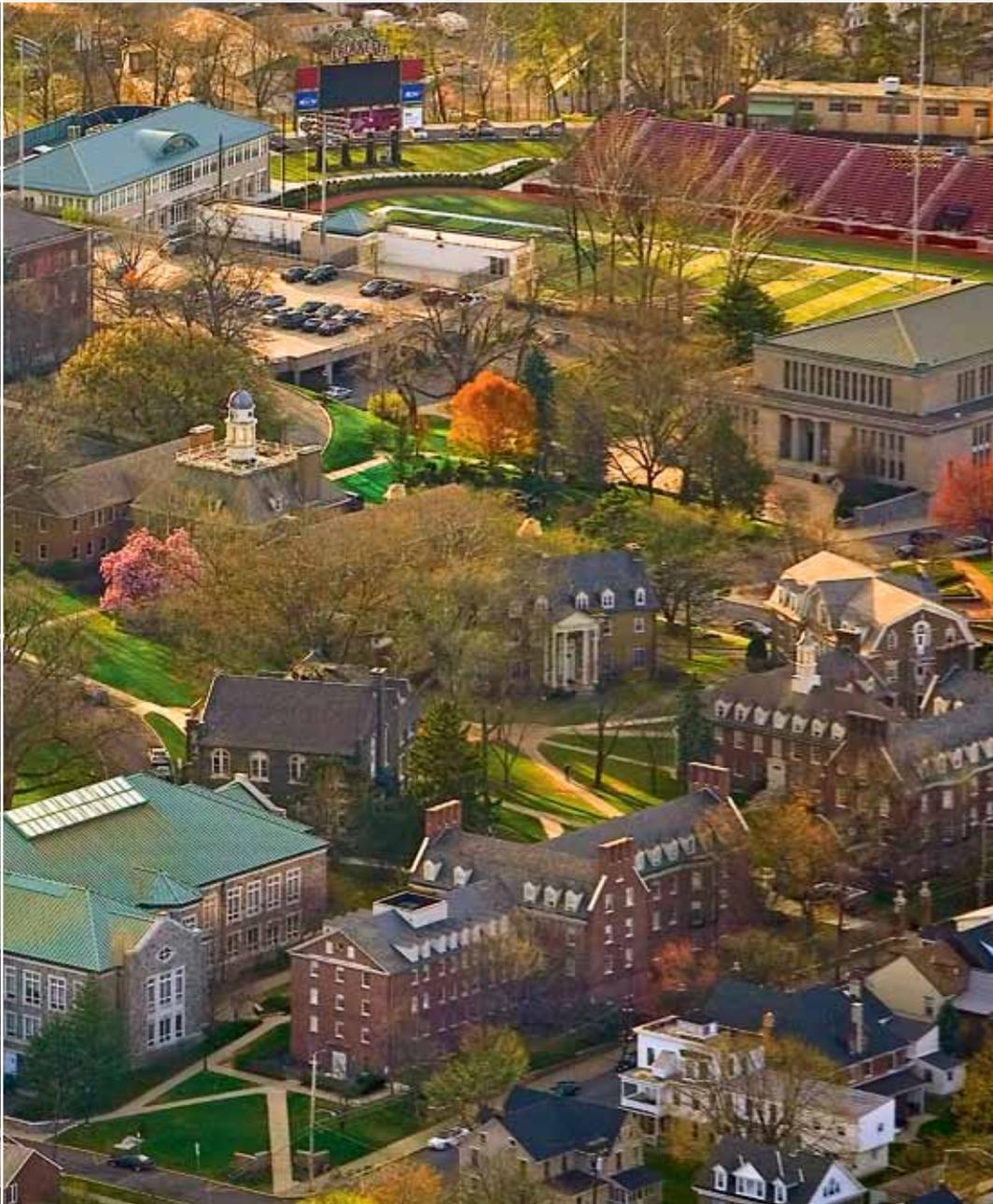


*Report of the Working Group on*  
**GREEK LIFE AND CAMPUS COMMUNITY**



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**LAFAYETTE**

**Report of the Working Group on Greek Life  
and Campus Community**

May 20, 2011

**Executive Summary**

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The full report of the Working Group on Greek Life and Campus Community is available to members of the Lafayette College community in hard copy. Please call the Office of the President, (610) 330-5200.

## I. Introduction and Charge

In 2009, an Ad Hoc Committee on Residence Life undertook a review of Lafayette's residence life program to provide direction as the College implements the Strategic Plan and continues shaping the residential experience for students. The Ad Hoc Committee was chaired by Robert Sell '84, Vice Chair of the Trustee Committee on Student Life. Its final report set forth 25 recommendations for consideration by College officials, three of which pertained specifically to fraternities and sororities. Although the Ad Hoc Committee did not set out to study the Greek system *per se*, the members thought it advisable to conduct an analysis on the role of these groups.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Residence Life sought the input of students through several Student Government forums and focus groups sponsored by Student Government and of faculty and administrators through regular staff and committee meetings. In its final report, the Ad Hoc Committee summarized the history of fraternities and sororities at Lafayette College and recognized their significant value to many current and former students. However, the members also voiced their concerns not all of the goals of the fraternity and sorority system were being met consistently across chapters.

While the Greek community has a long history at Lafayette, there is clearly a need to revisit the purpose of these organizations. While some tend to do well in the areas of recruitment, academic performance, community service, and philanthropy, they have found it challenging over time to adhere to College and national policies related to new-member education and risk management. In addition, fraternities and sororities are constantly in the position of defending themselves against charges of elitism, a lack of diversity, and discriminatory membership-intake practices (*Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Residence Life*, September 2009, p. 25).

The Ad Hoc Committee also noted many non-Greek students, faculty, and administrators had expressed concerns these groups were deleterious to developing the kind of academic community envisioned in the College's Strategic Plan. At the conclusion of its process, the Ad Hoc Committee expressed the "studied opinion that resolution to the issue of how fraternities and sororities can most effectively contribute to the College's mission requires further study."

In response to the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendation, President Weiss created the Working Group on Greek Life and Campus Community with the following charge:

The objective of the Working Group on Greek Life and Campus Community is to understand more clearly the benefits of sorority and

fraternity membership, so as to preserve and enhance these benefits while simultaneously working with the undergraduates and alumni to mitigate the more problematic issues facing the chapters. The group will seek to determine how best these organizations can contribute to the College's future by aligning their primary purposes and daily operations with academic excellence, diversity and inclusion, student learning outside of the classroom, responsible use of controlled substances, personal integrity, and the development of organizations that both support and challenge their members to grow and develop.

