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J. Patrick Biddix Ph.D.
Valdosta State University

Rachel Underwood
Valdosta State University

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A TEN-YEAR STUDY OF INDIVIDUAL OUTCOMES FROM A FRATERNITY CENTRAL OFFICE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

J. Patrick Biddix and Rachel Underwood

Fraternities promote leadership development as a benefit of membership. Researchers examined fraternal commitment and engagement of participants attending a leadership program offered by a fraternity central office. This study was designed as an outcomes assessment and included 2,065 cases, the total number of fraternity men attending in the ten-year span from 1999-2008. The following data were examined: attendance, undergraduate leadership, alumni/volunteer involvement, and donor rosters, as well as post-program survey evaluations. Descriptive statistics and significance tests revealed that (a) 63% of participants took a formal undergraduate leadership role, (b) 8% of participants took a volunteer advisory role, (c) 8% became donors, and (d) some years were more developmental for participants than others.

Fraternities promote leadership development as a benefit of membership. Organizational mission and vision statements emphasize leadership training (Harms, Wood, Roberts, Bureau, & Green, 2006), and many central offices offer or sponsor programming to meet this focus. Examples of inter/national programming include Beta Theta Pi's [Wooden Institute](#), Phi Delta Theta's [Emerging Leaders](#), and Sigma Chi's [Horizons](#). The impact of programming sponsored by fraternity central offices, however, is difficult to establish due to a lack of public empirical evidence. This disconnect lends support to Strayhorn and Colvin's (2006) observation that, "many offices of fraternity and sorority affairs emphatically state that they enhance the learning and development of students with little data to support such a claim" (p. 99).

Lack of justification for programs and services, coupled with scarce resources, has led to a greater call for accountability in recent years (Schuh & Upcraft, 2000). The Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors's (AFA) *Core Competencies for Excellence in the Profession* (2007) calls for professionals to be researchers, which includes assessing the impact of programs and resources on the fraternity/sorority community. Ironically, fraternity and campus-based professionals already have data (e.g., GPA, membership rosters, initiation rates, chapter and member consultations, needs-based and satisfaction surveys from programs), but fail to comprehensively report outcomes (Hesp & Biddix, 2009, September).

The purpose of this study was to examine the available evidence of leadership development resulting from attending a leadership program sponsored by a fraternity central office. Data were drawn from records normally kept by the organization, demonstrating that while data is often available, it needs to be collated, analyzed, and reported. Findings reveal after-program rates of office attainment, alumni involvement, and giving, pointing to the years in which the program was most effective in training new leaders.

Review of Literature

Hayek, Carini, O'Day, and Kuh (2002) noted, "perhaps the various programs and activities being implemented at local chapters by national organizations and campus-based personnel to enhance

the quality of Greek [sic] life are having the desired impact” (p. 658). Unfortunately, no published research was identified linking outcomes to central office leadership programming. Related research on outcomes from campus-based leadership programs offered some insight.

Outcomes Related to Fraternity Membership

In addition to small impacts on cognitive development after the first year (Pascarella, Flowers, & Whitt, 2006), research has favorably related personal/interpersonal growth, social interaction, collaborative work, and the ability to influence others, to fraternity membership. A limitation to the studies reported below is that studies conducted by Pike (2000, 2003) did not differentiate fraternity from sorority outcomes. With regard to general personal/interpersonal growth, Hayek et al. (2002) found affiliated men had higher gains than their unaffiliated counterparts. Pike (2003) reported this to be true for affiliated seniors. Both researchers found members to have better relationships with students, faculty, and administrative personnel, while Pike (2000) also reported higher levels of integration to college among first-year members.

In terms of collaborative work and commitment, Hayek et al. (2002) and Pike (2000, 2003) found members more engaged than non-members in active and collaborative learning, while Martin, Hevel, and Asel (2008) discovered positive gains in collaborate work measures. Dugan (2008) found affiliated men scored higher on commitment scales than non-members across all years of college. As for ability to influence others, Kezar and Moriarty (2000) reported significant gains among fraternity members four years after beginning college. Both Asel, Seifert, and Pascarella (2009) and Pike (2003) found this to be true among fraternity/sorority seniors.

Outcomes Related to Fraternity Leadership

Astin (1977, 1984, 1993), as well as Kuh (1995) and, more comprehensively, Pascarella and Terenzini (1991, 2005) cited positive gains in leadership skills among fraternity and sorority members. Being an officer in a campus organization significantly contributed to leadership development, decision-making skills, and feelings of personal competence (Astin, 1993; Kezar & Moriarty, 2000; Kuh, 1995). Fraternity presidents retained high confidence in their leadership ability up to ten years after college (Kelley, 2008). With regard to peer perception, however, Harms et al. (2006) found fraternity and sorority members holding formal offices were less often recognized as effective leaders than the members with the strongest commitment to the organization.

Outcomes Related to Leadership Programming in College

Research indicates that college students can and do increase their leadership skills during the college years (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Students who participate in leadership training programs during college not only develop significant skills, but also learn to more effectively develop those skills in others (Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, & Burkhardt, 2001; Kezar & Moriarty, 2000; Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt, 1999). This can be particularly true for members of fraternities (Dugan, 2008; Harms et al., 2006; Martin et al., 2008, November). Further, time spent in student organizations such as fraternities and being elected to office, indicators of engagement and commitment, have shown the strongest correlations with personal growth (Astin, 1977, 1984, 1993).

Zimmerman-Oster and Burkhardt (1999) summarized self-reported outcomes from leadership programming at 21 institutions, finding gains in confidence, leadership skills, and willingness to serve in a leadership role, particularly when activities were structured in cooperative ways. Kezar and Moriarty (2000) found the highest predictor for leadership skills among men was participating in a leadership class. Similarly, Dugan (2006) found students participating in formal leadership programs scored significantly higher on common purpose and citizenship.

