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Goodman and Arndt: Emerging Data on Sorority/Fraternity-affiliated Student Governmen
EMERGING DATA ON SORORITY/FRATERNITY-AFFILIATED STUDENT
GOVERNMENT PRESIDENTS

MICHAEL A. GOODMAN, PH.D., ALEXA LEE ARNDT

Abstract: Alongside sorority/fraternity governance structures, student government is another major form of campus involvement and student representation. At times, students share both student/leadership identities: as members of a sorority/fraternity and serving as a student government officer. In this study on student government presidents, descriptive statistics were used to tell the story of student government presidents who are also members of a sorority or fraternity and in comparison, to those who are not. Findings include present-day affiliation data, as well as campus contextual elements of their experience. There are subsequent recommendations for student affairs practice.

Keywords: fraternity and sorority life, leadership, student government, governance, power

As two institutions of perceived power and influence, the intersection and discourse of undergraduate student government and collegiate sororities and fraternities is often reported in college newspapers and campus press. Fontoura (2019) shared that nine out of eleven recent student government presidents were involved in sorority and fraternity life (SFL) at Florida Atlantic University. After the election of many sorority- and fraternity-affiliated students at Trinity University (60%), Claybrook (2019) reported that student leaders affirmed student government as “unbiased” and “neutral” (para 4). In 2020, students at North Carolina State University publicly debated “Greek Life control” of student government by way of campaign tickets and platforms (e.g., see Paszko, 2020; Walsh, 2020). Finally, and more recently, student government at Ball State University introduced legislation for one student government executive to attend all Interfraternity Council (IFC), National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC), and Panhellenic Association (PA) meetings (Hill, 2021). At the core of these examples is a description of perceived power and involvement, and how it resides in both SFL and

student government entities. Access alone to both SFL and student government is reserved to few, and involvement in either/each of these functional areas can influence the other.

According to the National Campus Leadership Council’s “Student Voice Index,” 35.1% of student body presidents were members of a sorority or fraternity (Templeton et al., 2018). Given the aforementioned examples and the significant number of SFL-affiliated presidents reported, the connection between student government and SFL warrants further investigation. To enhance this body of literature, as well as to understand elements of their experience, this article highlights data from a 2021-2022 survey, “Experiences, Perceptions, and Identities of College Student Government Presidents,” and in particular regarding the question, *Are you a member of a fraternity or sorority (e.g., campus ‘Greek Life’)?* For the purpose of this article, the following research questions were explored:

- What are the identities, institutional contexts, and experiences of college student government presidents who are members of a sorority or fraternity?

- How do these student leaders' identities, institutional contexts, and experiences differ, if at all, from college student government presidents who are not members of a sorority or fraternity?

Responding to these important questions will allow student affairs practitioners, and specifically those working in SFL and student involvement, to better understand how their areas intersect and interact with one another, and perhaps how to support the very students who share these roles. To ground this investigation, we overview literature and campus press on student experiences at the intersection of SFL and student government.

Relevant Literature and Campus Press

Sororities and fraternities have existed in U.S. higher education since the 1700s (Sasso et al., 2020) as a way for students to connect with one another and across shared identities and values (e.g., see Dosono et al., 2020; Miranda et al., 2020; Smith & McCoy, 2020). Over time, organizational values and missions have been espoused, enacted, and questioned (Tull et al., 2018). Sororities and fraternities model their organizations through a leadership lens, voting peers into positions such as president, vice president, standards chair, and more (Schoper et al., 2020). Student government, on the other hand, is a form of involvement wherein students serve as the official voice of the student body to administrators and community leaders (Laosebikan-Buggs, 2006; Templeton et al., 2018). Students traditional to student government participation are 18–24-year-olds who have the highest investment in campus activities (Miller & Nadler, 2006). Student government involves campaigning, fundraising, and get-out-the-vote activities (Miller & Nadler, 2006), and students spend significant time managing and adjudicating fees and student organization funding (Mackey, 2006; Smith et al., 2016). Miller and Nadler (2006) illuminated arguments often used to justify college student government programs, includ-

ing, “Higher education is heavily invested in preparing individuals for democratic participation and citizenship, and working with a representative democracy on a college campus is an excellent, and often lower-risk, laboratory for that to occur” (p. 12).

