

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

BOARD OF VISITORS GREEK LIFE REVIEW PROGRESS UPDATE

DECEMBER 01, 2021

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VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY
GREEK LIFE REVIEW
December 2021 Progress Report

OVERVIEW:

At the direction of the President in March 2021, the Senior Vice Provost (SVP) for Student Affairs launched a comprehensive review of Greek life at the university. That review included internal assessments of the operations as well as an independent review by an outside consultant, Dyad Strategies LLC. Many of Dyad's recommendations were accepted by University leadership who received their report in August 2021 and are at various stages of implementation (Appendix I).

Fraternity and sorority life work was the primary focus of senior leadership over the summer continuing into fall semester. Major accomplishments related to the reviews have included establishing the FSL office as a separate unit in the Division reporting to an Associate Vice Provost, hiring a Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life who started October 15th, establishing and charging 5 FSL workgroups, strengthening the FSL record keeping system, amending the Student Code of Conduct to address organizational conduct, adding a position to Student Conduct to address organizational conduct issues, review and updating FSL Handbook, establishing a weekly organization case coordination team, developing and disseminating an alcohol amnesty policy, creating and posting a Hazing Prevention Coordinator position, finishing alcohol and hazing training, developing new member and recruitment plans for spring 2022 and outreach to chapters, advisors, councils, and national headquarters.

Other recommendations from the reviews required further evaluation by workgroups established by the Senior Vice Provost and their work, which started in September 2021, is highlighted in this report. Each workgroup was led by Co-Chairs, with other members selected from various constituent groups. Workgroup membership and affiliation is listed in Appendix II.

The Senior Vice Provost met with Co-Chairs in August 2021 prior to the start of each workgroup to review each workgroup's charge (Appendix III) and answer any questions. After workgroups started, a monthly meeting was held with Co-Chairs to discuss progress and issues shared across workgroups. An FSL town hall was held on November 16, 2021 where each workgroup presented their recommendations for feedback from the community. A form was also provided to collect additional feedback for evaluation of the workgroup recommendations. Workgroups provided their reports to the SVP on November 22, 2021. Workgroup recommendations are enumerated in Appendix IV.

University leadership ultimately is responsible for policies related to fraternity and sorority life. The Senior Vice Provost and his leadership team will be evaluating recommendations and feedback received to present a final report to the Provost and President. Recommendations will be prioritized and linked to a timetable for implementation.

There were a number of challenges encountered over the course of our work. Nationally, and in Virginia, there has been an exodus of student affairs staff creating significant staffing gaps. This

is evident in fraternity and sorority life offices in the Commonwealth and across the country. In our office we had one coordinator depart May, 21, another who departed August 13, and after the hire of our director the one remaining staff member, the associate director, left on November 5 for another position leaving us with one staff member. The current director is in the process of evaluating the appropriate staffing configuration for the office and will start recruiting new staff. We had also hoped to restart new member recruitment and intake for the fall semester, but due to staffing considerations and continued policy review we postponed recruitment to spring semester 2022. This involved considerable time meeting and communicating with the FSL community, advisors and national headquarters to address their concerns and answer their questions. Some of the yet to be completed recommendations are also related to filling staff positions. For instance, the campus wide hazing plan is contingent on the hire of the Hazing Prevention Coordinator. Despite these challenges, we have made considerable progress to support and strengthen our FSL community.

Appendix I

Fraternity and Sorority Life Update			
	Completed	In Process and Ongoing	To Be Completed
Roles and Responsibilities	<p>Fraternity and Sorority Life is a separate unit reporting to the Associate Vice Provost</p> <p>Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life, Joe Wheelless, hired</p> <p>Record keeping system strengthened</p> <p>Organizational conduct cases adjudicated through Student Conduct and Academic Integrity</p> <p>Position added to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity to address organizational misconduct</p>	<p>Creating a sense of community (ongoing)</p> <p>Increasing support for chapter officers (ongoing)</p> <p>Analyzing FSL staffing for spring recruitment for open positions (Spring 2022)</p> <p>Developing strategic priorities and an assessment plan (Summer 2022)</p> <p>FSL affiliation as a demographic attribute in Banner (ongoing)</p>	<p>Increasing chapter accountability plan (Spring 2022)</p> <p>Revamp Standards of Excellence (Spring 2022)</p> <p>Establish FLS alumni council, FSL Director (Fall 2022)</p> <p>Start comprehensive DEI plan (Fall 2022)</p>