In one of the few comprehensive (and subsequently often-cited) studies on the subject, Cress et al. (2001) explored whether programming had a direct effect on student leadership ability and personal development. Using longitudinal data from 875 students at 10 institutions, Cress et al. found that versus all other students, those participating in a leadership experience were interested in developing leadership skills in others at a significantly higher rate than those who were not, and held an elected or appointed office at significantly higher rates.

Summary and Research Question

The research reviewed indicated significant positive affects with regard to personal, collaborative, and general leadership skills among fraternity members. In many cases, the same or similar outcomes were reported for members of other types of campus groups, making it difficult to determine whether outcomes were a result of campus programming or partially attributed to opportunities afforded to members by campus- or organization-based fraternity/sorority professionals.

The purpose of this study was to address the lack of research on leadership programming outcomes offered by a fraternity central office. A primary research question was posed: What individual outcomes occurred after attending a fraternity leadership program? Individual outcomes were evaluated as (a) fraternal commitment, measured as becoming an officer or expressing commitment to chapter and/or community development, and (b) fraternal engagement, measured as becoming a volunteer, donor, or expressing commitment to long-term fraternity (e.g., organizational level) development.

Method

This study was designed as an outcomes assessment (Schuh & Upcraft, 2000). This design was chosen for its relation to the central research question. Three criteria were established to identify a case: 1) the fraternity must have leadership programs for its undergraduate members, 2) the program must have been in existence, with only minor changes, for a minimum of five years to permit longitudinal analysis, and 3) the fraternity must be willing to provide access to data. One of the researchers had a prior relationship with a fraternity meeting all three criteria. While this helped established rapport and trust (Patton, 1990), it is notable as a potential for undue influence on the study. To moderate, a second researcher not affiliated with the fraternity joined the project.

Case

Not unlike other social fraternities, Phi (pseudonym) has faced significant obstacles during its 150 years of existence. In the 1990s, the Fraternity searched for a permanent resolution to negative trends of declining membership and an increasing number of risk management issues. To address these concerns, a task force of alumni and undergraduate members, non-member organization and campus-based fraternity/sorority professionals, and non-member advisors met in 1997 to create a change initiative intended to reemphasize Phi's founding principles, shaping men to "live their ritual" in all aspects of their lives.

This initiative expanded quickly to include, among other things, the concept of creating a leadership development program to foster the ideals of the movement. In 1997, Phi's central office staff members introduced the model for a new leadership training program, based in part on the Undergraduate Interfraternity Institute (UIFI) model. Phi's Leadership Program (hereafter, Program) included a curriculum based on leadership practices rooted in Kouzes and Posner's (1987) work, collaboration, service to the community, and the importance of ritual. The format included a five-day experience facilitated by fraternity alumni, non-member advisors, and campus-based professionals.

The first session of the Program took place in the summer of 1999 at Phi's central office, with 44 men attending. Positive reactions from the initial group prompted the fraternity to add additional sessions in 2000 and 2001. Presently, the Program holds three to four sessions per summer with over 300 undergraduate members attending from chapters across the U.S. and Canada. Attendee demographics have varied by year, but participants are most often sophomores, a large contingent of juniors, and a few seniors. By percentage, attendance in the ten-year span grew steadily from less than 1% of all undergraduate members in 1999 to 2.5% by 2002, and beyond 5% by 2008.

Procedure

In summer 2009, the researchers contacted Phi to discuss options for the study, including available data, support, and permission. After determining which data would best meet the needs of the central research question, the researchers sought and received IRB approval for the study. The following program data were requested for the ten-year span (1999-2008) of the study: attendance rosters from the Program, survey instruments used for the Program, undergraduate leadership rosters (i.e., president, vice president), alumni/volunteer involvement rosters, and donor rosters with giving information. All data relatable to program outcomes were quantitative.

Since data were stored in different databases, the first step was to move all different forms into a common spreadsheet, with tabs for each data source. Step two was to screen data for missing cases. Step three was to collate and match rosters for attendance, offices held, volunteer positions, and donor information, then to recode the cases so that identifiable information was kept confidential in the database used for this study. Each office held was counted individually to account for attendees who held multiple offices.

Step four involved an examination of the survey instruments to determine which questions would be beneficial in addressing the primary research question. Only five questions did not involve

satisfaction data and were consistent over several years (2001-2007). Since these responses were anonymous, this file was stored in a separate tab, not merged with the master database.

Once the master database was completed, step five was to calculate initial descriptive statistics and scan for inconsistencies (e.g., outliers). Fifty-two members attended the program more than once; therefore, the dataset was revised a final time so that cases would not be counted twice. Attendees were only counted their first time. The final dataset contained 2,065 cases, the total population of Program attendees for the ten-year span minus second-time attendees.

Analysis

Analytic methods used in this study included descriptive calculations and significance tests using techniques appropriate for different types of data computed with SPSS 17.0. Chi-square (χ^2) tests were used when the outcome variable was dichotomous (e.g., becoming an officer, volunteer, or donor). Kruskal-Wallis tests (H) were used when the outcome variable was nominal (e.g., survey data). Mann-Whitney tests were used to test independence for pairwise comparison (e.g., survey year data). Outcomes were assessed on the total population of attendees in all years and differentiated by year attended. The latter permitted an evaluation of the Program, by year, to determine if some years were more significant than others on specific outcomes.

To address the central research question (What individual outcomes occurred after attending a fraternity leadership program?), the following sub questions were assessed:

1. Fraternal Engagement (Immediate Outcomes)
 - a. What fraternity offices did attendees attain following the Program?
 - b. What commitment/s did attendees make to chapter and/or community development following the Program?
2. Fraternal Commitment (Long-Term Outcomes)
 - a. What volunteer positions did attendees attain following the Program?
 - b. What was the donor rate of attendees following the Program?
 - c. What commitment/s did attendees express to long-term personal and/or fraternity development following the Program?

