but either did not in the end receive the bid they wanted, or received no bid at all. We are told that the stereotypes associated with DePauw’s seven NPC sororities are so pervasive, the competition during recruitment among the sororities is so intense, and our women students are so invested in being invited to join a particular chapter, that those who are excluded harbor resentment for years. We certainly picked this up in our review of survey comments from independent women students and alumni. Nearly half of our independent women student respondents participated in rush but did not pledge. Thirty one percent of Greek women (compared to 16% of Greek men) believe that the rush process is not fair.

Another troubling part of this entire process occurs during new-member education, when activities designed to foster bonding among the group—“sisterhood” and “brotherhood”—can go too far and become hazing. Hazing today is defined extremely broadly, at DePauw and elsewhere. (DePauw’s formal definition of hazing is included in **Appendix D**.) In the materials we reviewed, both the NPC and the NIC take very strict positions against hazing. Unfortunately, despite this, despite the University’s clear policy forbidding hazing, despite education of student Greek leaders and members, hazing continues. Greek students and alumni—men and women alike—indicate that the significant hazing incidents of this past school year *are not* isolated ones, which confirms the staff’s belief that hazing is going on under the radar screen with some degree of regularity. It is not terribly reassuring to learn from our benchmark visits that our incidence of hazing is no worse, but also no better, than at other schools.

The stance taken by some national organizations promotes what they call “values congruence.” In essence, their efforts are based on the premise that local chapters have strayed away from the values on which their organizations are founded; they hope, by means of stepped-up education of members and follow-through by national representatives, chapter advisors, and alumni, the founding principles will be internalized and student behavior will change over time.

As we've described, the entire process of affiliation takes a lot of time and is creating at least some disaffected students. At best, the process is a minor distraction for our students, but for those who lack the skills to balance their academic work with the time and energy they devote to their chapters, the spring semester is a dangerous time. First-year students going through the affiliation process are particularly at risk.

The University was not able to supply ten years of grade point average data for first-year men and women that separates those who became Greek from those who remained independent students. But, since 65-75% of the past ten years' first-year classes have affiliated, and an even larger percentage is involved in the affiliation process, the aggregate data listed below in Table 6 does a reasonable job of showing a clear if modest correlation between changes in grade point average and the timing of rush and recruitment. Note that rush and recruitment was moved to the beginning of the second semester in the 1999-2000 school year.

	Fall First Year			Spring First Year			Difference		
	Men	Women	Both	Men	Women	Both	Men	Women	Both
<b>1995-1996</b>	2.790	2.899	2.851	2.806	3.004	2.919	0.016	0.105	0.068
<b>1996-1997</b>	2.720	2.911	2.829	2.790	2.971	2.894	0.070	0.060	0.065
<b>1997-1998</b>	2.661	2.861	2.768	2.771	2.947	2.867	0.110	0.086	0.098
<b>1998-1999</b>	2.691	2.901	2.814	2.721	2.954	2.858	0.031	0.052	0.044
<b>1999-2000</b>	2.879	2.973	2.932	2.730	2.885	2.819	(0.149)	(0.089)	(0.113)
<b>2000-2001</b>	2.881	3.075	2.987	2.840	3.116	2.996	(0.041)	0.041	0.008
<b>2001-2002</b>	2.975	3.057	3.022	2.914	3.101	3.021	(0.061)	0.043	(0.001)
<b>2002-2003</b>	3.040	3.235	3.145	2.981	3.255	3.130	(0.059)	0.020	(0.016)
<b>2003-2004</b>	3.022	3.209	3.119	2.932	3.147	3.044	(0.090)	(0.062)	(0.075)
<b>2004-2005</b>	2.963	3.211	3.099	2.971	3.196	3.097	0.008	(0.015)	(0.002)
<b>2005-2006</b>	3.081	3.215	3.158	2.987	3.128	3.068	(0.094)	(0.087)	(0.090)

**Table 6. First-Year Grade Point Averages.**

### The Greek System's Support of Academic Life

There is evidence to support the contention that academically Greek students are performing well. Since Greek students represent over 70% of our student population, it is something of a commonplace that their performance tracks well with all-student performance; in fact the grade point averages of Greek students almost always exceed the all-women's and all-men's grade point averages (of which they are a part).

**Appendix K** includes grade reports by Greek chapter for the past ten years. (In order to protect the privacy of members in NPHC/NALFO chapters—of which there are a relative few—we have not included grade reports for those chapters.) These data are most suggestive in those cases where a chapter consistently performs at the top end of the range or at the bottom. Securing the top spot for highest chapter grade point average is a prized accomplishment each semester, and some students take great pride in being able to say that their chapter is in the number-one spot. Also instructive are those cases in which

a chapter has made something of a comeback, as is the case over the past few years of Phi Gamma Delta (FIJI), and can receive recognition for a turnaround in many different areas, including best chapter grade point average among the fraternities.