Many colleges and universities have carried out similar reviews of their Greek systems during the past decade. The Working Group is indebted to colleagues at Bucknell University, Colgate University, St. Lawrence University, Wake Forest University, Princeton University, Lehigh University, Union College, and the College of William and Mary for sharing their reports and experiences with the Working Group.

The efforts of the Working Group were also informed by the so-called Franklin Square Group of presidents, Greek organizations, and higher education organizations, which issued a report in 2003 entitled *A Call for Values Congruence*. In his introduction to the report, Dr. Steffen Rogers, president emeritus of Bucknell University, stated the Franklin Square conferees "firmly believe that rhetoric will match reality when fraternity and sorority headquarters, host campuses, and students collaboratively implement and assess practices and policies grounded in a shared set of standards."

The report recognizes Greek organizations have the potential to make many positive contributions to institutions of higher education, such as enhancing student learning and leadership, strengthening the connections between alumni and their colleges, and helping students to value community service and citizenship, and many colleges have created "relationship statements" describing the expectations for Greeks and their host institutions. The conferees felt it was necessary to convene their group because they did not believe the Greek community had undergone the kind of transformative or systematic change that would help chapters align their behavior with their stated values (*A Call for Values Congruence*, p.4). They urged presidents to take a leadership role in helping their campuses do the following:

1. Strongly reaffirm the primacy of an academic culture for the campus community and the importance of social organizations, including Greek systems, to sustaining that culture.
2. Articulate collegiate expectations for students groups, including their responsibility for the behavior of their membership.

3. Encourage the development of programs and policies addressing alcohol abuse based upon research findings and established best practices and oversee their implementation.
4. Establish a periodic “certification process,” preferably conducted by or including representation external to the campus, of all recognized social fraternities and sororities. This site-visit process would focus on each individual chapter’s record of abiding by established policies and fulfilling enunciated expectations.
5. Dedicate the necessary resources to promote healthy lifestyles for all students and to encourage Greek organizations to emphasize common core values.
6. Seriously consider the adoption of a policy that clearly specifies that for a national/international fraternity or sorority to have a chapter on the campus, it must have adopted and implemented membership and behavioral standards congruent with those adopted by the North-American Interfraternity Conference and the National Panhellenic Conference.

Although the Working Group on Greek Life and Campus Community was charged to focus solely on the Greek community, members were frequently asked why they were not examining other organizations and aspects of campus life. The College has engaged in numerous studies of its programs and services in recent years, including reviews of campus alcohol use in 1998 and 2011, a 1999 review of its intercollegiate athletics program, a campus climate study conducted in 2000, a 2003-04 study of the religious life program, and a review of student social patterns completed in 2005-06. In addition, a working group examined athletics scholarships during 2005-06, and in 2008-09, as referenced above, an Ad Hoc Committee on Residence Life spent the full academic year examining that program. During the time the Working Group on Greek Life and Campus Community was examining the College’s fraternity and sorority programs, a second campus climate study was being conducted, and the College began reviewing its campus safety policies and practices. Typically, these review committees and working groups involve a wide array of College constituencies, including trustees, faculty, staff, students, and alumni.

The College also collects and examines, on a regular basis, comparative data related to its students through the use of various survey instruments, including the National Survey on Student Engagement, the Cooperative Institutional Research Project, the Lafayette College Drug and Alcohol Survey, the NASPA/ Student Voice Mental Health and Counseling Survey, and survey data obtained on residential living from the Educational Benchmarking Institute (EBI). The Working Group used information from many of these reports and surveys, as well as data collected by the Office of Institutional Research, to evaluate

how well the Greek community was fulfilling its stated goals and to inform its recommendations.

Fraternities and sororities share many things in common with other student organizations, such as providing leadership development, valuing service, and offering social activities, but they also differ in significant ways. The 2009 Ad Hoc Committee on Residence Life realized the uniqueness of fraternities and sororities at Lafayette College and thus believed they warranted special study. Nevertheless, the Working Group on Greek Life and Campus Community endeavored to carry out this review in a manner that would result in recommendations that would not only strengthen the Greek community but all student organizations and social living groups at Lafayette College.

The Working Group had the following objectives:

1. Conduct a thorough review of the history of Greek life and Lafayette College and develop a substantive understanding of the role the Greek system plays on our campus.
2. Examine the characteristics of fraternity and sorority systems at peer institutions.
3. Study best practices on fraternity and sorority management as forwarded by the National Interfraternity Council and sponsor an external review of the College’s Greek system.
4. Review the effectiveness of the COMPASS accreditation process for Greek life.
5. Review the College’s disciplinary process related to adjudicating the misconduct of fraternities and sororities.
6. Review the new-member education program of fraternities and sororities and the subsequent impact of membership on academic performance and student engagement.
7. Study the issue of inclusion and perceived exclusive member-intake practices by fraternities and sororities.
8. Evaluate the potential contributions of historically Black/Latino/Asian fraternities and sororities.
9. Study fraternity and sorority membership composition: scholars, athletes, underrepresented groups, etc.

10. Review the purpose, practices, and effectiveness of the Alumni Interfraternity and Sorority Board (AISB).
11. Study the issue of chapter-house management and facility supervision.
12. Contemplate the development of learning outcomes and assessment measures to be employed by these organizations to document student-learning outcomes.
13. Conduct candid conversations on hazing and the irresponsible use of alcohol within fraternities and sororities.
14. Review College staffing and support issues related to the administrative oversight of Greek organizations.

## 2. Membership and Information-Gathering Process

### *Composition of the Working Group*

The Working Group was co-chaired by **Barbara Levy '77**, chair of the Trustee Committee on Student Life, and **Ashley Juavinett '11**, a neuroscience major and former president of Student Government. Other members included alumni **Paul McCurdy '82**, Trustee and past-President of the Alumni Association, and **Kevin Canavan '76**, co-chair of the AISB; faculty members **James Schaffer**, Professor of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering and Director of Institutional Research, and **John Shaw**, Associate Professor of Psychology; and administrators **James Krivoski**, Executive Assistant to the President and former Vice President for Student Life, **Karen Forbes**, Director of Counseling Services and Student Life Research, **Laurel Peffer**, Assistant Director of Residence Life and Adviser to Fraternities and Sororities, and **Shirley Ramirez**, former Vice President for Diversity and Community Engagement. Other student members of the working group were **Max Bass '10** (American studies), **Thomas Benjamin '12** (chemical engineering and government and law), **Jennifer Cotennec '11** (Executive Vice President of the Panhellenic Council and psychology major), **Louis D'Angelo '11** (former president of the Interfraternity Council and neuroscience major), **Kyara Gray '11** (economics and business), **Justin Kamine '11** (economics and business/policy studies), **Elizabeth Katz '10** (past-President of Panhellenic Council and psychology major), and **DeAndre Morrow '10** (history).