Results

Fraternal Engagement

Fraternal engagement was assessed using officer rosters and survey results from 1999-2008. The first sub question concerned the number of offices and rate of attainment among attendees. Table 1 displays the aggregate descriptive statistics on involvement, by involvement type, from 1999-2008.

Table 1

Total Offices and Volunteer Positions Attained by Attendees (1999-2008)

| Involvement Type (n=2065) ¹ | n |
|--|-------------|
| Executive Offices | |
| <i>Chapter President</i> | 270 |
| <i>Vice President</i> | 203 |
| <i>Treasurer</i> | 123 |
| <i>Secretary</i> | 115 |
| <i>Recruitment Chair</i> | 156 |
| <i>Risk Manager</i> | 123 |
| <i>Pledge Educator</i> | 205 |
| <i>Scholarship Chair</i> | 103 |
| Non-Executive/Cabinet Offices | |
| <i>Alumni Relations</i> | 137 |
| <i>Chorister</i> | 74 |
| <i>Historian</i> | 10 |
| <i>House Manager</i> | 85 |
| <i>IFC Representative</i> | 10 |
| <i>Intramural Chair</i> | 9 |
| <i>Leadership Development</i> | 18 |
| <i>Philanthropy Chair</i> | 117 |
| <i>Public Relations Chair</i> | 100 |
| <i>Ritual Chair</i> | 40 |
| <i>Sergeant-at-Arms</i> | 10 |
| <i>Social Chair</i> | 31 |
| <i>Tech Chair</i> | 8 |
| Total Offices | 1947 |
| Volunteer Positions (Advisory Team) | |
| <i>Alumni Relations Advisor</i> | 7 |
| <i>Chapter Counselor</i> | 25 |
| <i>Faculty Advisor</i> | 1 |
| <i>Financial Advisor</i> | 16 |
| <i>Pledge Education Advisor</i> | 46 |
| <i>Recruitment Advisor</i> | 44 |
| <i>Risk Management Advisor</i> | 25 |
| <i>Ritual Advisor</i> | 9 |
| <i>Scholarship Advisor</i> | 8 |
| <i>Vice President Advisor</i> | 2 |
| Volunteer Positions (District/Regional Advisory Team) | |
| <i>Assistant District/Regional Advisor</i> | 23 |
| <i>District/Regional Advisor</i> | 23 |
| Total Volunteer Positions | 229 |
| Total Offices and Volunteer Positions | 2176 |

¹ 52 members attended twice. Each time this occurred, data for the second year attended was removed.

Becoming an officer. To assess office attainment following the Program, attendee and involvement rosters were merged. It was not possible to calculate a percentage of officers produced by the Program versus non-attendees over ten-years; therefore, only raw counts could be displayed. Among all offices, chapter president (270), pledge educator (205), and vice president (203) were most frequently attained. While there was significant variation among non-executive/cabinet offices, alumni relations (137), philanthropy chair (117), and public relations chair (100) were mostly frequently attained.

Table 2 shows office type (executive, non-executive/cabinet, all) by attending year. Each cell displays the number and percentage (in parentheses) of attendees who attained an office. Unlike the previous question, percentages could be calculated by dividing the number of offices attained by attendees. Members holding more than one office were only counted once to permit overall outcome measures in the All Offices and All Involved total columns. All Offices refers to the total number of participants who took executive and/or non-executive positions. All Involved refers to the total number of participants who took any type of position following attendance.

Table 2
Attendees (%) Attaining One or More Positions, by Year (1999-2008)

| Year | N | Executive | Non-Executive | All Offices | All Volunteers | All Involved |
|-------|------|-----------|---------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|
| 1999 | 45 | 12(26.7) | 8(17.8) | 16(35.6) | 13(28.9) | 22(48.9) |
| 2000 | 100 | 58(58.0) | 22(22.0) | 66(66.0) | 22(22.0) | 77(77.0) |
| 2001 | 152 | 87(57.2) | 38(25.0) | 100(65.8) | 25(16.5) | 105(69.1) |
| 2002 | 194 | 99(51.0) | 60(30.9) | 127(65.5) | 27(13.9) | 132(68.0) |
| 2003 | 201 | 87(43.3) | 58(28.9) | 116(57.7) | 29(14.4) | 126(62.7) |
| 2004 | 231 | 120(52.0) | 49(21.2) | 141(61.0) | 20(8.7) | 161(69.7) |
| 2005 | 276 | 126(45.7) | 66(23.9) | 157(56.9) | 19(6.9) | 166(60.1) |
| 2006 | 268 | 118(44.0) | 70(26.1) | 149(55.6) | 9(3.4) | 158(59.0) |
| 2007 | 304 | 138(45.4) | 86(28.3) | 181(59.5) | 3(1.0) | 180(59.2) |
| 2008 | 293 | 115(39.3) | 76(25.9) | 168(57.3) | 0(0.0) | 168(57.3) |
| Total | 2065 | 960(46.5) | 533(25.8) | 1221(59.1) | 167(8.1) | 1295(62.7) |

Over a ten-year span (1999-2008), nearly 47% of attendees held a future executive office and nearly 26% held a non-executive office. Controlling for office type and holding more than one office, 59% of all attendees held at least one leadership position.

Chi-square (χ^2) tests of independence evaluated whether involvement was independent of year attended. Analysis revealed no statistically significant difference among executive or non-executive offices. A significant difference was identified among all offices, $\chi^2 (9, N = 1221) = 21.20, p < .001$.