Fraternity and Sorority Life Update

	Completed	In Process and Ongoing	To Be Completed
Health and Safety	<p>Policy developed to address organizational misconduct</p> <p>Student organization case coordination team established for review of incidents</p> <p>Alcohol amnesty incorporated</p> <p>Finished Gordie Center training focused on alcohol and hazing</p>	<p>Hazing prevention coordinator position posted (Fall 2021 - Anticipated hire Fall 2022)</p> <p>Develop mechanism to disclose misconduct of FSL groups (Spring 2022)</p> <p>Update and expand campus hazing policy (Spring 2022)</p>	<p>Hazing investigation training (Fall 2022)</p> <p>Campus wide hazing prevention plan (Spring 2023)</p>
Recruitment, Intake and Member Education		<p>Outreach to councils, chapters and national headquarters regarding initial postponed recruitment and anticipated spring recruitment (ongoing)</p> <p>Met with all four councils fall related to new member intake and recruitment</p> <p>FSL town meeting reviewing workgroup recommendations</p> <p>Developing recruitment/intake plans with councils for spring 2022 cycle</p>	<p>Revamp fall recruitment to be completed by FSL Director (Spring 2022)</p>
University/Community Relations	<p>Student organization case coordination team established</p> <p>University/community relations workgroup presentation and feedback session with neighborhood association</p>		

Appendix II

First Name	Last Name	Title
Hazing Policy		
Karen	Belanger	Director, Student Conduct & Academic Integrity (co-chair)
Fred	Tugas	Assistant Dean of Students (co-chair)
Jason	Block	Senior Compliance Specialist, Audit & Compliance Services
Jordan	Gardner	Assistant Director, Structured Sports & Outreach, RecWell
Noah	Strebler	Associate AD for Compliance & Student Services, Athletics
Monica	Johnson	Employee Relations Associate, Human Resources
Carlos	Stewart	Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Area Advisor
Jayda	Nelson	Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., Chapter President
Farzad	Jarrahi	Theta Chi, Chapter President
Health & Safety		
Jihad	Aziz	Interim Assistant Vice Provost and Executive Director of UCS (co-chair)
Louie	Correa	Senior Director of Development, VCU School of Pharmacy (co-chair)
Trisha	Saunders	Interim Associate Director, Recreation & Well-Being
Caroline	Coffill	Clinical Case Manager, University Counseling Services
Malorie	Yeaman	Title IX Coordinator & Director of Outreach and Support, EAS
Fancis	Thompson	Phi Gamma Delta Chapter Advisor
Mason	Huynh	Lambda Phi Epsilon Fraternity, Inc. - Chapter President
Rebecca (Becca)	Kolb	Phi Mu - Chapter President
Domanic	Martin	Theta Delta Chi - Chapter President
Tom	Chau	Chapter and Volunteer Services Director, SigEp Headquarters
Recruitment, Intake & New Member Education		
Jimmie	Gahagan	Director, VCU Transform Living-Learning Program (LLP) (co-chair)
Allison	Toney	Director, Student and Alumni Engagement (co-chair)
Bailey	Mitchell	Coordinator, Student Conduct & Academic Integrity
Barbara	Cohen	Alpha Gamma Delta Chapter Advisor
Lindsey	McDonald	College Panhellenic Council (CPC) - Council VP of Recruitment
Lauryn	Myers	National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) - Council President
Josh	Leidy	Coordinator, New Student & Family Programs