### *Activities of the Working Group*

The Working Group met 18 times, including two four-hour facilitation sessions, between October 2009 and April 2011, with 38 separate meetings held by the Steering Committee. President Weiss met intermittently with the Steering

Committee and with the entire Working Group several times to review the charge and discuss their progress. The group spent its time engaging the College community in conversations related to the issues identified in the charge and collecting statistical information. Members attended a webinar on Current Issues in Greek Life by Drs. Joseph Bertolino and Emily Langdon on Values Based Education in Greek Life and reviewed academic articles on fraternities and sororities. The Working Group also met with the following individuals and groups:

- General Counsel and Vice President for Human Resources Leslie Muhlfelder to review laws relating to single-sex organizations in higher education
- Varsity coaches and the Assistant Director of Athletics to understand the relationship between fraternity and sorority membership and Division I athletics
- Members of the Alumni Interfraternity and Sorority Board to learn about the study they were conducting concurrently with that of the Working Group
- Fraternity and sorority leaders
- Faculty committees on Student Life and Diversity and other faculty members at an open forum
- Greek advisers and administrators on the campuses of Union College and Bucknell, Colgate, and Lehigh Universities
- Eve Riley, Executive Director of the National Panhellenic Council
- Ben Pendry, Vice President for Advancement of the North-American Interfraternity Conference
- Members of the general student body at an open forum

In April 2010, the Working Group engaged consultants from the North-American Interfraternity Conference's Fraternity and Sorority Coalition Assessment Project to conduct a review of Lafayette's fraternity and sorority system and to focus on identifying ways to help the community engage in best practices as defined by national fraternity and sorority organizations. The coalition team members met with groups and individuals from across the campus.

The Lafayette College Alumni Interfraternity and Sorority Board also presented a set of recommendations to the Working Group.

The Working Group enlisted the services of consultant Gretchen Pisano of Sounding Board, Inc., who helped to review and synthesize the data it had collected and to identify key themes that would form the basis of its recommendations.

### *Website*

The Working Group created a website to ensure all members of the College community, including alumni, had an opportunity to share their opinions and suggestions about the role of fraternities and sororities at Lafayette College.

On the website was a brief survey containing seven open-ended questions. All responses were anonymous, and respondents had the opportunity to decline permission for their comments to be included in the final report. Comments were submitted by 905 individuals. The majority of respondents (621) were alumni, with 213 comments from current students, 32 from faculty, 7 from staff, 10 from administrators, and 22 from “other.” The Working Group did not set out to obtain a representative sample of the Lafayette community. The survey comments included in the report are the opinions of the respondents and were chosen to illustrate the range of opinions expressed; no attempt was made by the Working Group to validate any of the claims being made.

### ***The Lafayette Greek System Today***

At present, the College recognizes five fraternities and six sororities, and approximately 40 percent of the current Lafayette upper-class population is affiliated with the Greek system. When first-year students (who are not permitted to affiliate) are included, the percentage of Greek students is 29 percent. Now that the College offers a wide variety of extracurricular and co-curricular clubs and activities as well as vastly improved dining, residential, and recreational facilities, students view the Greek system as an option rather than the only viable social alternative on campus. There are currently five nationally-affiliated fraternities and six sororities.

#### **Fraternities**

Delta Kappa Epsilon  
Delta Upsilon  
Kappa Delta Rho  
Phi Kappa Psi  
Zeta Psi

#### **Sororities**

Alpha Phi  
Alpha Gamma Delta  
Delta Delta Delta  
Delta Gamma  
Kappa Kappa Gamma  
Pi Beta Phi

The current role of fraternities and sororities to enhance the social, intellectual, and cultural life at Lafayette College is summarized in their mission statement on the College’s website:

In partnership with the College, Greek chapters work to uphold their founding values of brotherhood/sisterhood, scholarship, leadership, and

service. Chapters are also charged with enhancing the quality of life for all students on campus by providing a wide range of opportunities for meaningful individual growth and development.

### **3. Community Engagement**

Most chapters cite leadership development, philanthropy and service, and career networking as central to the mission of Greek organizations, and the Working Group heard from many individuals who reported feeling they had, indeed, received such benefits from their participation. Many of the respondents to the web survey expressed their views that their involvement in Greek organizations had helped them develop life skills, such as time management, financial competency, and career networking, but it is unclear if all members have an equal chance to take advantage of these learning opportunities. Although it appears many Greek students hold offices in their chapters and in other student organizations, the Working Group was unable to determine the impact of membership on leadership-skill development. COMPASS reports of participation in leadership training are not consistent across all chapters, so it is possible students are underrepresenting their attendance at regional and national leadership conferences. However, the rate of participation appears lower than expected, given the emphasis on leadership development in most chapters’ mission and values statements.

Most of the information about career networking benefits is also anecdotal. Representatives from the National Panhellenic Conference and the North-American Interfraternity Coalition Fraternity and Sorority Assessment Project emphasized the extensive network of alumni available for career support for members, but they do not maintain actual research data on Greek membership in the career search process.

The most recent COMPASS data available to the Working Group (2009) shows an impressive amount of philanthropic and service activity conducted by the Greek community. However, participation is uneven and dollar amounts raised ranged from \$50 to \$20,000. The average number of hours of service per student was 6.6 per year, which suggests most Greek students are not prioritizing service. There are, however, a disproportionate number of Greek students who hold leadership positions with the Landis Community Outreach Center.

The Working Group heard comments concerning the role of alumni giving. Some individuals expressed the opinion the College was avoiding problems with the Greek community because they feared losing alumni support, and others stated they believed the College’s treatment of certain chapters had already resulted in a

loss of financial support. The data provided by the Office of Development show Greek giving has historically been higher than non-Greek giving. Based on past giving patterns, the development office has concluded any declines in giving after a chapter leaves campus are generally short-lived, though they recommended further data analyses to confirm this opinion.