In other words, Program year did not influence future executive or non-executive office attainment. When type of office and holding multiple offices were controlled, however, some Program years seem more promising than others in terms of becoming a chapter officer. Statistically, it was not viable to assess which specific years were significantly different.

Commitment to chapter/community development. Survey results were assessed to evaluate future commitment to chapter and/or community development following the program. Table 3 displays descriptive statistics on the survey questions asked over multiple years. Questions 1 and 2 are relevant to fraternal engagement:

1. I have acquired tools to influence positive change in my chapter and my Greek community. (Tools)
2. As a result of this experience, I have acquired additional leadership skills that will transfer to my chapter. (Skills)

Table 3

Responses to Survey Questions, by Year (2001-2007)^a

| | <i>n</i> | Fraternal Commitment | | | Fraternal Engagement | |
|-------|----------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| | | Tools | Skills | Principles | Appreciation | Friendships |
| Year | | Mean (<i>SD</i>) | Mean (<i>SD</i>) | Mean (<i>SD</i>) | Mean (<i>SD</i>) | Mean (<i>SD</i>) |
| 2001 | 47 | 4.77 (.43) | 4.81 (.40) | 4.74 (.44) | 4.91 (.28) | 4.87 (.40) |
| 2002 | 166 | 4.59 (.60) | 4.64 (.54) | 4.70 (.54) | 4.87 (.43) | 4.83 (.40) |
| 2003 | 188 | 4.47 (.70) | 4.45 (.73) | 4.48 (.63) | 4.82 (.41) | 4.60 (.64) |
| 2004 | 131 | 4.58 (.59) | 4.47 (.71) | 4.47 (.72) | 4.73 (.62) | 4.61 (.60) |
| 2005 | – | 4.5 (<i>N/A</i>) | 4.5 (<i>N/A</i>) | 4.5 (<i>N/A</i>) | 4.5 (<i>N/A</i>) | 4.5 (<i>N/A</i>) |
| 2006 | 150 | 4.62 (.55) | 4.63 (.57) | 4.60 (.54) | 4.77 (.52) | 4.55 (.64) |
| 2007 | 119 | 4.36 (.83) | 4.33 (.85) | 4.41 (.81) | 4.80 (.42) | 4.50 (.64) |
| Total | 883 | 4.55 (.65) | 4.52 (.68) | 4.54 (.65) | 4.80 (.49) | 4.64 (.59) |

^a Only *M* was available for 2005, therefore *n* and *SD* are not reported or calculated in analysis.

For the six years responses were available, attendees consistently noted they acquired tools to affect positive change. An average of 4.5 (on a 1-5 scale) with a .6 standard deviation for both outcomes points to fairly consistent high ratings for individual commitment to chapter and community.

Kruskal-Wallis tests (*H*) determined whether differences existed among the six years attended (2001-2007). Results were significant for both question 1 (Tools) $H(5, N = 883) = 15.38, p < 0.01$ and question 2 (Skills) $H(5, N = 883) = 25.86, p < .001$. Mann-Whitney tests identified which years were specifically different for these outcomes. For question 1 (Tools), 2007 was significantly different when compared against all other years but 2003, $p < .05$. For question 2 (Skills), 2001 was significantly different when compared against all but 2002, $p < .05$.

In other words, 2007 produced a different score when compared against other years on acquiring tools to influence positive chapter and community change. In this case, the score was the lowest ($m = 4.36$) with the highest variance ($sd = .83$), suggesting whatever affected the score did so negatively when compared to other years. Something also produced a different score in 2001 when compared against other years on acquiring additional leadership skills to transfer to the chapter. In this case, the score was the highest ($m = 4.81$) with the lowest variance ($sd = .40$), suggesting whatever affected the score did so positively when compared to other years.

Fraternal Commitment

Fraternal commitment was assessed using donor rosters and survey results from 1999-2008. The first sub question concerned number of volunteers and rate of attainment among attendees. Table 1 displayed the aggregate descriptive statistics on volunteer involvement, by involvement type, from 1999-2008.

Becoming a volunteer. To assess volunteer involvement following the Program, attendee and volunteer rosters were merged. It was not possible to calculate a percentage of volunteers produced by the Program versus non-attendees over ten-years; therefore, only raw counts could be displayed. Among all volunteers, pledge education advisor (46), recruitment advisor (44), chapter counselor (25), risk management advisor (25), and assistant district/regional advisor (23), and district/regional advisor (23) were most frequently attained.

Table 2 showed data for all volunteers by attending year. Each cell displayed the number and percentage (in parentheses) of attendees who attained an office. Unlike the previous question, percentages could be calculated by dividing the number of offices attained by attendees. Members holding more than one position were only counted once to permit overall outcome measures (All Volunteers).

Over a ten-year span (1999-2008), just over 8% of attendees held a future volunteer position. Low cell counts prevented an evaluation of all volunteers by office.

Becoming an officer or volunteer. Accounting for all offices and volunteer positions, and controlling for office type and holding more than one office, nearly 63% of all attendees took a formal leadership position in the Fraternity after attending the Program. Chi-square (χ^2) tests of independence evaluated whether involvement was independent of year attended. Analysis revealed a significant difference among all members involved as officers or as volunteers, $\chi^2(9, N = 1295) = 29.84, p < .001$.

In other words, some Program years seem more promising than others in terms of participants becoming a future officer or volunteer. Statistically, it was not viable to assess which specific years were significantly different.

Becoming a donor. To assess donor rate following the Program, attendee and donor rosters were merged. Table 4 displays years, donor raw counts and percentages, donor levels, and mean (sd) donor rates. Donor levels were created by the researcher for display purposes.