Clearly the Greek system aids in retention of Greek students, as can be seen in **Appendix L**. A student is less likely to leave DePauw before graduating if he or she is a member of a Greek chapter here, and more likely to leave before graduating if not Greek. The data are clear on this fact. First-to-second year retention of Greek students has been well above 95% for several years. First-to-second year retention of independent students—defined here as those students who are not affiliated but were eligible to be, and who did not leave DePauw prior to rush/recruitment—is now above 85%.

A careful reading of the 1998 Philosophical Statement of Residential Life (**Appendix B**) suggests that it is probably unfair to expect the Greek system, or other components of our residential living system, for that matter, to bear the burden for the “formation of intellectual communities” that are a strategic objective. The 1998 statement indicates that our learning environment should *support* and *complement* the academic experience, and that all living units, including Greek houses, should “foster an environment that is *supportive* of academic excellence and social development” (emphasis added).

It’s probably fair to say that by and large the Greek system does support academic achievement. The student survey data show that Greek chapters make it clear that academic performance and achievement are valued and expected from members. Each chapter has a scholarship officer whose job it is to monitor the academic performance of members. To judge by the grade point average results, the Greek houses, as a subset of all DePauw living units, are doing just as well as other residential living units.

But it is also worth remembering that academic achievement is not the same thing as intellectual engagement, which we hope to cultivate in all our students. We cannot afford to ignore the criticism, voiced in some faculty quarters and elsewhere, that the Greek system is “anti-intellectual” and therefore should be abolished. All of us on the Commission have heard some version of this argument. Accusations about the anti-intellectual nature of the Greek system are not in any way unique to DePauw. The question is not one that we could satisfactorily address, of course, given the nature of our fact-finding and our accelerated timeline.

There is a fair amount of official and unofficial interaction between faculty members and Greek chapters. Forty-seven percent of faculty respondents reported that they were invited to chapter houses between one and four times last year, 15% reported being invited between five and nine times, and 3% reported being invited more than ten times. The rate of actual visits to the houses corresponds appropriately. And it isn’t true, as some may think, that DePauw faculty members have little experience themselves with Greek systems. In fact, 25% of the respondents to our faculty survey—32 out of 130 respondents—were members of Greek organizations, and more than 70% of our faculty members attended undergraduate colleges with Greek systems.



We are only the most recent group to point out that there is room for improvement in engaging faculty members with the Greek system. One place in which to put some energy is the formal faculty advising structure. The GSI requires each chapter to have a faculty scholarship advisor, and just this last year a job description for that position was created as chapters sought to recruit advisors in order to comply with the requirements of the GSI. In general, there isn't much going on, as is indicated by results of various surveys, GSI compliance data from this year, and a review of the reports from faculty members about their service in this capacity. Chapters seem to be waiting for faculty advisors to take the initiative in engaging them, and faculty members don't seem to know how to fulfill this role.

It is apparent that the biggest sources of faculty frustration about the Greek system are the disruptions to the academic program caused by the presence of the affiliation process during the academic semester and the perceived unfairness of that process (discussed above), and the negative effect of the alcohol culture they associate with Greek life on their students both in and out of the classroom, which we address below.

### Alcohol Use and Abuse

The alcohol culture on college campuses today is most disturbing. At DePauw, and at every other campus in the country, administrators, staff, and faculty live with a realistic fear that a student might die of alcohol poisoning at any time. Research published recently in the *Annual Review of Public Health*, in an article entitled, "Magnitude of Alcohol-Related Mortality and Morbidity Among U.S. College Students Ages 18-24" reports that the rate of alcohol-related deaths among college students is increasing faster than the rate of students attending college. In 2001, there were more than 1,700 alcohol-related deaths among college students. (See **Appendix W** for this data from *Congressional Quarterly Researcher Online*.)

Here in Greencastle, we tend to live in something of a cultural "bubble," and it is useful to learn from our fact-finding and visits to benchmark schools that our alcohol culture, as measured by the prevalence of alcohol, importance of alcohol to students, drinking rates, judicial infractions owed to alcohol, and hospital visits owed to alcohol, is no worse than at the six benchmark schools. It is useful to be reminded that everyone is frustrated by the amount of alcohol used and abused by students, and this abuse is by no means restricted to Greek students. It is helpful to be reassured that we have a comprehensive and well-designed "educationally based" alcohol program in place, although according to staff it is too early to tell whether it will prove to be successful in teaching students to moderate their own behavior. (See **Appendix N** for an overview of DePauw's program, as well as that of a national organization, the Genesis Group, of which DePauw is a member. The activity and hoped-for effectiveness of the Genesis Group has been less than satisfactory, according to the staff and students with whom we spoke.)