The Working Group recognizes the data on community-engagement activities are limited and incomplete, and the Greek community and the College could benefit from more systematic record-keeping and evaluation to ensure chapters are fulfilling their objectives in this regard. There is the potential for Greeks to become centers for leadership, philanthropy and service, and career preparation, but the benefits are largely anecdotal at this time. Many Greek alumni expressed a desire to partner with the College in improving chapter performance with regard to community engagement.

#### 4. Academic Excellence

Fraternity and sorority houses have the capacity to provide outstanding living-learning environments. Unfortunately, the data from the Office of Institutional Research suggests there may be some aspects of membership that hamper students' academic performance, especially for fraternity men. In 1995, the faculty voted to move the new-member recruitment and education period to the first semester of sophomore year in an attempt to reverse the declines in the overall grade-point average occurring for Greek students; this decline has persisted for fraternities.

Students in Greek organizations are less likely to have merit scholarships or to pursue EXCEL, honors, and independent scholarly research than students who are not members. Between 1999 and 2008, the percentage of Greeks participating in these activities has declined while it has increased slightly among non-Greeks. The Working Group heard some Greek students voice their opinion that lower GPAs were the result of higher numbers of majors in engineering and the natural sciences. Greeks were not overrepresented in these majors; fraternity and sorority members were most likely to major in the social sciences.

The EBI Resident Survey suggests Greek students value their houses for the opportunities they provide to engage in learning outside the classroom. There is great potential for Greeks to cultivate their houses as centers for scholarship and intellectual discourse, in the spirit of the very first fraternity, Phi Beta Kappa. Such efforts might also help transform some of the perceptions expressed to the Working Group that the Greek community was anti-intellectual. The reports of the 2009 Ad Hoc Committee on Residential Life and the North-American

Interfraternity Conference Fraternity and Sorority Coalition Assessment Project recognized the value of living-learning communities on college campuses. The Greek community would benefit from refocusing its efforts on academic excellence and supporting the academic mission of Lafayette College.

#### 5. Personal Integrity and Responsibility

##### *Conduct and Social Living Groups*

The issue of group and individual responsibility for violations of the Code of Conduct has been one of the most contentious issues faced by the Working Group. The amount of historical data a dean or committee considers regarding group conduct history is an ongoing source of debate.

In the spring of 2010 the College invited a consultant to review the Code of Conduct and to address this conflict specifically. Dr. John Wesley Lowery spent time reviewing the document and also speaking with members of the campus community. In evaluating conduct matters, decisions must be made about group versus individual responsibility. Dr. Lowery made reference to a chapter from the 1992 book *Rights, Freedoms and Responsibilities: A Continuing Agenda* edited by Richard Mullendore and William Bryan. The chapter, written by Joe Buchanan and D. Parker Young (p. 84), outlines six general principles of group responsibility. The six principles are as follows:

1. Members of the group act in concert to violate university standards of conduct.
2. A violation arises out of a group sponsored, financed, or endorsed event.
3. A group leader(s) has knowledge of the incident before it occurs and fails to take corrective action.
4. The incident occurs on the premises owned or operated by the group.
5. A pattern of individual violations is found to have existed without proper and appropriate group control, remedy, or sanction.
6. Members of a group act in concert, or the organization provides the impetus (probable cause) for violation of university rules and regulations.

Although more than a decade old, this paradigm of assigning group responsibility for individual behaviors is still applicable. The authors are clear to point out organizations are responsible for the actions of their members and the

responsibility to ensure rules and regulations are followed is the duty of every member of the group. Lafayette College most clearly defines living-group responsibility as it relates to the alcohol policy, and since the overwhelming majority of violations of policy for which groups are adjudicated center on the alcohol policy, this is a good place to find the definition. Lafayette's *Student Handbook* defines living-group events within the College's alcohol policy. There are specific guidelines for fraternities and sororities outlined, and the first two items of the policy define living-group events and living-group responsibility.

**Living-group events:** Any activity for which the living group pays, directly or indirectly, constitutes an event sponsored by that organization. Also, any event or activity that takes place in a living group's house is the responsibility of the living group. Living groups that use any private, off-campus facility to host social events may be held accountable by the College for violations of city and Commonwealth laws (*Student Handbook 2010-11*, p. 9).

**Living-group responsibility:** A living group sponsoring an event is responsible for ensuring that the alcohol policy is observed, and it will be held responsible for violations of the policy by individuals, including undergraduates and alumni. Each case will be judged, however, based on the efforts of the organization to ensure compliance. Individuals who violate these rules will also be held accountable, and, when appropriate, both individuals and organizations will be subject to disciplinary actions (*Student Handbook 2010-11*, p. 9).

When the current Lafayette College statements about living-group events and responsibility are compared to those outlined by Buchanan and Young, there appears a high degree of consistency between the threshold Lafayette College uses to determine group responsibility and the guidelines Buchanan and Young provide regarding group responsibility.

A total of 59 formal actions against Greek organizations have been recorded since the year 2000. Additionally, during this time period, three organizations voluntarily withdrew from campus pending conduct proceedings. Alcohol was a factor in nearly all conduct situations for which formal or preemptive action was taken. It appears the percentage of total sanctions for violations of the Code of Conduct by affiliated upper-class students has trended downward, at least for the period studied by the Working Group.

The Working Group also obtained information on the disciplinary processes for Greek organizations used at Bucknell, Colgate, and Lehigh Universities. In essence, each school's disciplinary process is roughly identical to that of Lafayette

College. Bucknell uses an interfraternity council judicial board to adjudicate minor incidents of misconduct; this appeared to be the primary difference from Lafayette's policy and procedures.

The Fraternal Information and Programming Group (FIPG), the risk-management program for fraternities and sororities, also makes the assumption the chapter will be held responsible for the actions of individual members. Member fraternities and sororities are expected to comply with FIPG policies in situations in which the university policies are less restrictive (*FIPG Risk Management Manual*, 2008, p. 9).

### ***High-Risk Alcohol Use***

High-risk alcohol use has been an ongoing concern at Lafayette College and at colleges and universities across the country. Self-report data collected over the past decade has shown a consistent pattern of heavier and more frequent alcohol consumption among Greek students. COMPASS includes the expectations students will participate in alcohol-education programs sponsored by the College or by the chapters.