Table 4

Attendees Becoming Future Donors, by Donor Rate and Program Year (1999-2008)

| Year | N | Donor | Donor Level | | | | Donor Rate <i>m(sd)</i> |
|-------|------|----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|---------|-------------------------|
| | | | \$0-99 | \$100-249 | \$250-499 | \$500+ | |
| 1999 | 45 | 3(6.7) | 1(2.2) | 0(0.0) | 0(0.0) | 2(4.4) | \$1226.20(1521.5) |
| 2000 | 100 | 6(6.0) | 2(2.0) | 1(1.0) | 2(2.0) | 1(1.0) | \$647.80(1010.4) |
| 2001 | 152 | 14(9.2) | 1(0.7) | 5(3.3) | 6(3.9) | 2(1.3) | \$973.10(878.6) |
| 2002 | 195 | 16(8.2) | 4(2.1) | 5(2.6) | 2(1.0) | 5(2.6) | \$1335.70(4050.10) |
| 2003 | 201 | 16(8.0) | 5(2.5) | 2(1.0) | 6(3.0) | 3(1.5) | \$392.30(479.0) |
| 2004 | 233 | 20(8.6) | 3(1.3) | 4(1.7) | 7(3.0) | 6(2.6) | \$752.00(1164.0) |
| 2005 | 273 | 25(9.2) | 6(2.2) | 7(2.6) | 7(2.6) | 5(1.8) | \$154.70(129.5) |
| 2006 | 268 | 22(8.2) | 6(2.2) | 2(0.7) | 4(1.5) | 10(3.7) | \$1468.80(3476.2) |
| 2007 | 304 | 20(6.6) | 8(1.6) | 5(1.6) | 5(1.6) | 2(0.7) | \$74.50(86.7) |
| 2008 | 294 | 18(6.1) | 5(1.7) | 2(0.7) | 6(2.0) | 5(1.7) | \$98.10(121.7) |
| Total | 2065 | 160(7.7) | 41(2.0) | 33(1.6) | 45(2.2) | 41(2.0) | \$712.32(1291.7) |

Attendees from 2001-2006 had the most consistent giving rate as compared to all other groups (8.6%), though 7.7% was a fairly consistent rate for all years. In terms of consistency, 2005 was the most consistent year, with donations nearly equally falling in all donor levels, and a low average to variance ratio ($m = \$154.70$, $sd = \$129.50$). In terms of large donations, 2006 was the most productive year, with 10 attendees giving over \$500.00 each.

Chi-square tests (χ^2) of independence evaluated whether becoming a donor was independent of year attended. Analysis revealed no significant differences among attendees becoming donors. Low cell counts for donor levels prevented further analysis, leaving interpretation of donor rates following attendance as merely descriptive.

Commitment to Fraternity. Survey results were assessed to evaluate future engagement to the Fraternity following the Program. Table 3 displayed descriptive statistics on the same survey questions asked over multiple years. Questions 3, 4, and 5 are relevant to Fraternal commitment:

3. I will utilize the principles upon which our Fraternity is founded in my daily life.
(Principles)
4. I have a strong appreciation of the Fraternity as an organization. (Appreciation)
5. Through this experience I have established strong friendships with Phi brothers.
(Friendships)

For the six years responses were available, attendees consistently committed to utilizing the ritual, appreciating the Fraternity, and maintaining strong friendships with brothers. Average scores of 4.5 or better with moderate standard deviation (.5 to .6) for all three outcomes points to fairly consistent high ratings for individual commitment to Fraternity.

Kruskal-Wallis tests (H) evaluated whether differences existed among six years attended (2001-2007) and survey results from each year. Results were significant for question 3 (Principles) $H(5, N = 883) = 21.99$, $p < .01$ and question 5 (Friendships) $H(5, N = 883) = 36.83$, $p < .01$. Results for question 4 (Appreciation) were not significant. Mann-Whitney tests identified which years were specifically different for these outcomes. For question 3 (Principles), 2002 was

significantly different when compared against all other years but 2001, $p < .05$. For question 5 (Friendships), 2002 was significantly different when compared against 2004, 2006, and 2007, $p < .05$.

In other words, 2002 produced a different score when compared against other years on two measures of Fraternal commitment. With regard to Principles, the score for 2002 was the second highest ($m = 4.70$) with the second lowest variance, suggesting whatever affected the score did so positively when compared to other years. Something also produced a different score in 2002 when compared against other years on establishing strong friendships with Phi brothers. In this case, the score was again second highest ($m = 4.83$) with the second lowest variance ($sd = .40$), suggesting whatever affected the score did so positively when compared to other years.

Leadership attainment was relatively consistent across all years. In the ten-year span of this study, nearly 63% of Program attendees from 1999-2008 took a formal leadership role in the fraternity following the Program. Pledge education was the most consistent area of involvement among both undergraduates and volunteers. In that same span, nearly 8% of attendees became donors.

Fraternal engagement and Fraternal commitment were relatively consistent across all years. On survey measures of fraternal engagement, 2007 was the lowest reported year attendees noted they acquired tools to influence positive change and additional leadership skills, while 2001 was the highest. For Fraternal commitment, 2002 was the most consistent year when compared against all others, with attendees indicating an intention to use founding principles in daily life, a strong appreciation of the Fraternity, and recognition of strong friendships with Fraternity brothers. A discussion of implications from these findings follows.

Discussion

Results from this study were supported by the research linking campus-based leadership programs to development. Discussion is presented in statements, offering observations informed by present findings and grounded in previous literature.

Nearly Two Thirds of Program Attendees Took Formal Involvement Roles

As demonstrated in Table 2, 62.7% of attendees became officers or volunteers following the Program. This statistic accounted for multiple offices, so that each attendee was only counted once. Almost two decades of research on outcomes related to fraternity leadership (Astin, 1993; Kezar & Moriarty, 2000; Kuh, 1995) as well as leadership programming in general (Cress et al., 2001) conceptually supported this finding. What is unique to this study, other than the focus on a central office leadership program, is the high and consistent rate of participation.