Brooke	Heiche	Graduate Assistant, VCU Fraternity & Sorority Life Office
Matthew	Wixted	Theta Delta Chi, Chapter President
Caleb	Massey	VCU Alum, R&D Associate Staff ; Oak Ridge National Laboratory
Brian	Bertges	Exec Director, Theta Delta Chi International Fraternity
Rick	Wood	Educational Consultant, Theta Delta Chi International Fraternity
Tony	Moss	External Advisor to VCU NPHC
Roles & Responsibilities		
Reuban	Rodriguez	Associate Vice Provost & Dean of Students (co-chair)
Gavin	Roark	Director, Residential Life & Housing (co-chair)
Maitlan	Sullivan	Conference Services Coordinator, Residential Life & Housing
Brooke	Isbell	Assistant Executive Director, Pi Kappa Phi Headquarters
LaDarius	Thompson	Associate Director, Fraternity & Sorority Life
Natalie	Pennywell	Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. - Primary Chapter Advisor
Sidhu	Pemmasani	Alpha Sigma Alpha - Chapter President
Kevin	Armas Rodas	Multicultural Greek Council (MGC) - Council President
University & Community Relations		
Heidi	Crapol	Executive Director, Center for Community Engagement and Impact (co-chair)
Miles	Gordon	Director, Community & Government Relations (co-chair)
EJ	Taylor	Assistant Chief, VCU Police
Lisa	Mathews-Ailsworth	Assistant Director, Student Support - Dean of Students Office
Tito	Luna	Neighborhood Outreach Director
Julie	Seward	Fan District Association
Chris	Morem	Fan District Association
Jess	Co	Kappa Phi Gamma - Chapter Advisor
Courtney	Maitland	College Panhellenic Council (CPC) - Council President
Koroush	Banakhjaste	Interfraternity Council (IFC) - Council President
Amy	Robins	5th District Liaison, Office of the Honorable Stephanie A. Lynch
Katherine	Jordan	Councilmember, Richmond City Council, 2nd district
Sven	Philipsen	2nd District Liaison, Office of the Honorable Katherine Jordan
LaTasha	Wyche	Randolph Neighborhood Association

HEALTH AND SAFETY WORKGROUP:

- Charge:

The primary objective of this workgroup is to identify, evaluate, and propose mechanisms to support the health, safety, and well-being of fraternity and sorority members, pledges, and guests. The workgroup should review current policies and procedures, identify gaps in supporting a safe and healthy environment, and propose necessary changes.

As part of its work, the group should identify attitudes, behaviors, and practices that contribute to creating healthy and safe communities, as well as those that inhibit the formation and sustenance of such environments.

Initially the workgroup is asked to explore the Dyad recommendation related to a programming structure aimed at improving the health and safety of fraternity and sorority members. The workgroup should further analyze the internal recommendation eliminating alcohol from all sorority and fraternity events. The workgroup is also tasked with evaluating the current social event registration process and purpose. Finally, the group should examine ways to encourage self-reporting and bystander intervention related to behaviors negatively impacting health and safety, including hazing.

RECRUITMENT, INTAKE & MEMBER EDUCATION WORKGROUP:

- Charge:

This group will examine policies and practices related to bringing in membership to fraternity and sorority chapters. The group will also examine new member and ongoing education reflecting the values and purposes of chapters, consistent with the university's and division's mission and values.

The workgroup should evaluate the recruitment process and make recommendations to improve that process. Issues to be considered include threshold GPA requirements for individuals and chapters, first year student participation, qualities of new members contributing to chapter success, consideration of dashboards for evaluation of chapter performance, chapter expansion, new member educator training, and new member orientation procedures.

The workgroup should also evaluate new member and ongoing member education content and delivery. Diversity and inclusion should be an integral component of any education program, targeted to all fraternity and sorority members. The workgroup

should coordinate with the Health and Safety workgroup on education or policy matters related to hazing, alcohol & drug abuse, and sexual violence.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES & PURPOSE WORKGROUP:

- Charge:

The objective of this workgroup is to delineate roles and responsibilities for offices, organizations and individuals supporting fraternity and sorority life at VCU. The workgroup should examine relationships between the Division of Student Affairs, the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life, councils, chapters, advisors and headquarters. The workgroup should propose policies and practices to provide an effective and seamless, to the extent practical, Fraternity and Sorority Life infrastructure.