Alcohol use and abuse among 18- to 22-year-olds is a national problem and is not something that DePauw or any other college in the business of educating this constituency is going to "solve." Our staff as well as Student Services professionals at

our benchmark schools shared with us a “profile” of the current generation of college students that gives us pause. These young people come to college with an extraordinary sense of entitlement, and, like young people of every generation, are confident that nothing bad will ever happen to them. The current generation of college students has started drinking at earlier ages than previous generations, and, over time, learns to drink more.

Data from AlcoholEdu, the online alcohol education course for first-year students that DePauw has used for the last three years,<sup>1</sup> tell us that the majority of DePauw students are experienced drinkers when they arrive on campus. The data also show quite clearly the alarming phenomenon of “the college effect,” which refers to the fact that during the first year of college, abstention rates decrease as drinking rates increase. (See Table 7.)

	Summer survey	Fall survey
I abstain from alcohol.	36%	28%
I am a light drinker.	43%	31%
I am a moderate drinker.	19%	38%
I am a heavy drinker.	2%	4%

**Table 7. Self-Described First-Year Alcohol Use.**

According to the 2005 AlcoholEdu report,

Students were asked to describe themselves in terms of their current use of alcohol. Students’ self-described alcohol use consistently differs from their self-reported consumption patterns. Particularly, only small percentages of students describe themselves as heavy drinkers but a much larger proportion are, in fact, heavy-episodic drinkers (5 or more drinks at a sitting) or problematic drinkers (10 or more drinks at a sitting).

As several reports have pointed out in the past, DePauw fraternity houses serve as the social hub for the campus. We have evolved a social structure in which the fraternity house is the nexus for large campus parties that feature alcohol. Fraternity parties are technically allowed only on Friday and Saturday nights, though we are told by students that Wednesday and Thursday nights are big party nights as well, often in the guise of smaller parties that don’t need to be “registered.” It is common for students, even those who are under 21, to keep alcohol in their residence hall rooms and Greek houses (and of course it is legal for those over 21 to have alcohol in their rooms). “Pre-gaming,” in which drinkers front-load large quantities of hard liquor prior to attending a party, is common, and residence-hall drinking at DePauw happens as frequently as at other benchmark schools, according to our interviews of staff and students at the other schools and our review of comparative judicial data from DePauw and the other schools.

---

<sup>1</sup> Students take the course over a series of weeks, and then take exams/surveys at three distinct points during the year to measure knowledge and behavior.

Sorority women use the fraternities as playgrounds just as much as the men do, while evading any of the liability because parties cannot take place in their houses (sorority houses are required by the NPC to be dry). And we are told that many fraternity members believe they can't recruit a new pledge class without alcohol.

Thus the question of where students drink is of central concern. The construction of the Student Social Center in the Walden Inn was intended to be an on-campus alternative to fraternity parties, but it has not evolved as such. Davidson College, in an attempt to compete with the attitude that "there's nothing to do in Davidson," and as direct competition for its Patterson Court area (fraternity row), recently undertook a similar effort on a larger scale, converting its old gymnasium into a new student center that contains a restaurant, a bar, the gym, a theatre, the Career Center, the copying/printing/post office operation, the bookstore, student affairs offices, meeting rooms, and more. It is a huge structure, busy day and night. It's too early to tell whether the desired effect will occur, but staff and students at Davidson report that satisfaction with the space is very high; the building is fulfilling the administration's primary objective in that students are there all the time.

Liability is another central concern. Since fraternity parties almost always involve free alcohol for guests, and since our houses are privately owned, liability for alcohol-related harm or damage rests primarily on the shoulders of the house corporations, the individual Greek chapters, and in some cases individual students. No one, including house corporation officers, wants this liability. Among the concerns of fraternity men, their house corporations, and chapter advisors is the fear that students who "pre-game" in their dorm rooms or elsewhere, show up at a fraternity party before the alcohol has affected them, have a beer at the party, pass out or worse, and are taken to the hospital and later report that they were at that particular house, are unfairly putting the chapter at risk. (This doesn't absolve fraternities of the responsibility for dangerous levels of alcohol that are consumed solely and regularly on their property.) We view the DePauw Interfraternity Council's (IFC) vote this past spring to disallow first-year students on Greek property during traditional "party hours" as its signal that the fraternities are getting fed up with this risk. And we should expect that any liability litigation would most certainly also involve the University.

At some of the benchmark schools we have seen ingenious attempts to shift liability for student drinking. Some have chosen to let the drinking leave the campus proper in an attempt to shift or curtail University liability. Benchmark schools that have deliberately limited alcohol availability in Greek houses have seen the drinking behavior move off the campus very efficiently. Unfortunately, in none of these cases have the drinking rates changed.