The intersection of SFL and student government involves the cross-pollination of these forms of student involvement. Members of sororities and fraternities often recruit students who held high school leadership positions and, in turn, encourage new and active members to seek prominent leadership roles of authority on campus—including student government offices (Hevel et al., 2014). For example, in the 1960s, alongside a coalition of faculty and students, the student government at Indiana University (IU) petitioned for student and faculty seats on the IU Board of Trustees. At the time, the board was largely composed of white men, members of historically white fraternities (Lozano, 2016). Further, in literature, both votes and support have been cited as by-products of membership rather than work or capability (Goodman, 2021b).

In Goodman’s (2021b) study on former student government presidents working in higher education and student affairs, “the Greek vote” was mentioned by participants as a contentious topic involving campus-wide elections (p. 43). One participant talked about the frustration of sorority/fraternity gender dynamics and that she saw fraternities voting for their own members over a more deserving woman candidate (Goodman, 2021b). Hébert (2006) found that fraternity-affiliated students were encouraged by older members to get involved in student government, which would lead to other leadership experiences on campus. One first-year student in Hébert’s (2006) study ran for student government and shared, “I was fortunate. The advice from my older brothers really proved to be the ticket I needed to board that train” (p. 35).

While there is limited empirical research on the direct intersection of student government and SFL specifically, campus press

(i.e., student newspapers) regularly document and report on this connection. For example, Tran and Perez (2020) reported that half the student government leaders at California State University, Fullerton were involved in sororities and fraternities despite the SFL population being just under 3%. In 2019, student government at Elon University passed an amendment to increase the role of sororities and fraternities in student government; representation increased from one student senate seat the previous year to three (Brown, 2019). Conversely in 2021, student government at Northwestern University abolished guaranteed seats for IFC and PA and instead reallocated seats to other registered and representative student groups; this most recent decision at Northwestern University is another point in time when the student government attempted to equalize representation among sorority and fraternity governing councils, beyond solely IFC and PA representation (2016), and more (2018) or less (2019, 2020) seats allotted to governing councils more broadly (Kim, 2021).

Student newspapers have even served as a site of engagement between student government and SFL on campus. In 2019, presidents of four governing councils wrote a letter to the editor in Texas State University's student newspaper, noting that they would not be endorsing any candidate in the student body elections (Castillo, 2019). The students wrote, "There is a long history of members of the fraternity and sorority community serving in Student Government. However, their involvement is always founded in their identities as Texas State students, not as members of their Greek-lettered organizations" (Castillo, 2019, para 2). Such engagement by the SFL council leadership demonstrates an awareness of the SFL and student government intersection.

The presence of sororities and fraternities clearly garners great attention and is also often debated beyond campus press and into student government spaces. For

example, during Louisiana State University's (LSU) student government debate in 2021, six candidates discussed their platforms for the following academic year, including "striving for anti-racist changes within Greek Life" (Savoie, 2021, para 3). One candidate talked about the lack of diversity in SFL and that they would fight to abolish the legacy system in recruitment efforts (Savoie, 2021). Of the three tickets, only one presidential candidate was a member of a sorority or fraternity, and that individual suggested that her sorority membership "makes her the best candidate to represent Greek issues in office" (Savoie, 2021, para 11). The candidate shared that senate prospects on her ticket were writing legislation for NPHC plots and to move the timing of IFC and PA recruitment, so it does not take place during the first week of classes (Savoie, 2021). Conversely, an unaffiliated presidential candidate rebutted that NPHC plots were "tokenism" and that senators on their ticket would present legislation to increase funding for other Black student projects (Savoie, 2021, para 44). In sum, this literature reveals an intersection between SFL and college student government, an area worth exploring empirically to fill an otherwise missing gap of research on this topic specifically. To examine this connection more deeply through empirical research informs the work of university administrators and stakeholders committed to developing college students as leaders and engaged campus citizens.