The College collects data on students' alcohol and drug use from a number of sources, including the NASPA/Student Voice Mental Health and Counseling Survey, the biannual Lafayette College Alcohol and Drug Survey, and the Educational Benchmarking Institute's Resident Survey. The Mental Health and Counseling Survey (2010) included six questions on alcohol and drug use. Substantial differences were found between Greeks and non-Greeks on all alcohol-related questions.

### ***Hazing***

Lafayette College defines hazing as "any ceremony or practice which involves mental or physical exhaustion or abuse or would in any way interfere with the students' mental or physical ability to perform their work at Lafayette College. These rites must not reflect unfavorably upon either the group or the College or be of a dangerous, rude, or demeaning nature" (*Student Handbook 2010-11*, p. 11).

Lafayette does not have any quantitative information on the prevalence of hazing on our campus, though campus administrators do report receiving anonymous reports of hazing from parents and students and some respondents to the web survey reported having experienced or witnessed hazing. Fraternity and sorority members are required to participate in hazing prevention educational programs sponsored by the College on an annual basis; 75 percent of members must be in attendance. Comments from the web survey show a variety of opinions about hazing, most of which were from alumni.

### *Unwanted Sexual Experiences*

At Lafayette, 24 percent of Greek students reported experiencing unwanted sexual contacts since coming to college as compared to 10 percent of non-Greek students. Of those students who reported unwanted sexual experiences, 26 percent of sorority members and 20 percent of fraternity members reported these unwanted contacts; 16 percent of non-Greek women and 5 percent of non-Greek men reported unwanted sexual contacts. Greek students were also more likely to report having unprotected and unplanned sexual experiences, to have been forced to engage in sex, to report alcohol-related sexual contacts, and to have experienced or to know of others who have experienced incidents of sexual assault and harassment.

### *Summary*

The Franklin Square Group's *Call for Values Congruence* cited alcohol abuse as a particularly destructive force within the Greek community. High-risk alcohol use is associated with vandalism, sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and hazing among many student groups at almost all colleges and universities, but Greeks have been associated with these problems to a greater degree. Education on these issues has been required by Lafayette College and chapters' national organizations, however the problems associated with high-risk alcohol use are still prevalent. Members of Lafayette's Greek community self-report greater use of alcohol on all of the College's survey instruments and are more likely to report alcohol-related violence, unwanted sexual experiences, and academic disruption. Repeated alcohol violations are the primary reason groups receive sanctions from the Dean of Students or from the Committee on Student Conduct and in some cases lose their ability to remain on campus. When almost one third of fraternity members report drinking almost every day it is unlikely they are fulfilling their potential either in or out of the classroom.

Although the Working Group was unable to obtain substantiated information about the frequency of hazing at Lafayette, the National Study of Student Hazing suggests coercive alcohol consumption is the most frequently occurring method of hazing in fraternities and sororities. The Working Group heard from students and alumni that the rules prohibiting hazing are unclear and some hazing leads to closer bonds, which suggests the College needs to make more clear to students, alumni, and parents its policies related to hazing and to take steps to promote alternative strategies to developing close ties among members.

The adjudication of group misconduct appears to be consistent with best practices and the practices employed at other colleges. Nevertheless, the Working Group received feedback that the basis for decisions about whether to sanction groups or individuals was still perceived as unfair and the appeals process was out of step with conventional practice.

## 6. Diversity and Inclusiveness

### *Perceptions of Exclusivity in the Greek Community*

The issue of "exclusivity" was mentioned frequently by respondents to the Working Group web survey. It was clear this term was used not just with regard to race, ethnicity, gender, or religion; it also referred to the practice of not being open to all who wished to join a specific chapter or the system as a whole and to having membership criteria that were inconsistent, unclear, and not transparent. These concerns were heard frequently by the Working Group, and they were often voiced by current and past members of sororities and fraternities.

However some respondents to the survey appear to value the exclusivity of Greek organizations and believe that the process prepares students for the future.

The Working Group was charged with addressing the issues of diversity within the existing Greek system as well as the feasibility of adding historically Black, Latino, and Asian chapters. The 2009 Ad Hoc Committee on Residence Life made the following observations in its report:

No issue divides our society more than diversity, and our campus is reflective of this divide. Student interest in historically Black or Latino organizations is in part an expression of preference and in part an indication that many students of color do not feel comfortable joining any of the traditional organizations that make up Lafayette's current Greek community. While some chapters have been more successful than others in diversifying their membership and some others may have the desire to do so, past efforts have not been sufficient to meet this perceived and expressed need (p. 26).

Committee members recommend that the College support those students who wish to join historically Black or Latino fraternities and sororities, directly through regional or national organizations, but we are reluctant to advocate for the recognition of campus-based chapters of such organizations pending the completion of the work of the Working Group on Greek Life and Campus Community this academic year (p. 42).

The Working Group relied primarily on information from the Office of Institutional Research to determine whether fraternities and sororities were diverse with regard to race, income, and athletic participation, but also used additional sources of information such as Counseling and Mental Health Study and the Campus Climate Survey to inform its recommendations.

### ***Gender***

Most sororities and fraternities are prohibited by their national organizations from becoming coeducational. Ben Pendry, Vice President for Advancement of the North-American Interfraternity Conference, and Eve Riley, Chair of the National Panhellenic Conference, confirmed that groups would likely have their charters revoked by their national organizations if they were to allow members of the opposite sex to join. Although Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. § 1681-1688), states "... [n]o person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance [including student loans]," the statute provides a list of exceptions to this general rule including one for social fraternities or sororities. According to §1681(a) (6) of the statute, this general prohibition "shall not apply to membership practices... of a social fraternity or social sorority... which consists primarily of students in attendance at an institution of higher education..." Thus, Title IX does not prohibit the presence or recognition of single-sex living groups on Lafayette's campus.

During open meetings and in personal communications, some members of the Lafayette community voiced their objections to single-sex organizations as contrary to Lafayette's non-discrimination policy with regard to all other student organizations, and they were concerned that those who argued that fraternities and sororities provided benefits above and beyond those offered by other groups were depriving students from receiving those benefits on the basis of gender.

### ***Race and Ethnicity***

Analyses were conducted to determine whether the racial/ethnic distribution of students varied by membership in a fraternity or sorority. Analyses were conducted on data from 1999 and 2008. The percentage of students of color who were Greek increased between 1999 and 2008, however the percentages are still well below what would be expected based on their representation in the College population.