Another perspective is to consider those 37.3% of members who either did not become or have not yet become formal leaders. How did attending the Program, which focused on deepening attendees' understanding of ritual and leadership through ritual, influence these members? What impact did they later have on their chapter and community? Both Komives, Lucas, and McMahon's (2007) and Dugan's (2006, 2008) research has shown that contemporary models emphasizing relational (e.g., commitment to shared leadership where anyone in the organization

can contribute) over positional leadership may be more reflective of today's students leadership approach.

Shertzer and Schuh (2004) recommended educators work to shift learning environments to value initiative and collaborative action over hierarchical decision-making. While this may be difficult in an organization as structured as a fraternity chapter, leadership programs can emphasize the value of every member contributing, particularly in a fraternity chapter where members report significant gains on ability to influence others over the course of their involvement (Asel et al., 2009; Kezar & Moriarty, 2000; Pike, 2003) This concept is supported in Harms et al.'s (2006) finding that fraternity members recognized those members more committed to the organization than those holding positional roles as more effective leaders.

Nearly Half of Program Attendees Took Executive Board Leadership Roles

The finding that 46.5% of attendees became executive officers was similarly not surprising for many of the same reasons previously discussed. What is notable about this finding is the remarkable consistency among all years. With the exception of the inaugural year of the program in 1999, attendees have returned to their chapters and been elected to office. This statistic might even be higher if data for 2009 or 2010 were available, which would allow those who attended in 2008 to appear on the officer rosters.

Taken together with the previous findings, and considering an additional 25.8% of members take a non-executive position, it would seem that either the Fraternity structure, the leadership Program, or perhaps both, whether intentionally or not, emphasizes formal leadership as the path to create change. This consideration echoes the notion previously mentioned that leadership is equated with position, and is perhaps emphasized in the Program through the use of Kouzes and Posner's (1987) model, which has been criticized as valuing positional role attainment over values-based outcomes grounded in collaboration (Dugan, 2006, 2008). A discussion of alternative models for leadership development is discussed later as a recommendation.

Program Attendees Most Often Became Chapter President

Program attendees most often became chapter president. Following Dugan's (2006, 2008) criticism of Kouzes and Posner's (1987) model, it may be that attendees returned hoping to affect change and perceived the most viable means of doing so was being elected to the highest positional office. It could be the opposite – that peers recognized their leadership potential and elected them, or somewhere in between. Available data did not make it possible to discern intention, so motivation for seeking office can only be speculated.

Members holding formal offices are less often recognized as effective leaders than the members with the strongest commitment to the organization (Harms et al., 2006). Chapter president is the most visible positional leader and therefore, members attaining the position may find it difficult to affect the change they had hoped to see. In other words, members who had a transformative experience at the Program may be frustrated when others do not share their vision for the chapter, no matter how altruistic, simply because they hold office. This suggests that the Program should incorporate additional work on building and sustaining relationships for change – emphasis areas covered by two of Kouzes and Posner's (1987) Five Practices for Exemplary Leadership®: Inspiring a Shared Vision and Enabling Others to Act.

Many Program Attendees Took Leadership Responsibility for Pledge Education

While it was not possible to determine the rate of program attendees taking an office or advisory role working with pledge education versus those members who did not attend the Program, both offices showed high numbers for those who did. Considering the emphasis of the Program on ritual and member education, this is perhaps not as surprising. Again, without baseline and outcomes-based survey data, this is purely conjecture. However, it seems reasonable that a member hoping to create organizational change would see new members as the opportunity to do so. This further suggests that the Program's emphasis on change as related to committing to founding Principles seems to have taken hold with many attendees, whose choice to work with new members seems an indicator of their desire to create a long-term change in the organization. It could also be that as a result of the curricular focus, participants learned the new members program was the area most in need of change.

Few Program Attendees Seldom Became Ritual Chairman

Perhaps surprising was that attendees did not assume leadership roles as ritual chairmen following the Program, given the emphasis on ritual. Leadership in the highest offices (president and vice president) and in one of the most influential (pledge education), along with survey results focusing on intention to create change, support the idea that attendees desired to positively influence their experiences. A speculative reason attendees did not become ritual chairs may be that the office is not considered authoritative enough to influence other members. This assumes a formal leadership paradigm valuing hierarchy over commitment. Perhaps a more plausible explanation is that ritual chair, formally or not, is perceived more as a logistics officer (e.g., purchasing equipment, setting ceremony dates) than an educational one.

Nearly Eight Percent of Program Attendees Donated to the Fraternity

Similar to the caveat on rate of officer attainment, this statistic is likely to rise each year it is recalculated. What the number currently indicates is that a good representation (over 8%) of attendees become donors. Given that most are undergraduates, coupled with the fact that the oldest donors in this group are likely in their early thirties at most (e.g., a 22-year-old attending in 1999), this seemingly low rate becomes significant. Like all findings from the study, attending the Program is not the only influence on later actions; however, the consistent rate is perhaps an indicator of a link. If donating is an indicator of satisfaction with or belief in an organization, perhaps the Program is enhancing members' connection to the Fraternity. The notable aspect about giving is that rates can only stabilize or rise, especially as members grow older and presumably reach higher income brackets. Instead of targeting members and reminding them of their experiences in the Fraternity, development officers can remind members of their experience with the Program and emphasize how giving can contribute to other members' connection.

Program Attendees Expressed High Engagement to Chapter/Community Development

In addition to rates of office attainment following the Program, two survey questions were used as indicators of immediate chapter/community engagement. As with other outcomes used in this study, survey results were fairly consistent across all years, indicating a constant Program organizers can perhaps rely on – in this case, with no change, attendees continued to perceive they have been provided the tools and skills to create change.