Study Context

This study emerged during the analysis of a larger project. Data collected from an initial larger survey designed by one of the researchers considered expanding knowledge and scholarship on college student government; the study considered only student government presidents due to the nature of the role. The researcher asked questions associated with student identities in student government (e.g., Goodman, 2021a; Goodman, 2022; Hardaway et al.,

2021; Workman et al., 2020), voice and impact (Broadhurst, 2019; Laosebikan-Buggs, 2006; Templeton et al., 2018), relationships on campus (Hardaway et al., 2021; Templeton et al., 2018), student government as work (Goodman, 2021b; Goodman et al., 2021; Smith et al., 2016), and student government as public office (Goodman, 2022). It was during data analysis of the larger project that interesting differences emerged between SFL-affiliated and non-SFL-affiliated student government presidents, which prompted the further analysis.

Methods

In 2021, the researcher launched a 34-question survey entitled, “Experiences, Perceptions, and Identities of College Student Government Presidents.” The survey was sent to student government presidents and advisors through the NASPA Student Government Knowledge Community, as well as posted on various social media platforms (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn more broadly; NASPA Fraternity/Sorority Knowledge Community Facebook page). The survey was open November 2021 through January 2022. In addition to demographic identifiers, role-based information, and institutional context(s), the survey prompted several questions associated with presidents’ experiences or perceptions of their campus, student government, and personal leadership.

To participate in this study, individuals must have been undergraduate students enrolled at a U.S. institution for higher education and serving as “student government president” (or “student body” or “student association” president). The survey contained an informed consent, which granted respondents access to the questions once they accepted the terms of the IRB-approved study. No question on the survey was required, other than the informed consent, and some respondents did not answer every question asked. Demographic and institutional identifiers were pre-listed for participants to choose from, should they

elect to answer a particular question. This study enlisted descriptive statistics, which reflect the responses of 218 individuals who completed the survey. Data cleaning techniques were used (Allen, 2017; Salkind, 2010), including addressing any errors or gaps in input and responding to both tendency and spread. Data for the purpose of this article were pulled from a larger study about college student government presidents’ experiences more broadly. One question in particular asked presidents if they were involved in a campus sorority or fraternity. Sixty-four out of 218 respondents self-identified as members of a sorority/fraternity. Using the R software, a research statistician created a report of descriptive statistics and cross-tabulation reports to present a snapshot of SFL-affiliation within the student government presidency, and extracted data associated with this question.

Positionality

We write this article as members of a fraternity and sorority, and as individuals who have previously been involved in or advised college student government. Michael A. Goodman is a past undergraduate and graduate student government president, as well as a past campus-based SFL advisor. His undergraduate student government experience was made most successful by having a support- and voting-bloc in his fraternity (and this case, a historically and predominately white fraternity; and identifying as a cisgender, educated white man). Alexa Lee Arndt is a former student government advisor and campus-based SFL advisor, as well as a volunteer for her international sorority. Professionally, the authors operate as scholar-practitioners who have researched both SFL and student government in multiple capacities and contexts. Informally, over the years as student affairs administrators, the authors have heard discussion around “Greek voting blocs,” sorority/fraternity representation, and candidate platforms often involving attention to SFL issues on campus (i.e., much like those illuminated in the introduction and review of relevant

literature and campus press). The authors often reflect on their experience(s), as well as personal, professional, and scholarly insights that have aided in how they view this intersection of student government and SFL.