In 1999, 4.80 percent of fraternity members and 12.15 percent of non-members identified themselves as racial/ethnic minorities; in 2008 the percentages increased to 9.15 percent of members and 20.21 percent of non-members. Members of ethnic and minority groups made up 2.46 percent of sorority membership in 1999 and 7.95 percent in 2008; 10.56 percent of non-Greek female students were racial or ethnic minorities in 1999 and 26.91 percent in 2008.

### ***Summary***

The membership of Greek organizations appears to differ from the student body as a whole in several ways. Fraternity and sorority members are more likely to

be Caucasian, less likely to be receiving financial support, more likely to identify themselves as Catholic, and less likely to feel isolated and alone. Fraternity members were also less likely to be varsity student-athletes. Greek students were twice as likely to believe the Greek community contributed to a positive campus climate as were non-Greeks. The groups are single-sex as required by their national organizations and they are exempt from non-discrimination requirements under Title IX.

The Working Group was challenged to define the meaning of diversity and to include academic major, sexual orientation, and geography in our definition. As noted in the section on academic excellence, academic majors were not distributed equally within the Greek community. There were few students who identified themselves as gay, lesbian, or bisexual in the Campus Climate Survey, however a slightly greater number of those students were non-Greek. The Working Group did not collect data on the geographic origins of students.

Information about the perception Greeks are "exclusive" organizations whose criteria for membership were secretive and inconsistent was largely gathered through the web survey and conversations with members of the Lafayette community. The Working Group heard from students of color and non-members that many did not feel welcome in Greek houses. Greeks who were very positive about their overall experience still commented they thought the process for recruitment and selection needed to be improved and made more transparent.

## **7. Recommendations**

The following recommendations are based on the findings of institutional research; conversations with students, faculty, alumni, and administrators; web survey responses; the reports of the North-American Interfraternity Conference Fraternity and Sorority Coalition Assessment Project and the Alumni Interfraternity and Sorority Board; the report of the Franklin Square group on Values Congruence; and research on best practices at other institutions. After reviewing the information it collected, the Working Group met with consultant Gretchen Pisano of Sounding Board, Inc., to formulate preliminary recommendations. Members of the Steering Committee solicited recommendations from the entire Working Group, which were incorporated into the first draft. The Working Group met on five subsequent occasions before arriving at the final draft. The Working Group was able to achieve consensus on most of the recommendations, though there is one on which a difference of opinion remains.

The changes being proposed are intended to transform the Greek community and to improve its relationship with the College. Most of the recommendations are consistent with those proposed by the college presidents of the Franklin Square Group in their report *A Call to Values Congruence*, which focuses on prioritizing academic engagement, communicating behavioral expectations clearly, using research-based approaches to reduce high-risk alcohol use and improve overall well-being, and systematic evaluation of chapters' adherence to their own missions and to that of the College. Central to the mission of Lafayette College is its commitment to making its campus a diverse, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

Regardless of which recommendations the Board may choose to endorse, it is imperative a reasonable period of time be employed to assess the effectiveness of the changes made. Systematic assessment has become a requirement for the accreditation of colleges and universities and for many of their programs. Anecdotes and personal opinions will not be sufficient to make important decisions regarding the impact of the recommendations. Students, alumni, and College officials must be given adequate time to adjust to changes in decades-old practices and to adopt new skills and behaviors before the changes are judged to have been successful.

The Working Group believes that for these recommendations to be implemented, the Greek community must work cooperatively with the College and with alumni and national organizations to achieve academic excellence, to become more diverse and inclusive, to live up to its ideals of personal responsibility and integrity, and to fulfill its mission of philanthropy, service, and leadership.

#### ***Improving Relationships between the College and the Greek Community***

The Working Group recognizes it is vital for the College and the Greek community to have a positive, open, and trusting working relationship. The five fraternities and six sororities currently recognized by the College must be supported in a manner that will provide them with optimal opportunity to succeed in fulfilling the College's mission and the purposes of their national organizations. Both the North-American Interfraternity Conference Fraternity and Sorority Coalition Assessment Report and the AISB membership articulated a need for the College to acknowledge the existence of the Greek community on campus and to make public its virtues. The Working Group concurs that, as a significant part of campus life, this system should not be ignored or hidden by the College but that both the virtues and struggles of these organizations should be made transparent to assist students as they make decisions about becoming members of the Greek community. Therefore:

1. The partnership between the College and the Alumni Interfraternity and Sorority Board must be strengthened, with active involvement from recognized organizations and the College. Lafayette should play a stronger role in facilitating the functioning of this organization.
2. Information on Greek life at Lafayette should become fully represented throughout the College's public relations efforts. The activities and advantages of Greek life should be fully transparent in areas such as admissions, tours, Family Weekend, Alumni Reunion, etc.
3. The College should maintain its web presence such that a balanced perspective on each organization is offered to interested students and their parents. This balanced perspective would include each group's mission and the many philanthropic and service projects each sponsors, the recent conduct history and current disciplinary status of the groups, and each organization's accreditation status (COMPASS or its equivalent) to afford prospective new members and parents the opportunity to make well-informed decisions concerning organizational choices.
4. The College must partner more closely with the national organizations of our active chapters, such that meaningful interaction, either in person or via teleconference, occurs each semester. These interactions should involve the Vice President for Campus Life and Senior Diversity Officer, the Dean of Students, the College's Greek Adviser, executives from the national organizations, and student leaders.
5. The Working Group recommends College officials communicate with the parents of students joining fraternities and sororities, perhaps through a Parents' Council, concerning the recruitment process, the new-member education process, and initiation (i.e., letter to parents on student selection to a chapter).
6. The College should engage in conversations with alumni officials concerning best practices for chapter-house management. While these residential facilities—fraternities, sororities, residence halls, off-campus houses—provide differing living-learning experiences for students, all must receive the appropriate physical plant attention from the College.
7. The alumni advising for Greek organizations must be improved, such that advisers receive training from the College and the various national organizations and performance-assessment becomes a part of this important role. Specific improvements include providing at least two advisers per house, one having been graduated for a minimum of 10 years, and personal meetings with College officials at least twice per semester focusing on financial management, philanthropic activities, faculty involvement, and general chapter management.

8. The Vice President for Campus Life and Senior Diversity Officer should secure/appoint additional staff resources to support the supervision and educational programming related to the College's Greek Life program.