Prof. Pamela Proppom (Psychology) and a group of her students conducted an important research investigation into student drinking at DePauw during the spring semester, 2006. The data from her Alcohol Research Group confirm that fraternity houses are the primary place where our students drink: 86% of those students who drink report drinking in fraternities. Fifty percent of the first-year students who drink, however, report that they

drink in their residence halls; the majority of seniors who drink legally do so in University duplexes, apartments, and in bars. Prof. Propsom's research indicates there is no difference in the volume of drinking between the classes: first-year students are drinking just as much as seniors.

Prof. Propsom's research also shows that DePauw's Greek students do indeed drink more than DePauw's independent students; Greek students consume an average of 5.9 drinks per occasion, as compared to independents who consume 4.2 drinks per occasion. Further, Greeks have a more positive attitude toward alcohol consumption than independents do. A stunning 52% of all DePauw students can be classified as "binge drinkers" (more than five or more drinks the last time or on average when they "party"), down from 56% last year. Fifty three percent of all DePauw students "reported that they got drunk last weekend." Perhaps the most worrisome finding is the fact that the mode—the number of drinks that was most frequently reported among the drinkers—was more than ten drinks in a sitting. Of those who reported having ten or more drinks the last time they partied, 93% were male, 94% were white, 95% were Greek, and 63% lived in a fraternity house.

Her executive summary states:

The good news is that students usually socialize with students who don't drink to get drunk, eat before drinking, and walk or use a designated driver. The bad news is that students only sometimes, rarely, or never pace themselves when drinking, alternate non-alcoholic with alcoholic beverages, or determine in advance not to exceed a set number of drinks. They are also more likely to sometimes, usually, or always play drinking games or pre-party. These behaviors don't appear to differ greatly between first-year students and seniors...77% of students believe that getting drunk is acceptable, but 94% of students believe that it is unacceptable for drinking to interfere with academics or responsibilities.

Unfortunately, of course, heavy drinking does interfere with academics and with other responsibilities, but students don't realize it, or think they can manage it. And the physiological effects are only beginning to be understood. As this report was being written, *The New York Times* published a lengthy article about new research findings at Duke University and elsewhere that alcohol consumed by teenagers and adolescents—including college-aged students—does significant damage to the still-developing brain, affecting the ability to remember, memorize, and learn. (The article is included as **Appendix W**.)

The intersection of alcohol use and abuse and living units—that is, to know that if you choose to live in a fraternity, you are living in a social environment in which access to alcohol is valued highly by the rest of the campus—caused us to wonder what percentage of students might be interested in substance-free fraternity housing. Only 3.3% of male Greek students said that they agreed with the statement, "I support substance-free fraternities." Twelve percent of Greek women agreed with that statement. Among the admitted students planning to enroll, there is more support for substance-free Greek housing (20%). Among those admitted but *not* planning to enroll, there is even more support (32%), and it comes disproportionately from women students who plan to join a

Greek system in college, but not at DePauw. Twenty-nine percent of Greek student parents would support substance-free Greek housing, and nearly half of our alumni agreed with that statement.

### Student Group Accountability

Educational programming, enforcement, and activities that positively engage students are all critical to efforts intended to impact student behavior. Historically the DePauw judicial system has been considered a component of the educational process. The Student Handbook states that the primary purpose of our process is to “provide a fair educationally valid process resulting in fair decisions that hold students accountable for their actions.”

Survey results indicate that students, faculty members, and staff see the judicial systems in place at DePauw as ineffective at changing group behavior. (Students see the chapter’s own judicial systems as somewhat more effective, perhaps because those sanctions locally imposed do deter behavior within the chapter, although it is unclear whether or not individual chapters are sanctioning for behaviors that violate university policy or merely chapter policy). Chapters rarely pass on information about group or individual student violations to the University judicial process. Perceptions of the University’s judicial system’s ability to change individual behavior are also fairly negative, but the staff points to the low recidivism rate of individual offenders as evidence that there has been some impact on individual behavior. Group recidivism rates are not as low. The discussion that follows mostly concerns group violations.

Guiding both the University’s accountability system and the judicial processes in place in the Greek chapters is a myriad of laws, policies, and other statements of principle. These include chapter codes of conduct, the IFC and Panhel judicial processes, University policies and statements, policies of the Greek national organizations, and Indiana state law. We have examined all of them. (**Appendix D** includes several University policies: the Student Judicial Code Philosophy, the Student Policy on the Use of Alcohol Beverages, the statement of Expectations for Student Behavior, and the statement of Student Group Responsibility. **Appendix M** includes the Greek national organizations’ founding principles and/or statements of policy.) The unifying threads throughout all these policies are the expectations that students will obey the state law of Indiana and adhere to community standards of behavior, and that, since they are legally adults, and want to be respected as adults, they will be treated as such when it is time to dole out penalties for violations of these judicial codes.