Limitations

There are a few limitations to this work that are important to note. First, one limitation of this study is that not all institutions have SFL (e.g., some 2-year colleges, some private institutions), and some may have local or campus-specific involvement spaces that mirror sororities and fraternities but are not considered “Greek Life” on that particular campus. Next, while there are 3,982 degree-granting institutions of higher education in the United States (National Center for Education Statistics, n. d.), this study illuminates the 218 respondents to this survey. Future research can seek to include a larger sample of respondents, though this number is consistent with previous work on student government presidents conducted by Lozano (2020) and Templeton et al. (2018).

Findings

We found nuances associated with SFL-affiliated student government presidents’ identities, institutional contexts, and experiences. Further, there are a few notable differences between SFL-affiliated and unaffiliated student government presidents. The following findings, pulled from the larger study on college student government presidents, describe the specific data associated with affiliation with a sorority or fraternity.

Identities

Of the 218 student government presidents who completed the survey, 29.36% identified that they were members of a sorority or fraternity. None of the nonbinary or genderfluid presidents were SFL-affiliated, and women (36.73%) in the sample were more affiliated than men (27.84%). In total, 18.75% of SFL-affiliated students identified as bisexual or gay, and none of the SFL-

affiliated respondents identified as lesbian or pansexual. SFL-affiliated presidents identified slightly less as first-generation college students (32.81%) than unaffiliated presidents (37.06%). Regarding the racial makeup of SFL-affiliated presidents, 11.11% were African American/Black, 6.39% were African American/Black and white, 9.52% were Asian American/Asian, 9.52% were across multiple multiracial breakdowns, and 60.31% were white. Unaffiliated presidents were slightly less white (56.16%).

Institutional Contexts

SFL-affiliated presidents were located across all regions in the United States, with the least amount of representation from the West (12.5%) and Northeast (18.87%). The most representation was in the South, where 44.59% of presidents were SFL-affiliated (next was the Midwest with 35.14% of SFL-affiliated presidents). Regarding institution size, 14.06% of SFL-affiliated presidents attended institutions with a student population greater than 30,001, and there were twice the number of unaffiliated presidents at schools with greater than 30,001 students. Most SFL-affiliated presidents attended institutions with 2,501-15,000 students, and only 8.57% SFL-affiliated presidents attended institutions with a student population smaller than 2,500. In other words, 91.42% of presidents attending institutions with less than 2,500 were unaffiliated.

Experiences and Perceptions

There were very few major differences between SFL-affiliated and unaffiliated presidents in terms of experiences and perceptions. For example, SFL-affiliated and unaffiliated students meet roughly the same with campus administrators (e.g., four times per semester with campus president; ten times per semester with senior student affairs officer). Further, 84.38% of SFL-affiliated presidents strongly or somewhat agreed that student government was taken seriously at their institution (compared to 81.63% of unaffiliated). Similarly, 85.94% of SFL-affiliated presidents stated they

strongly agreed that they had relationships with administrators, whereas 79.59% of unaffiliated students strongly agreed.

Two findings demonstrate slight differences between these populations. First, concerning matters of perception, 93.75% of affiliated presidents strongly or somewhat agreed that student government has significant power on their campus, compared to 79.59% of unaffiliated presidents. Second, although student government presidents are generally compensated for their work (e.g., see Templeton et al., 2018), findings from this study indicate that 92.19% of SFL-affiliated presidents are compensated in some way compared to only 82.11% from the entire sample of presidents. Such slight differences concerning perceptions of power and compensation are interesting to note.

Discussion

First, this study's findings differ slightly from research by Templeton et al. (2018), who reported 35.1% SFL-affiliated students in their sample (compared to the 29.36% of SFL-affiliated presidents in the present study). Additional data on SFL-affiliated presidents was not supplied in Templeton and colleagues' (2018) study, therefore the comparison is unknown regarding demographic and institutional factors/differences. On one hand, findings such as these are generally skewed when factoring in institutions without SFL, and yet it is notable that there are still greater perceptions of being taken seriously, power, and relationships with administrators for SFL-affiliated presidents than unaffiliated presidents.