Two questions dealt with the perception of acquiring tools and additional leadership skills to affect positive chapter and fraternal community change. Attendees overwhelmingly indicated the Program had provided tools necessary to influence change. These values are congruent with Dugan's (2006) findings linking formal leadership roles to similar outcomes (i.e., commitment, collaboration, common purpose). This emphasis would seem to increase organizational engagement and perhaps is further supported by the high rate of attendee involvement following the Program. In short, the curriculum provided attendees with tools to create change and the confidence to do so, though there is no way of determining how this intention translated to action.

As noted in results, follow-up tests revealed that 2007 (for Tools) and 2001 (for Skills) were significant years for producing member engagement, as measured by these questions. While it is not possible to pinpoint what exactly might have caused these years to be more important than others, some other observations about those years can be made from the data. The year 2007 had the lowest scores for the Tools measure and was also in the lower tier for executive office attainment, though nearly the highest for non-executive office. Given that this question related to acquiring tools to influence positive change, one can speculate that attendees in 2007 did not leave with the same levels of self-confidence in their ability, as did those of other years. This later may have translated to fewer members running for executive offices and instead serving in less positional, non-executive offices.

The year 2001 had the highest scores for the Skills measure and was also among the highest for executive office attainment and lowest for non-executive officers. Given that this question related to acquiring additional leadership skills for use in the chapter, it is perhaps no surprise that more members from this year went on to attain the highest offices. Again, this seems to enforce an emphasis on formal leadership being the best route to creating change, at least at the chapter level.

Program Attendees Expressed High Commitment to Personal/Fraternity Development

In addition to volunteering and donor rates following the Program, three survey questions were used as indicators of long-term personal/Fraternity commitment. As with other outcomes used in this study, survey results were fairly consistent across all years, indicating a constant Program organizers can perhaps rely on – in this case, with no change, attendees continued to commit to living the ritual (Principles), recognizing the value of the Fraternity (Appreciation), and establishing strong friendships with members outside of the chapter level (Friendships).

Three questions dealt with commitment to aspects of the larger Fraternity – its principles, the organization, and non-chapter members. These measures are reflective of Harms et al.'s (2006) and Dugan's (2008) findings on organizational commitment as an outcome of fraternal membership. Such commitments may be linked to collaborative learning and work measures, noted by several researchers (Martin et al., 2008; Hayek et al., 2002; Pike 2000, 2003) as positively associated with membership.

With regard to statistical significance only Principles and Friendships permitted a look at specific years to determine difference. In both cases, 2002 was important when compared to others. In both cases, the values for those years was second highest with the second lowest variance,

indicating that attendees, as a group, committed to similar levels of utilizing principles and establishing strong friendships outside of their respective chapters. As for volunteering or donor rates, both measures were fairly consistent, if not lower, for those years than previous or subsequent years. Given that taking a volunteer role or donating is not restricted to a four-year window as undergraduate offices are, perhaps these outcomes may take longer to manifest and link directly to Fraternal commitment.

Recommendations

Research on leadership programs and fraternal affiliation, results from the present study of Phi's Program, and barriers the researchers encountered while conducting the study resulted in the following recommendations, perhaps transferable to other central office leadership programs. This study revealed two major obstacles and one limitation to completing a contemporary outcomes assessment of Phi's Program.

1. *Create a Master Tracking Database for Members*

A primary obstacle the researchers encountered was the assortment of databases Phi maintained on membership activities. For example, the membership database was separate from the officer and volunteer database, as well as from the donor database. Program attendees were similarly kept in a different database, as were survey responses and other outcomes-based data. None had consistent fields that could easily be linked or merged for data analysis. As a result, finding and piecing together all of the necessary data was a major undertaking. Given how often each of these disparate databases are accessed by the central office staff, it would seem beneficial to create a master database to promote effective data entry, query, and reporting.

Using a data-tracking system, such as Microsoft Access, at the central office level would allow for data mining on specific programs, chapters, and individuals to be more easily tracked and linked, as well as more readily available for comparative analysis. A case file for a member could be created when he joins as a pledge, updated on initiation, and then continually built upon as he progressed through collegiate and alumni membership status. Each time a member did something within the fraternity (e.g., became an officer, volunteer, attended a program, etc.), that information would get added to his file by a series of linking spreadsheets and could be easily found when needed. Currently, Phi uses online forms for data reporting which could seemingly be linked to this data-tracking system.

In addition to keeping track of individual member information, implementing a master system would facilitate assessment efforts at various levels. For example, a query on Phi members at the University of Tennessee might show that only 3% of members have attended any leadership program in the past three years. Another example might be a query of Program attendees, requesting how many members became officers, volunteers, or donors following attendance. Currently, as demonstrated by this study, this type of assessment is not possible without considerable effort. Overall, the creation of such an instrument would serve as a useful tool in recording, tracking, and assessing member information for Phi.

An important consideration would be the need for security measures to safeguard sensitive information. One option would be requiring a separate password to access confidential sections of records, such as donor information.

2. *Develop or Adopt an Outcomes-Based Assessment Instrument*

For the past 10 years, Phi's assessment efforts on the program have been primarily satisfaction surveys conducted post-event (e.g., please rate the speaker, food, etc). A few notable exceptions were the five questions consistently given during the middle years of the Program. Even then, however, it was not possible to directly link responses to other experiences. In this case, it might be worth exchanging anonymity for a way to accurately link member experiences to subsequent outcomes. This revision would be the easiest, whereby Phi would keep the five consistent questions and request names, noting that the results are only used for assessment data. This comes with risks inherent in non-anonymous survey data, such as possible lower response rate and/or inaccurate answers (i.e., members rate items high because their answers are linked to their name). However, as demonstrated above, the gain would outweigh the loss of data as a more accurate link between self-rated outcomes and later measures of engagement and commitment.