Over the past eight years every group violation that has come before the University’s judicial system for resolution has involved a Greek chapter. Since 2000 there has been an average of more than ten group violations each year. Two-thirds of these violations have involved alcohol in some way. (That same proportion is true for individual violations.) In 2004, to encourage greater student accountability and input, the University’s judicial process for groups was significantly revised, and now an “NCAA model” is in place for group violations, in which a group charged with some infraction may in the first instance

propose its own sanctions. If the proposed sanction is deemed appropriate by the University, it is accepted and no further formal action is taken. The University has the authority to reject inadequate proposals, though in two-thirds of the cases since 2004, the proposed chapter sanctions have been accepted by the University (See **Appendix I** for a summary of judicial statistics over the past four years.)

On the campus visits, we asked other institutions about effective approaches in working with student organizations. While no benchmark institution had the answer, a couple of accountability practices were cited by staff and students as particularly effective with organizations. Several schools charge their campus security with staffing parties. The most effective judicial action for groups, according to staff at the benchmark schools, is closing down a chapter. (Please refer to **Appendix V** for the benchmark school report.)

For group violations, there is also the unique dynamic of working with national organizations. It is possible (and in fact it was the case in one instance this past year) for the sanctions proposed by a national organization to be more severe than the University's. It is equally possible that the University might view an infraction as intolerable and want to impose severe sanctions, and a national organization might object. In such cases, whose sanctions should prevail? What is the appropriate hierarchy?

The Commission had discussions about whether or not the purpose of the judicial process was primarily education or deterrence. Our current system is not a system that has deterrence as a guiding principle. We know through the fact-finding process that some stakeholders feel deterrence should be the operative goal. Inconsistent philosophy among stakeholders as to the purpose of judicial processes causes confusion about how administrators of the system should proceed.

Effective and consistent accountability requires a consistent campus ethos. We have heard from various sources that "if we simply enforced the rules we have, we wouldn't have the problem for long," and that "if we had a way to weed out the bad apples, we wouldn't have a problem." But it's not so simple. We have an obligation to enforce the state drinking laws, but as an educational institution we want to encourage responsible behavior within the bounds of appropriate community standards. Suppose that we opt to have DePauw security officers staffing every fraternity party. Should they enforce the law (ticketing and/or arresting every underage or clearly intoxicated drinker, by the dozens every weekend)? Or should they only take action to enforce the law when someone calls attention to herself or himself in some inappropriate way? A zero-tolerance approach would mean swift and severe sanctions, and would send a strong message of deterrence, but at what cost? On the other hand, if we were to take action only when intoxicated students call attention to themselves, do we encourage evasion?

We need to briefly mention the work of the Coalition for a Responsible Community, and, in particular, the DePauw Community Covenant. The Coalition was created in March 2003, after we received the report on alcohol use and the Greek system from Holly McKiernan and Peter Lake, as a campus-wide effort designed to combat high-risk drinking. (See **Appendix E** for President Bottoms' speech announcing the creation of the

Coalition.) The Coalition quickly became a group with a broader reach, and over the past three years, its work has led to the development of the DePauw Community Covenant, the Student Leadership Summit, the Greek Standards Initiative, and many hours of conversation about high-risk alcohol use and hazing at DePauw. While the Coalition was initially focused on the Greek system, the DePauw Community covenant and the Leadership summit address issues of concern to all DePauw students. (Note: the Coalition has recently gone through a reorganization that creates a new, smaller Coalition Steering Group and five new task forces, each with its own charge. Please refer to **Appendix H** for a description of the new organization and the charges given to the task forces.)

The DePauw Community Covenant (found in **Appendix F**) was created to provide a framework of values embraced by all members of the DePauw community. The original intention was that the document would be signed by all students, but objections from students led to a reversal of that plan. According to the Admission Office staff, the Covenant is included in the materials assembled for prospective students, as a way to inform them about the community we aim to create, but is not used proactively, as an honor code, for example, might be. We spoke with those benchmark schools that have honor codes, which are simple statements of value that govern the entire campus, much simpler than our covenant. These schools believe their honor codes are attractive to prospective students, and each has its own variation of a signing ceremony for first-year students, as well as a way to display publicly the signatures. Both staff and students at these schools reported, however, that the honor code is seen as having more to do with academic than social life, and hasn't had much impact on high-risk behavior.

### Support for Personal Growth and Development

One of the objectives of the University's strategic plan is "to prepare students to make a positive difference in the diverse and interconnected world in which they will live and work." To what extent does the Greek system support this objective?

Our Statement of Residential Life from 1998, quoted above, articulates the University's commitment to a diverse community in which our living environments respect and celebrate human differences. Diversity is not particularly a goal of the Greek system, nor of course of affinity groups in general. It is interesting, therefore, that Greek alumni, with their additional years of life experience, are more likely to agree with the statement "I wish my chapter had been more diverse in its membership" (37%) than are our current students likely to agree with a similar statement, "I wish my chapter was more diverse in its membership" (22%). Among current Greek students, women were more than twice as likely as men to wish for greater diversity in the chapter (29% compared to 14%). Not surprisingly, independent students were considerably more likely than Greek students to agree with a similar statement ("I wish I lived with a more diverse group of people."): 36%, again divided along gendered lines (41% for the women and 28% for the men).