Power and elections are not an uncommon theme associated with SFL (Becque, 2012), and 44% of U.S. presidents have held fraternity membership (North American Interfraternity Conference, 2021). In part this study might debunk some of the assumptions made about college student government—particularly the access to power and potential impact of sororities and fraternities (e.g., previous perspectives about “voting blocs” and pipelines from student

government office to civic and public service [e.g., Flint, 2019]). Data in this study regarding schools over 30,000 students is relevant and important (e.g., that there are double the number of unaffiliated presidents than SFL-affiliated at this institution size). It could be assumed that one needs an SFL-backing to win the presidency at a large institution, and yet the findings in this study reveal that this is not necessarily the case. Given these findings are not generalizable, this may also be solely reflective of the sample of those who completed the survey. Further, it is unknown whether unaffiliated presidents ran alongside an SFL-affiliated vice-president. Therefore, it is impossible to say with certainty the potential impact of such a duo (i.e., at ticket-style campuses).

Still, theories concerning SFL-affiliation in student government elections persist. At Florida Atlantic University, Fontoura (2019) reported that affiliated students have an advantage in student government elections and that some unaffiliated students have reported defeat due to “not having as large a network of influence as members of fraternities and sororities do” (para 5). Similarly in the southern part of the United States, institutions like the University of Alabama have a long history of SFL/student government intertwining, as displayed in discourse about the ‘Machine,’ which operated as an underground organization made up of prominent sororities and fraternities that had an influence on college politics and elections (Tilford, 2018). Historically, students at the University of Alabama saw student government elections as “fixed,” due to the Machine’s encouragement of sororities and fraternities to vote for “Greek-friendly candidates” (Tilford, 2018, p. 144). Present-day questions about this connection could be further considered, analyzed, and applied with regard to race and gender, as well as sorority or fraternity type (e.g., council affiliation, social capital, and organizational conduct history).

As this study reveals that the student government presidency is still mostly white

and heterosexual, the dynamics of SFL-affiliated students is of particular note. The small number of SFL-affiliated presidents who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ+) in some way may be a glimpse into the lack of support for LGBTQ+ students in SFL, but then those who are in SFL and ascend to the student government presidency. Race and ethnicity may be an additional consideration. While not known in this study, the value of NPHC membership can be a significant aid for candidates. One student government president in Hardaway et al. (2021) was a member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., a membership she shared with her university president; additional participants were members of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris' membership in Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. is also of note, and the "Greek vote" as a concept and question is worthy of interrogation as students consider the politics of candidates and the race-gendered reality of elections. *The New York Times* even published a story about this entitled, "Kamala Harris's Secret Weapon: The Sisterhood of Alpha Kappa Alpha" (Saul, 2019). For the purposes of this study, it is unknown their affiliation or council-affiliation, yet there is value in understanding this for future studies and considering inter/national organization involvement.

Implications and Recommendations

There are several implications drawn from this work that warrant recommendations for both practice and future research. Importantly, these implications and recommendations are not limited to one population; both campus-based professionals and inter/national organization staff/volunteers can and should consider what follows, as the down-stream effect could be beneficial to the very students involved in these ways.

Recommendations for Practice

First, it should be asked, in what ways are students, campus-based practitioners, and higher education administrators (even) con-

scious of the SFL-affiliation of student government presidents? Given the examples of student government's structure, power, and potential impact on the sorority and fraternity experience (e.g., the aforementioned example of LSU student government candidates' descriptions of desired changes in SFL), council and chapter leadership, campus-based SFL staff, and administrators must continuously educate not only all student government participants (regardless of any student government officers' SFL affiliation) but also SFL-affiliated leaders (particularly council leaders). Specific education could concern the organizational structures, practices, and norms of both SFL and student government (e.g., varying governance structures and timelines among SFL councils, student government election processes, membership requirements); collaborative leadership; and institutional processes (e.g., budget cycles, signatory authorities, contractual approvals, policy timelines and implementation periods).