A second option would be to internally develop an instrument based partly on Phi's values, the goals for the Program, and perhaps a set of developmental outcomes that might be impacted by the Program. Other sample questions might involve intent to become an officer or volunteer or desire to lead in any capacity. Questions should be tied directly to the mission of the Program and Fraternity though should be kept to no more than a page to promote participation. A group similar to the original founders of the Program could draft a list of questions, which could then be piloted with fraternity members to build validity and enhance reliability.

Once the instrument was piloted, administration could begin for the subsequent summer Program sessions. A logistics plan would involve a pre/post design. To promote participation, participants could fill out an online version of the instrument when registering and then fill out a paper version of the same at the end of the program on site. If confidentiality was more important than linking future actions to these responses, the new instrument could be blinded by assigning code numbers at the beginning and end, allowing Phi to link the pre/post data. Descriptive statistics, t-tests, and correlation measures (all easily calculable in Excel or using online calculators) could provide data answers immediately following the program.

A third option would be to utilize an existing instrument intended to measure outcomes from leadership programming. An instrument commonly given to college students to measure student development would link Phi's programming to extant efforts on college campuses, permitting cross-comparisons. Other advantages of this approach would be that the instrument would be valid and reliable, at least among college-aged men. Some survey developers even offer data analysis and reporting as part of the service. Disadvantages might be the cost (most instruments involve a fee) and that the instrument would not be tied directly to Program goals, unless an instrument was selected that would allow an additional few questions. An example instrument is the Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (SRLS), an

instrument designed to evaluate values associated with the social change model (Tyree, 1998). A discussion of this instrument and its underlying theory follows.

3. *Consider Realigning Curriculum with Contemporary Leadership Theory*

Perhaps the biggest limitation of this study was the available data used to evaluate outcomes. In most cases, data involved formal office attainment. This approach, while consistent with the curricular focus of many leadership programs in higher education in the 1990s and early 2000s has recently been reconsidered.

Rost (1993) is frequently cited as among the first to advocate a postindustrial leadership paradigm, centered on shared responsibility, the opportunity to create change, and inclusivity. This is in contrast to a traditional industrial paradigm, which views leadership as individualistic, formal, and synonymous with management (Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Posner, 2004; Posner & Brodsky, 1992). Dugan (2006, 2008) has been critical of leadership theory that takes a hierarchical leader-centric approach – valuing positional role attainment over values-based outcomes grounded in collaboration. Recently, researchers (Dugan, 2006, 2008; Martin et al., 2008) have demonstrated positive outcomes and areas for improvement linking fraternity membership to the Social Change Model of Leadership Development (Higher Education Research Institute [HERI], 1996).

The central tenets of the Social Change Model (HERI, 1996) involve social responsibility and change as benefiting the common good. Eight core values are aimed at enhancing level of self-awareness and ability to work with others: consciousness of self, congruence, commitment, common purpose, collaboration, controversy with civility, and citizenship. These values function at the individual (consciousness of self, congruence, commitment), group (common purpose, collaboration, and controversy with civility), and societal (citizenship) levels. Interaction across and among all values contributes to social change for the common good, the eighth value in the model (HERI).

A benefit of linking a leadership program's curriculum to focus areas from the model is that it includes a statistically valid instrument (Tyree, 1998) that can be used to assess outcomes, the [SRLS](#). Dugan (2008) found commitment as the highest value and change as lowest among fraternity and sorority members across all years in college. Sorority members scored significantly higher than fraternity men on congruence, commitment, collaboration, common purpose, and controversy with civility. Martin et al. (2008) found fraternity members scored high on the congruence, commitment, and collaboration scales, using the same instrument on a sample of first-year students, though their evaluation positioned fraternity men versus those who were not members.

Using this model and instrument, or a similar one internally developed and validated, would provide Phi valuable insight as to how the Program outcomes align with larger developmental gains. Phi might even choose to administer the instrument to all members at the beginning and ends of their collegiate careers to ascertain how fraternity experience might more specifically relate to overall collegiate outcomes. If data could be linked to code numbers, Phi could compare the experiences of those who attended leadership training, such as the Program, to those who did not attend. Overall, this could be a powerful investment in

data relating the value of fraternal involvement to future members, alumni, parents, institutional representatives, and the larger community.

Limitations and Future Research

Outcomes related to attendance dates should be interpreted with caution given the finite timeframe of the study. For example, it is not possible to track donors beyond present, so any attendees giving from 2009 and on will not appear as donors in this study. The same is true of involvement for those attendees in later years, which may not yet have attained office.

The lack of baseline data on measures such as member aspirations of becoming officers before attending makes it difficult to establish causation. In other words, were vast majority of attendees intending to become leaders regardless (see Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), or did the Program influence their decisions to run for office (Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, & Osteen, 2006)? What may be attributed to the Program, however, is the influence it had on leadership values, or the type of office an attendee might later take. For example, the Program's focus on ritual and member education may more likely produce members interested in taking offices related to pledge education or ritual.

Future research should incorporate multi-fraternal, multi-campus, and multi-leadership theory designs to provide a more comprehensive look at the value of leadership programs offered to fraternity and sorority members. Efforts to assess chapter and Fraternal-level outcomes, such as program effects on recruitment, retention, and risk management would also significantly add to our understanding of the value of sponsored leadership programming. Such data would be useful not only for benchmarking and program justification, but also for campus expansion efforts and central office advancement.

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Author Autobiography

Dr. J. Patrick Biddix is Associate Professor of Higher Education and Research Methods at Valdosta State University.

Rachel Underwood is a graduate research assistant for the Higher Education Program at Valdosta State University.