On the other hand, Greek and independent students do mix often outside of class. Ninety-six percent of Greek students and 95% of independent students indicate that they

have both Greek and independent friends. (Still, some independent students feel that the burden is on them to initiate social interaction.) Alumni can't claim percentages this high: 67% indicate that they have both Greek and independent friends from DePauw. According to students and staff, much of the credit for this improvement is owed to the *depauw.year1* program, which was started in 1999 with an explicit goal of creating an exemplary first-year experience: students choose a first-year seminar taught by their faculty advisor and participate in small mentor groups facilitated by an upper-class student that are designed to support the transition into college social and academic life. The affiliation process now occurs in the spring semester as a result, a change that house corporation officers and others cite as having weakened the Greek system.

Diversity is one of the many issues that might be addressed in the educational programming delivered on the local level through Greek chapters. Greek students generally believe that their educational programming efforts are successful. (See **Appendix P** for a complete overview of staffing, educational programs, and other kinds of support in place for the Greek system.) But the resources to support this effort are so thin that it's surprising that levels of satisfaction are as high as they are. This is a credit to the tireless work of Student Affairs and other staff, who are continually asked to do more, without additional budget or staffing resources, and who have integrated advising and support for the Greek system and its infrastructure with their other daily duties in an add-on way.

Beginning in the 2006-07 academic year, the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life (formerly Greek Affairs) will grow from 1.5 to 2 full-time professional staff members. But even this new level of staffing is meager compared to one benchmark school that has recently strengthened its Greek system through more staff resources. Several years ago Lehigh initiated a program to strengthen its Greek system called "Be Great or Be Gone," and added enough staff in the Greek Affairs office to enable each professional to focus exclusively on only seven or eight chapters. At the same time, Lehigh implemented an accreditation program for chapters (similar to our GSI) and focused its new staff resources to ensure that chapters had every possibility of meeting the standards. Lehigh credits its increase in staff as the most important factor that supported the strengthening of the Greek system.

Denison took similar measures when it converted its Greek system to a non-residential one in 1995: in an effort to increase programming for its students now left without party venues, it increased its budget for on-campus programs by 250%, and increased the size of the campus programming staff as well. Several of the benchmark schools staff their fitness centers around the clock, keep their libraries open late, and program alcohol-free events during the 11 p.m. to 3 a.m. hours, when college students want things to do.

Our survey data show that Greek students and alumni (and, to a lesser extent, independent students) credit DePauw for honing their leadership, social, and communication skills. Table 8, below, shows the percentage of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with the statements, "My DePauw experience has honed [my leadership skills/my social and communication skills] most effectively."



	Greek Students	Independent Students	All Alumni
Leadership Skills	84%	47%	79.5%
Social and Communication Skills	92%	62%	86%

**Table 8. Influence of DePauw on Leadership and Social and Communication Skills.**

For a small subset of Greek students, the Greek chapters provide extraordinary leadership opportunities. This is quite clear. For the three to five to eight students each semester or year who are the high-office holders within each chapter, the leadership experience rivals the best that DePauw has to offer. These students learn to manage the operations of a chapter, or they fail publicly. They learn to deal with personnel issues, manage budgets, motivate a group of people to strive toward common goals, manage the operations and business of the chapter, and learn to manage an executive team. (We are obliged to point out, however, the obvious corollary that the vast majority of Greek students do not pursue these unique leadership opportunities.)

We wondered about the extent to which the Greek system contributes to healthy relationships between men and women on our campus, since it is fundamentally a social system that is divided along gender lines. This question is most complex and our project, with its compressed and aggressive timeline, could not do justice to it. There are virtually no comprehensive reports or other data available to examine on this issue at present, other than examining official statistics about sexual assault at DePauw, which are scarce. We therefore relied on our surveys to inform us about basic perceptions. We asked respondents to agree or disagree with the statement that “the Greek system promotes healthy relationships between men and women.” Greek students and Greek alumni were far more likely to agree than were independent students, parents, independent alumni, and faculty members. We don’t know what to make of this disparity in perception.

The Impact of the Greek System on University Admission

Does the Greek system help or hinder our efforts to attract the best possible student body? This is not an easy question to answer. Certainly it is safe to say that there has always been a strong affinity between the students we have traditionally recruited—bright, ambitious, social, good communicators—and the Greek system. And we believe that this traditional student profile remains as valid today as in the past: the well-rounded student for whom four years at DePauw set in motion a satisfying and productive life.