Conversely, inter/national staff and volunteers must ensure annual education and acknowledgement of student government's structures, processes, and impact on the fraternal experience with chapter leaders and their volunteers (i.e., advisors, program facilitators). Sororities and fraternities that increase awareness and education among members and volunteers could potentially increase student government participation from members, given the potential impact student government has to shape the fraternal experience. Just as more students became involved in trustee governance at IU in the 1960s, SFL-affiliated students today have the opportunity to (re)insert themselves into student government processes. Inter/national organizations can and should consider opportunities to support the development of members interested in student government roles. If sororities and fraternities continue to claim leadership skills as a product of membership (Atkinson et al., 2010; Kimbrough & Hutcheson, 1998; North American Interfraternity Conference,

n. d.), the student government platform is a stage upon which leadership outcomes can be demonstrated. Future research might consider longitudinal scales to measure leadership development of students who ascend to these roles.

Second, though some inter/national organizations regularly recognize on their social media outlets members' student government affiliation (Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., 2020; Beta Theta Pi, 2020; Gamma Phi Beta, 2019), what, though, do they do with this information? Are organization staff eventually outreaching to their SFL-affiliated student government presidents to congratulate them, tap them for future committees, publications, or speaking opportunities (or something else)? Both campus-based and organization-based practitioners can and should develop some standard operating procedures (SOP) to serve multiple purposes: gather/share news of SFL-affiliated members' election results, encourage relationship building, promote knowledge-sharing, and enhance marketing/promotion opportunities. The development of SOPs not only regularly operationalizes such actions, but signals to students an awareness and recognition of their role from their affiliated organization.

Third, campus-based practitioners should also consider the ways not only SFL engages with student government but also support SFL governing councils in their interactions, as well. Specifically, SFL offices, departments, and advisors should develop departmental SOPs designed to engage with the institution's student government president—regardless of the student government president's SFL-affiliation or lack thereof. Similarly, campus-based professionals should incorporate similar outreach, relationship building, planning, and collaboration with student government into the advisement of governing councils; though student government is only one of many potential collaborative entities on campus (e.g., athletics, service-learning entities, Dance Marathon organizations), its

role in institutional governance should not be ignored by governing councils. The findings from this study indicate that in some regions or within campuses of various sizes, SFL-affiliated student government presidencies are not as prominent as previously thought. Therefore, campus-based practitioners can facilitate relationship building and information sharing with SFL leaders and student government presidents in routine ways. Consider elections calendars and timelines to develop annual, standing outreach and meeting opportunities (i.e., email introductions, retreats, strategic planning check-ins). Because students only experience their role over the course of a singular calendar year, the onus on developing and maintaining long-term vitality between student government and SFL leadership falls onto campus-based staff. SOPs embedded into professional staff advising of student leaders can assist in long-term development of productive working relationships between these prominent, visible, and important campus communities.

Finally, for those campuses that already have or benefit from a highly functioning SFL-student government relationship, information-gathering efforts could support the expansion of campus-based administrative support. An obvious question to explore is which campus-based administrators involved with student government are themselves members of sororities and fraternities (e.g., the Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. members in Hardaway et al. [2020])? The opportunity for SFL-affiliated student government presidents to connect easily with SFL-affiliated administrators is obvious and one of the many benefits of membership (National Pan-Hellenic Council, n. d.; National Panhellenic Conference, n. d.). Campus-based professional staff sometimes are already aware of and have SFL-affiliated administrator knowledge and access. Information sharing with student government advisors and facilitating relationship-building opportunities between SFL-affiliated administrators and student

government presidents (regardless of their SFL-affiliation, if any at all) can afford opportunities to engage in campus-specific discourse concerning elections and campaigning. Campus-based staff (and organization-based staff) can support colleagues and ultimately student leaders by facilitating these networks.