### ***The Greek Community as a Center for Academic Excellence and Innovation***

The academic achievement of all students is a priority for the College.

Unfortunately, the data suggest many Greek organizations have not been successful in making such academic excellence a priority. Of special concern is the decline in fraternity GPA during the semester when recruitment and new-member education occurs. This is an important matter that requires the close attention of the College, alumni leaders, and representatives from the national organizations. The Working Group believes the solutions to this problem will best be addressed through organizational rewards that create a culture of academic pride, rather than through punitive measures. This is a matter that must be featured prominently in the revitalized accreditation program (COMPASS).

9. The College should work with the Faculty Committee on Student Life to develop a Tech Clinic model of new-member education, whereby faculty/staff members, with input from the national organization, would work with the new-member class to achieve established outcomes. At Lafayette, Tech Clinics are hands-on courses that bring together students from different majors to help solve real-world problems. This model could be configured in a manner that would incorporate the strengths of this collaboration into the new-member education process. The Group recognizes, if adopted, such a program would be designed differently for different groups and might require differing time periods to complete. The Working Group recommends the current new-member education period remain at three weeks in length, at least until the Tech Clinic option is explored as a possible alternative.
10. The College should institute a strategy where fraternity and sorority chapter houses will be scheduled on a regular basis for academic use and open to all on campus to participate in these activities. The Group imagines classes and seminars would be taught in the houses, lectures given, receptions held, films shown, academic discussions facilitated, etc. These facilities, with the assistance of alumni and undergraduate members, can be transposed into living-learning centers important to the campus community, in a manner similar to what was proposed by the 2009 Ad Hoc Committee on Residence Life.
11. The Working Group recommends, with the assistance of the Faculty Committee on Student Life, the Greek life accreditation program, COMPASS, be reconsidered so it focuses on organizational values alignment, specific learning outcomes, and the assessment of those outcomes. Such a program might differ for the various organizations, as suggested by the NIC report, but

positive outcomes should be recognized and rewarded, while organizational failure in this area should be addressed as well.

12. Faculty and staff members who are full-time College employees should be encouraged to serve as advisers to fraternities and sororities, and they should receive training and be rewarded for their efforts. These faculty and staff advisers will work together as a steering council with house leaders to create community-wide programming hosted by the Greek organizations. The College should review staffing patterns and financial resources to support this council and its efforts.

### ***Supporting a Diverse, Inclusive, and Welcoming Greek Community***

The Campus Climate Study found the campus is divided in its opinion about the impact of the Greek community on the campus as a positive and welcoming environment. The current membership does not reflect the diversity of the student body. The success of these organizations is tied to College support, their new-member selection and education processes, and to others' perceptions that they are open, welcoming, and purposeful. The Working Group also recognizes the current community lacks any representation from historically Black, Latino, and Asian fraternities and sororities. Therefore:

13. College officials should work with fraternity and sorority alumni advisers and national organization representatives to devise a recruitment system for Lafayette whereby these organizations are open to any interested student and do not discriminate in membership-intake beyond grade-point average, disciplinary standing, and other well-reasoned, transparent qualifications: *transparency* in new member selection criteria is the operative concept. The criteria for each organization should be well-publicized.
14. The College must enter into a partnership with alumni, parents, and national executives in framing the details of purposeful new-member education programs. There should be a pre-approved new-member program calendar of activities, a new-member handbook needs to be developed and distributed as part of the orientation, and representatives of the national organization and the alumni adviser must be present for and certify each group's initiation.
15. A fund should be developed and a process initiated to provide financial support for those who are unable to join Greek life and other student organizations due to costs. The College, in coordination with the AISB, should develop a mechanism for funding this program through an assessment placed on chapter alumni and/or funding from the national headquarters.
16. The Working Group strongly recommends Greek organizations offer alcohol-free social events (similar to DU spinning) open to the entire campus

community and coordinated with the student life division, on a recurring basis. This is designed to provide additional social outlets for all students and to “open” the chapter houses in a way that mitigates their exclusive images. The College should provide financial support for this recommendation.

17. Chapters should place high priority on the successful launch of community service/service-learning initiatives in partnership with the City of Easton and within the Easton community. Ideally, such philanthropic activities conducted by various chapters would be open to the general student body and would involve developing important ties between students, the organizations, and the city. Greek life programming must be more closely connected to the Landis Community Outreach Center staff to ensure coordinated and high-quality service experiences.
18. College officials over time have heard passionate testimony from multicultural students that existing Greek organizations on campus do not fully meet their needs. The Working Group heard such reports as well. As Lafayette continues to make diversity and inclusive excellence an institutional priority, the Working Group was unanimous in encouraging the College to identify and put into place additional support structures that optimize the experiences of all students. To this end, the Working Group recommends the College support those students who wish to join culturally based fraternities and sororities through regional or national organizations, through city-wide or metro chapters, or through a limited number of Lafayette recognized chapters, with the understanding that such organizations comply with the recommendations of the Working Group. Such initiatives that more fully address the needs of a diverse community, offer added value in providing opportunities not currently available on campus, and actively further the College’s diversity and inclusion goals should receive immediate attention.
19. The Working Group recommends the College create, in partnership with the AISB and national organizations, a leadership-development program for all new members of fraternities and sororities. The Working Group anticipates this might present an opportunity for joint programming with other Lehigh Valley institutions through the Lehigh Valley Association of Independent Colleges.

***Promoting Personal Integrity, Responsibility, and Well-Being in the Greek Community***

Throughout its review, the Working Group discussed important issues related to the wellness of our students, such as alcohol and substance abuse, disordered eating, hazing, sexual misconduct, and behaviors related to general incivility. These problems are often associated with fraternities and sororities, but it is clear they are not limited to these organizations. Although for years the College

has engaged in efforts to address these issues, a re-conceptualization of how best to move forward with this initiative is necessary. The Working Group is aware there are currently campus groups reviewing the College’s approaches to alcohol education and working on innovative and research-based interventions. Research on high-risk alcohol consumption among college students suggests the most successful interventions are [1] student-driven, [2] address students’ perceptions about their peers’ behaviors and attitudes (i.e., social and injunctive norms), [3] involve parents, and [4] include environmental-management strategies. The Working Group supports any policy changes that will permit students, both affiliated and nonaffiliated, to use alcohol in a responsible and legal manner and in ways that comply with fraternity and sorority FIPG guidelines.