The survey responses of admitted students indicate that 40% of this year’s group of admitted students plans to join a Greek system. This number tracks fairly closely with the responses of our alumni, of whom 46% knew prior to matriculation that they wanted to join our Greek system. Obviously many students choose to join the system after

arriving on campus: only 29% of our current Greek students knew prior to coming to DePauw that they would join. Conversely 45% of our current independent students participated in rush or recruitment but did not join. All these data generally support the conclusion that our Greek system is an admission magnet of some force, given the type of student we attract and recruit.

The entering credentials of those admitted students who know now that they plan to join a Greek system correlate well with those of all admitted students, and there is little evidence that the Greek system is repelling “the good students” in our admission pool, a commonly held belief. Some students do reject DePauw and its Greek system, but the survey responses suggest that that group of students (mostly women) is primarily turned off by excessive alcohol use that they associate with Greek life; they may find it difficult to find a campus, even one without a Greek system, where alcohol is not a significant part of the student social scene.

Some have suggested that we attempt to ascertain how many excellent potential students never apply to DePauw because of the Greek system and the accompanying image of “party school.” We have had no way to do that, but perhaps a comprehensive marketing study on behalf of the Admission Office might be able to get at that issue. To underscore the commonly held association between system and image, one need only observe that the 2007 issue of *The Princeton Review’s 361 Best Colleges* ranks DePauw first for “Major Frat and Sorority Scene,” a category that is included in the book’s section on “Parties.” Most of the Top 50 liberal arts colleges listed in the *U.S. News and World Report* rankings either have much lower student participation percentages in Greek systems than DePauw, or have no Greek system at all. (See **Appendix X** for a chart of the *U.S. News and World Report* Top 50 schools and the presence of Greek systems.)

During the admission process information about the Greek system is being communicated effectively only during the campus visit, from current students to prospective students. Data from surveys of current students, current student parents, and admitted students all make clear that admission materials and admission counselors say little about the Greek system, and little information comes from parents and friends from high school. Many Greek alumni also think that the admission process does little to proactively communicate about the Greek system. As one chapter advisor wrote to us,

DePauw can be most helpful to me and to (my chapter) by embracing the Greek system as a true strength of the University. I am told the Admission office tends to minimize its importance to incoming students when, in my opinion, it should be as celebrated as academics, our alumni network, or even winning the Monon Bell game. DePauw should not apologize for something it does really well. I understand our Greek system is considered one of the best in the country and yet this is something few applicants seem to know. The University is going to have to decide either to embrace the Greek system completely or do away with it altogether. It cannot continue to be the elephant in the room.

## Engaging Alumni

The third objective of DePauw's strategic plan is "to cultivate alumni loyalty through lifelong engagement." It is indisputable that the Greek system supports this objective effectively.

DePauw's highly successful Alumni Reunion Weekend is organized around living units within Greek chapters, particularly beyond the 10th reunion. The top reason alumni attend Alumni Reunion Weekend is "to see their friends," which typically means living-unit friends. Forty-five percent of Greek alumni report coming to their reunions sometimes or always, while only 31% of independent alumni attend sometimes or always. On the occasion of milestone celebrations for individual Greek chapters, such as the upcoming celebration of the 150th anniversary of our FIJI chapter, the University unfortunately plays a very minor role; at the time of this writing, (July 2006) it was clear that very few individuals within the administration knew of the chapter's plans for this event, despite diligent and consistent efforts by chapter alumni over previous months to get the word out.

This does not mean, however, that staying connected to their current chapter is particularly important to Greek alumni. Only around a quarter of our Greek alumni claim this is important to them (28% in our survey). Thus it is fairly clear that the burden for alumni involvement with Greek chapters, cited by chapter advisors and house corporation officers as critical to chapter success, will be carried by a relatively small number of committed alumni. The work of these alumni is extremely valuable: without the commitment and diligent work recently of a number of Beta and FIJI alumni, these chapters might no longer exist on our campus. These individuals are the unsung heroes and heroines of Greek alumni involvement with chapters at DePauw. It is amazing to us that the burnout rate isn't higher among them. But is this really a value-added alumni engagement experience for them? And with University staff resources stretched as thinly as they are, the support for these volunteers is hit-and-miss. Regular group meetings for house corporation officers, sponsored by the University, occur twice a semester, but the chapter advisors don't have a similar meeting schedule.

Of all the educational programs evaluated by current students, "engaging alumni as mentors" received the lowest ratings, so there is room for improvement, even if student expectations are not always realistic in this regard. Not surprisingly, independent students, without the built-in advantages of living-unit infrastructure through which mentoring is typically delivered to Greek students, are considerably less satisfied in this regard than are our Greek students.

Development and Alumni Relations data indicates a strong correlation between alumni satisfaction, alumni involvement, and alumni investment in the University. Even beyond the fact that our alumni body is disproportionately Greek, that affiliation is an important predictor of willingness to support the University financially. A comprehensive and thorough review of historic giving data shows that DePauw's legacy of fundraising success is helped by the presence of our Greek system. (See **Appendix Y** for a report

about the impact of Greek affiliation on fundraising results over the years.) Greek alumni don't feel as compelled to support their chapters, though, as evidenced by our survey data.