Issues to be examined may include communication, collaboration, nature of relationships, shared responsibilities, scope and reach of each entity, roles and responsibilities, utilization of a strong volunteer system, need for memorandum of understandings, and common objectives.

UMBRELLA HAZING POLICY WORKGROUP:

- Charge:

Currently hazing is listed as a prohibited behavior in the Student Code of Conduct. It is also referenced in other local documents and policies. This workgroup will evaluate the adoption of a comprehensive stand-alone umbrella university hazing policy incorporating requirements of state statutes and the *Model Policy regarding the Prevention of and Appropriate Disciplinary Action for Hazing at Virginia's Institutions of Higher Education* promulgated by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia.

UNIVERSITY & COMMUNITY RELATIONS WORKGROUP:

- Charge:

The objective of this workgroup is to identify and propose practices that foster communication and identify solutions to the challenges of fraternity and sorority life in the external community. Those issues and challenges include, but are not limited to, open and timely communications, event planning and coordination, noise, trash, parking, engagement of fraternity and sorority alumni and parents, and incident response and resolution.

Appendix IV Workgroup Recommendations

The following workgroup recommendations will be evaluated and prioritized by the Senior Vice Provost and his leadership team and linked to a timetable for implementation.

Health and Safety Recommendations:

- Current risk management policies and procedures should remain. Alcohol may be permitted at events so long as the events adhere to VCU FSL risk management policies and procedures, third party guidelines, legal drinking age, etc. The work group did not see high risk behavior as a result of registered, formal events. High risk behavior occurred in informal settings.
- FSL could provide clarity around what is a formal event and what is an informal event.
- For informal events, a set of informal gathering guidelines could be established so members could take further precautions when these events occur to help insure safety of their members and guests
- FSL could provide further education on both formal and informal events. FSL should develop a clear communication plan/strategy on how information will be disseminated to FSL members. Acknowledgment of receipt and review of this information can be completed in the annual accreditation process.
- FSL could provide training for registration of events as the current event registration process hasn't been utilized during this evaluation period
- Re-evaluate the Big/Little Brother/Sister nights. The work group recommends FSL consider one or more of these potential changes:
 - Eliminate Big/Little nights - these events create opportunities for high risk behavior and involve a power dynamic when they occur during the pledging process.
 - Move Big/Little events to after initiation - moving the events to after initiation would substantially decrease the power dynamic issue.
 - Require Big/Little events to occur on campus - the sorority organizations host their Big/Little events on campus and seemingly have far fewer issues of high risk behavior. Although there is concern of informal parties occurring after the formal events.
 - Alcohol should be eliminated from these events in their entirety.
- Enhance training/programming around responsible citizenship. Many students were well aware of their role in decreasing liability. Although important, this should be a secondary concern behind the safety and well-being of members and guests. The FSL community could benefit from peer-to-peer training on good citizenship, bystander intervention and more. This programming should be assessed regularly to ensure it is effective.
 - Fraternity and Sororities membership should be required to develop baseline knowledge on topics such as alcohol and bystander engagement. Some examples include:
 - VCU AlcoholEdu

- Step Up!
- Create peer-to-peer models for education and training
 - Explore models that allow for training and educational activities within each chapter to be peer-developed and peer-led where possible.

Recruitment, Intake & Member Education Recommendations:

Value Proposition

A values-based Fraternity and Sorority Life (FSL) community creates an experience for students that adds value to the overall VCU experience. The community's core values should be espoused throughout a student's entire collegiate experience. A committee of students from across all councils at VCU (IFC, CPC, NPHC, and MGC) should be formed to determine and define shared values for the fraternity and sorority community at VCU which also align with VCU's Quest 2025 goals.