Most of the disciplinary infractions involving Greek organizations are related to the illegal use or abuse of alcohol. The Working Group heard testimony that the disciplinary history of organizations – more than 4 years – might reflect the behavior of students who are no longer undergraduates at the College, and, thus, it can seem unfair to punish the organization for the behavior of past students. Simultaneously, the Group is aware these organizations sometimes take on a negative “group culture” that germinates over time and sustains itself despite the efforts of the College, alumni, well-meaning individual students, or the national office to change it. Furthermore, the Working Group is aware of the challenge in deciding whether violations of the College’s Code of Conduct are the responsibility of an individual, an organization, or both.

Also, the Group is aware that, at present, a pronounced gap exists between perception and reality related to how organizational misconduct is adjudicated. Many affiliated students and alumni view the College’s disciplinary process as flawed. However, College officials strive to follow best practices in this respect (and practices similar, if not identical, to our peer institutions). Therefore:

20. The Working Group recommends the College reconfigure under a comprehensive wellness model its approach to alcohol and drug education, hazing prevention, healthy eating and exercise, and sexual misconduct education, focusing on positive lifestyle behaviors, to accompany the necessary policy-enforcement efforts. The Working Group anticipates this effort will require the College to commit additional resources in the form of funding and personnel.
21. Students should be involved in the planning and execution of alcohol-education and prevention activities. The Greek community should be encouraged and supported in bringing a chapter of Gamma (Greeks Advocating the Mature Management of Alcohol) to campus, but the College should also provide adequate advising so the group can be successful.

22. The College should consider the adoption of the research-based on-line prevention program *Outside the Classroom*, which includes modules on alcohol education and sexual assault, as well as a module specific to the Greek community. These programs could be used during new-student orientation and Greek new-member education. Colleges that adopt *Outside the Classroom* receive individualized consultations about best practices and may attend the Annual Research Institute.
23. The Working Group recommends faculty members consider addressing the issue of high-risk alcohol within the curriculum, where it is appropriate. The Group is aware that the Office of the Provost and the Division of Student Life are developing a curriculum-infusion program, based on a successful effort at the University of Virginia, to use College survey data in courses as a way to understand and address such problems as high-risk alcohol use.
24. The College must work with alumni advisers to address the issue of organizations moving their social events to off-campus locations in order to provide alcohol to minors (their own members and as a recruiting practice).
25. The Working Group recommends the College participate in hazing-prevention organizations and conferences, such as the Novak Hazing Prevention Conference at Lehigh University in June 2011. Current members and new members should be required to sign a hazing contract. The College should establish a Hazing Tip Line to provide a mechanism for students, parents, and others to report hazing being conducted by any type of campus organization. The Working Group recommends the College's response to hazing of any kind, by any type of student organization, be unequivocal and substantive. There should be no tolerance for hazing, and communication from the College on this issue must be thorough and frequent (through faculty, staff, coaches, advisers, alumni, etc.). Finally, the College must involve parents of students in its efforts to educate students regarding hazing.
26. While the Working Group recommends the College ensure it continues to observe best practices in the adjudication of student/organizational misconduct, it also recognizes Lafayette must seek ways to communicate more effectively its policies and practices and, when reasonably possible, how individual/ group misconduct has been adjudicated. The Group understands that when appropriate, individual students should be held accountable for misconduct, and not an organization; when appropriate, organizations alone should be held accountable; and when appropriate, both individuals and organizations should be held accountable. More transparent community education on this matter is in order.

27. The Faculty Committee on Student Conduct, which adjudicates cases of serious organizational misconduct, must be trained to consider organizational-conduct histories in a manner that ensures organizations are treated fairly while the interests of the College community are maintained as well. It is the sense of the Working Group that the Adviser to Fraternities and Sororities should play a role in the training of this committee, and alumni leaders could be more engaged in the disciplinary process. Finally, groups should be provided with incentives/ recognition for commendable organizational and individual disciplinary records, perhaps through the Hoff Awards program.
28. The Working Group supports the creation of Interfraternity Council and Panhellenic Council Judicial Boards—as recommended by the NIC Coalition Assessment Team and AISB—for the purpose of adjudicating minor organizational violations of the College's Code of Conduct, Commonwealth law, and policies of the various national organizations.
29. The Working Group recommends, as described in the Coalition Assessment Team Report, the College's senior student affairs officer consider a staffing configuration whereby the Adviser to Fraternities and Sororities reports through the Department of Student Life Programs, so as to separate further his/her association with the student-conduct system and adjudication process and to connect more closely with that department's leadership-education programs.

#### ***College Recognition and Assessment of Greek Organizations***

The Working Group encountered substantial bifurcation of opinion regarding the number of fraternities and sororities that should exist at Lafayette. While there is strong opinion within the College community that no additional groups should be recognized, and even that the current system should be abolished altogether, many alumni affiliated with Greek organizations advocate for additional groups. Indeed, the Working Group did not reach consensus on this issue. Some members opine that the future of the College's student-life program should not include additional, traditional fraternities and sororities, while others would reserve judgment on this issue until the Working Group's recommendations have been implemented and their impact evaluated. Two minority opinions exist within the group, one for abolition and one for more flexibility in considering expansion of the system. Over the past decade, the College has focused its efforts on attempting to enhance the quality of fraternity and sorority life rather than adding to quantity, so that existing groups are programmatically and organizationally strong, while at the same time meeting student demand for other types of special-interest living groups and incorporating these into the College's residential program.

In any event, it makes sense that the first order of business should be for the College to implement the Working Group's recommendations and to assess systematically their effectiveness over a period of time. This assessment should provide direction to the Board of Trustees regarding the future configuration of Greek life on campus. Therefore:

30. Upon acceptance of this report and approval of its recommendations, an implementation committee should be appointed to create a Time and Responsibility Grid. This committee, which should include or report to the Faculty Committee on Student Life and the new Vice President for Campus Life and Senior Diversity Officer, will operate at ground level and be responsible for ensuring the details of the recommendations are moved forward. Ultimately, the committee will report on its work to the Trustee Committee on Student Life.
31. An oversight committee consisting of various College constituents, including faculty, staff, students, and alumni, should be convened to assess the effectiveness of these recommendations. This committee will focus on the desired outcomes of this study and the assessment of those outcomes. The results should be used to guide the future of Greek life at the College.