Recommendations for Research

While this study engages with responses from SFL-affiliated presidents, future studies may examine the nature and nuances of organizational impact (e.g., social capital, membership size and type, total SFL population size, sequential presidencies, and so on). Additionally, future research should consider who else is involved in student government and what are their affiliations. To understand the experiences and identities of students in vice president and Executive Branch roles or who are serving as representatives (e.g., Senators), may allow campus-based practitioners to more deeply understand the presence of representation on campus. Further, a central question to this (future) research can engage with the element of “representation:” who do students feel they are representing when they are members of a sorority or fraternity? Further, in what ways does “neutrality” play into serving in this dual capacity (e.g., president *and* in a sorority or fraternity), and whether or not an individual is really neutral? Tangentially, future studies could consider the ways student government presidents, both SFL-affiliated and not, engage with the students they claim to represent. When student government presidents are SFL-affiliated, in what ways do they engage and connect with non-SFL-affiliated students; when student government presidents are not SFL-affiliated, how do they engage and connect with affiliated students?

Next, future research might explicitly examine the racialized, gendered, and harmful oppressive structures that continue to influence and impact the SFL and student government relationship. More specifically, future studies could explore the ways SFL-

affiliated students interact with SFL-specific controversies or incidents on campus (e.g., hate-bias incidents, public organizational conduct cases, Abolish Greek Life). Campus-based Abolish Greek Life and similar movements could be particularly interesting, localized case studies to examine the ways student government leaders are aware and informed of the inherently exclusive structures still prevalent in a community. Specifically exploring the ways institutional differences (e.g., size, location, type, population served) impact such SFL’s oppressive structures could inspire additional non-generalizable scholarship. Another opportunity for future research could explore the types of interactions that are had in controversy-induced meetings with administrators; in what ways are SFL-affiliated students seen as members of the collective sorority/fraternity community as opposed to members of their particular organization (e.g., given student government presidents meet frequently with campus administrators, what, then, do they talk about, and how or does that change based on affiliation or campus climate)? How might the identities of administrators uphold or challenge the acceptance of SFL structures when advising and supporting student government leaders during public controversies? Such questions could enhance and bolster practitioner literature.

Finally, given this study’s notable finding that 93.75% of SFL-affiliated presidents strongly or somewhat agreed that student government has significant power on their campus (compared to 79.59% of unaffiliated students), future research could explore this considerable perception gap. Why are SFL-affiliated student government presidents under this impression; what experiences have they had that contribute to this perception? As indicators/proxies of power, what organizational knowledge or political experience from SFL membership benefits student government leaders? Additionally, given the findings above, future scholarship could further consider and test other proxies

and measures of power of student government (French & Raven, 1959). The findings from this research can be extended to enhance professional practice and advising for all student government presidents. This future research might include understanding the nuances of campus controversies associated with SFL and student government. For example, candidates at the University of Mississippi have been disqualified for instances of bribery among the SFL community and chapters (e.g., see Boyer, 2019; Neal & Clayton, 2019). Future research might include evaluating the structures that potentially uphold “the Greek vote,” as well as in/formal safeguards that result in advantages for SFL-affiliated students. Much like expectations of umbrella groups asking chapter members, advisors, and alumna to understand their policies and protocols, this research may provide both SFL and student government advisors an increased awareness of additional nuances of this intersection.

Conclusion

While there are no known empirical studies about this intersection of students’ identities and involvement contexts, perhaps this is the beginning of a deeper exploration beyond passive citations and campus press. Still, the findings from this study reveal that there are nuances among SFL-affiliated student government presidents’ identities, institutional contexts, and experiences. Most notably, differences discovered between SFL-affiliated and unaffiliated student government presidents should give pause to prevalent assumptions concerning the power and impact of sororities and fraternities in student government elections. The implications of these findings afford various considerations or recommendations for not only campus-based professionals but for organization-based professionals and volunteers, as well. Though this research is part of a larger study examining student government presidents, the findings are interesting enough to warrant considerable additional

and future research. Clearly, the intersection of student government and SFL-affiliation continues to evolve; this scholarship could be an early extension to a much more comprehensive understanding of two major, quintessential collegiate associations.

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