- We recommend the formation of a Greek Council that can serve as a community-wide board that can provide learning and engagement opportunities (see example at [Dartmouth](#)). This creates an opportunity to increase cross-council communication and to build ownership for their community's existence as a diverse collective. Create opportunities of shared council/FSL community-building. Examples of shared council and community-building activities may include but are not limited to:
 - Shared council letter day: identify a day monthly when all councils wear their letters
 - Community service day or days for the entire community to come together over a shared experience - See the [FreshStart at Pennsylvania State University](#)
 - Optional for-credit leadership course - creating a leadership course that would help FSL leaders understand the values of the community and learn how to translate that into action in their specific organizational context. ([Iowa State](#), [LSU](#))
- We recommend the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life create a marketing plan and timeline that articulates the values of the FSL community and highlights the contributions of community members to the broader VCU and Richmond constituents including but not limited to (i.e. potential new students, returning students, parents and families, faculty, staff and administration, community members). Examples may include but are not limited to:
 - Develop a marketing tool that promotes the positive initiatives of fraternity and sorority chapters and the community as a whole ([Virginia Tech](#)).
 - Develop and invest in university resources to tell the VCU fraternity and sorority membership experience story.
 - Highlight chapters, members and events that directly positively promote values in ways that are equitable, right, and fair. For example: how the [Watch the Yard](#) page displays excellence in the Divine 9 community
 - Encourage the FSL office to officially articulate what organizations are doing successfully on campus and within the community.
 - Create a module for FSL to be incorporated into Weeks of Welcome that highlight the values of the community and why a first-year student should

consider joining an organization. Explore other options to get information about the FSL community into the hands of first-year students through events like Open Houses and the Resource Fair

- We recommend the university needs to make a true commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) by engaging in the following:
 - Examining policies and practices in light of DEIA
 - Distinguishing between sense of belonging work and moving organizations away from exclusionary practices
 - Ongoing training members on restorative practices, implicit bias, and other topics
 - Conducting a DEIA audit to assess the climate of FSL community, address barriers, and promote awareness
 - Institutions must move away from treating culturally oriented organizations similarly based on membership numbers. This is done by focusing on equity over equality.
 - Require councils to create events that support VCU students' sense of belonging, well-being, and success and contribute to traditions on campus.

Recruitment

- We recommend the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life should consistently promote the values and benefits of fraternity and sorority membership by implementing the following:
 - Training for chapters to facilitate a values-based recruitment/intake
 - Require potential members orientation prior to any recruitment/intake processes to ensure all potential members understand the expectations with the potential for breakout sessions based on councils.
 - Disclose of the range of estimated costs (based on prior fiscal year) of participating in Fraternity/Sorority Life
 - Develop a permanent year round Greek Ambassador program
- We recommend that the recruitment by fraternities and sororities be delayed by six weeks from the start of the Fall academic semester or unless a longer time is specified by national councils or organizations. Additional supporting literature can be found at the end of this document in the references section. During this six week timeline we encourage council-wide promotion and outreach efforts that would promote the values and benefits of FSL membership. We would advocate for the following eligibility standards to be put in place:
 - For Potential New Members:
 - A minimum 2.5 GPA requirement for a student not in their first-semester, first-year of enrollment at VCU
 - Students to be in good standing
 - Successful completion of Potential New Member (PNM) orientation
 - For Chapters participating in recruitment
 - Recruitment for all recognized FSL chapters is a privilege not a right
 - Chapters must be in good standing with the university and national organization affiliation
 - Documentation from the inter/national headquarters stating that the chapter may recruit must be received by OFSL before the chapter can participate in membership recruitment/intake.

- Communication initiated by the FSL office. In the summer, official communication requests each organization approval for chapters to recruit.
- All chapters should submit for approval all recruitment/intake events. Prior to any recruitment/intake activities at least one chapter member, preferably the Chapter President or Intake/Recruitment Chairperson and/or New Member Educator must meet with a designee in the OFSL.
- In the event recruitment/intake activities begin without the knowledge and approval of the Office of Fraternity & Sorority Life and/or the chapter has not adhered to the guidelines stated by the office and/or designated council, recruitment/intake activities may be referred for disciplinary action.