## **FINAL THOUGHTS**

Much of the raw material is in place to make a University-wide effort to “improve the Greek system,” one of President Bottoms’ goals, as written in the charge that we were given. We hope that leadership at all levels and within all constituencies will articulate a common vision for the Greek system of the future, develop a sustainable plan with clear accountability to support the vision, and then have the institutional patience to see it through the inevitable good and bad times. We are not the first group to say this, nor did we need a Fact-Finding Commission to point it out. But at the moment there is very little trust among different constituencies. That fact will challenge the next steps in this process.


One final “fact” to report is that the Greek system falls under the umbrella of the entire University. The system does not exist apart from the University. We are a single liberal arts university with a Greek system; we are not a university AND a separate Greek system. This fact can be easy to lose sight of in the midst of outrage coming from all corners, or at least from some corners, whenever change is considered. Those involved in the next steps of this process must be aware that the opinions held by different constituencies about DePauw’s Greek system are polarized and heated. This isn’t a topic about which people have no opinion. It is likely that any move to “improve the Greek system” will displease some students, or parents, or alumni, or others. But it is the University’s obligation to decide what is ultimately in the best interest of its students. Not to do so is an abdication of that responsibility. We say to the University, “Proceed with an inclusive and open process, and with the best interests of all of our students in mind, Greek and independent alike.”

This report is the beginning of a process, not the end of one. We hope that the DePauw community will embrace the next steps energetically and openly, keeping in mind always the best interests of our students.

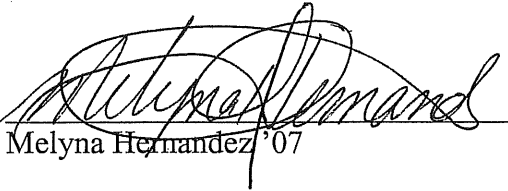
Respectfully submitted,

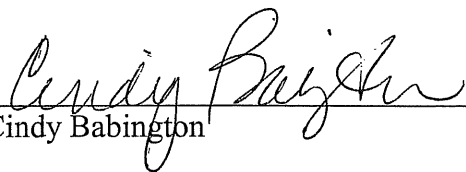
The Greek Fact-Finding Commission

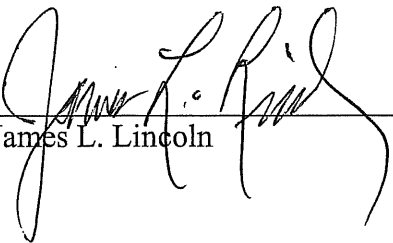
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Lisa Hollander, Chair

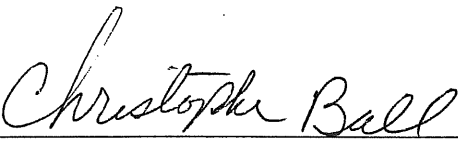
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Daniel Hasler '80

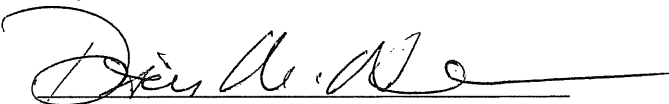
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Zachary Adams '06

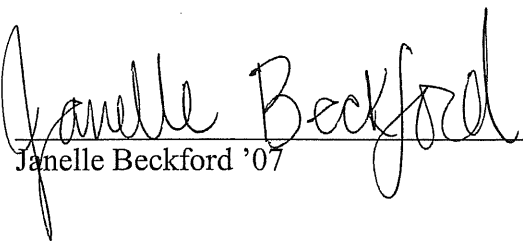
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Melyna Hernandez '07

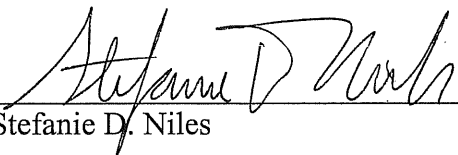
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Cindy Babington

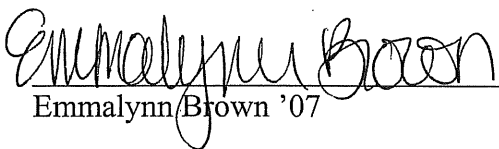
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
James L. Lincoln

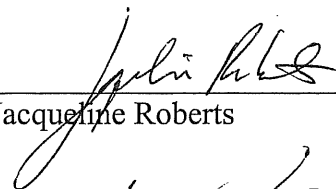
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Christopher Ball '07


  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David Newman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Janelle Beckford '07

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Stefanie D. Niles

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Emmalynn Brown '07

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jacqueline Roberts

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Julie Houk Goodrich '73

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Freffehn '06