New Member Rights and Responsibilities

- We recommend the elimination of any tier based vernacular (e.g., pledge, colonies, rush) that reinforce power differentials between new members and older members, and could invite or condone a hazing or unsafe culture (NASPA, pg 83).
- We recommend that the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life create a new member “bill of rights” that outlines how new members are integrated and involved throughout their first semester and/or first year within an organization.
 - The document should include a list of opportunities and expectations that new members are entitled to as they are going through the new member process.
 - See [example](#) provided by NPC.
- We recommend that the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life as well as individual chapters/organizations address concerns about the big-brother/big sister process and how it contributes to positive and negative behaviors. Suggestions include:
 - Encourage big brother/big sister roles to be upper class students vs. sophomores.
 - Train big brothers/big sisters on effective mentoring, expectations, and creating a sense of belonging. The training should be council specific at a minimum (highly recommended chapter follow ups). Chapter participation should be included in the FSL review process at the end of year.
 - Working with fraternity chapters to develop parameters around the use/presence of alcohol as part of big/little brother/sister activities.
 - At beginning of each semester, new member educators are required to attend trainings regarding the three big nights (bid nights, big brother/sister reveal, initiation) and how to train big brothers and sisters on appropriate mentorship

New Member Education

- We recommend that at the start of each academic term/semester the chapters should provide the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life an outline and overview of the new member education curriculum which includes the programs, dates, locations of all activities.
- We recommend that new member education should be reduced to a maximum of 6 weeks, unless dictated longer by the national/international/corporate headquarters within the respected fraternal/sorority organization’s guidelines.

- We recommend the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life ensure an internal standards process exists and is utilized by chapters and respective councils to hold its members accountable for their behavior and actions and is in alignment with the process outlined and approved by the local and national/international/corporate headquarters.

Chapter Performance and Accountability

- We recommend the creation of a comprehensive multicomponent training program that addresses diversity, equity, inclusion & accessibility; health and wellness; and how to manage risk. Training should include new and returning members. Training should be ongoing, active, and skill-based and should take into account the timing of the student life-cycle.
- We recommend the development of a common set of expectations/frameworks/standards for education programs for different roles such as campus advisors, alumni advisors, student leaders, and organizational members. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - [University of Arizona](#)
 - [Dartmouth](#)
 - [Theta Delta Chi Charge Manual](#)
- We recommend that the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life should provide a list of campus-based training held by other departments to chapters/organizations that make sense in order to avoid duplication. The same should be in place for the inter/national/corporate headquarters of chapters.
 - As stated in the values proposition section, we recommend the formation of a Greek Council that can serve as a community-wide board to provide learning and engagement opportunities. This creates an opportunity to increase cross-council communication and to build ownership for their community's existence as a diverse collective.
- We recommend that a Fraternity/Sorority Life Retreat should be established and held annually that both builds community and helps VCU to better define roles and responsibilities.
- We recommend that the university establish a formal Student Organizational Standards of Excellence Scorecard or Rubric that is inclusive of FSL organizations.
 - We highlight the [national scorecard from the Piazza Center](#) at Penn St and the [Fraternity & Sorority Life Chapter Scorecards](#) developed at Florida State and [Community Conduct Page at Missouri](#) as examples
- We recommend that the university create a student organization Community Conduct Page that highlights student organizations in good disciplinary standing as well as those organizations on disciplinary probation if not included in the scorecard/rubric. We recommend a possible green, yellow, red distinction between organizations.
- We recommend that there should be an increase in resource allocation to support student organization accountability and programming.
- We recommend that the Office of FSL should clearly define and increase communication with inter/national/corporate headquarters staff. For example, inviting headquarters, alumni advisors, and other stakeholders on joint calls with students as necessary.
- We recommend that the university should increase communication and networking between student organizational leaders at VCU.
- We recommend that NPHC and MGC should be assigned a dedicated staff member, preferably someone affiliated with a culturally based group. For example, the university

may consider dual appointments in Sorority and Fraternity Life and the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs where students currently go for support.

- We recommend that the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life host semesterly town hall meetings with the local community to provide feedback and accountability between the overarching Greek Council, VCU, and the neighborhood associations immediately surrounding the VCU community.
- As a part of the semesterly roster submission process we recommend creating a new roster of those who have left the organization. The Office of FSL should create an anonymous exit survey of why students leave the fraternity and sorority life at VCU and send to members who have left the organization
- The Office of FSL should ensure each council has student leadership transition check-list
- The Office of FSL should regularly celebrating the successes of the FSL community and share with the campus and broader community

Space

- We recommend that the university evaluate priority given to Fraternity and Sorority Life in the space reservation process on-campus.
 - The Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life should work with the University, Residential Life and Housing, and the Student Commons to determine if dedicated meeting space can be prioritized for the FSL community in a way that is beneficial to chapter growth, development, and inclusivity.
- We recommend that the university incorporate fraternity and sorority organizations into the existing campus master plan as well as Student Commons renovation strategic plan.
- We recommend that the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life redesign what the official office space in the Student Commons looks like to better support student organizations.
- We recommend that the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life require chapters to provide an annual housing update with the office. In addition, if the chapter is using a house that members live in, and is being used for events, that should be registered as well.

Roles & Responsibilities Recommendations:

- Provide a FSL Implementation Plan that includes key performance indicators to help ensure the various recommendations from the various workgroups can be evaluated and implemented in a timely manner.
- Establish a Relationship Statement for recognized chapters at the University. This is recommended to be a joint collaborative process between FSL and the various councils. The creation of the relationship statement must include focus groups from chapter leadership, advisors, and members from inter/national (or equivalent) organizations.
- FSL will establish a yearly accreditation process that includes key performance indicators such as: required training, GPA requirements, submitting service hours, submitting by-laws/constitution, advisor feedback, programs and events, recruitment initiatives, attending council meetings, and highlighting values based activities of the organization.
- Re-establish a yearly Greek Life awards night that can be tied to both the accreditation process as well as additional meaningful awards for the Greek community. Examples of awards to include: Service Project of the Year, Chapter of the Year, Greek Person of the Year per Council, Risk Management Program Excellence, 3.0 GPA recognition for

chapters, and Rams Cup (to recognize the organization with the highest GPA or the organization per council with the highest GPA).

- Greek Councils should establish a Greek Life creed that shifts focus from social based organizations to values based organizations. The creed will help connect all councils and what it means to be a member of the Greek community. This creed can also connect to the relationship statement, accreditation process, and increase a sense of belonging as a Greek community.
- FSL or appropriate VCU website to be updated to include positive highlights from the various organizations and councils, a breakdown of policies, organization discipline and outcomes, recognized and unrecognized chapters, and a parent resource page.
- FSL create an infrastructure dashboard in terms of organizations submitting items at University level to be utilized for items such as; advisor contact information, required advising training, roster management, chapter constitution and bylaw submission, appropriate materials from Inter/National organization (or equivalent), chapter events, recruitment/intake processes, community service, training requirements, council transition reports. It should be considered if the chosen system connects to the university banner system.
- All organizations must have an advisor on file with the FSL office. FSL office will develop required annual training for advisors that sets the expectations from the University and will keep advisor contact information on file. Offer advisors the opportunity to connect with other advisors for support on a semesterly basis. Additionally, all chapters must have an Inter/National Office contact (or equivalent) on file annually with the FSL office.
- Utilization of a strong volunteer system to have an available pool of volunteers who can serve as advisors or community members to assist the Greek system.
- (FSL) Host an annual state of Greek Life meeting in which members of Inter/Nationals (or equivalent), advisors, and the Greek members are invited to hear updates on the Greek community.
- (FSL) Publish a newsletter or assessment highlight book to provide updates, benefits, accomplishments, and overview on the Greek Life Community.
- (FSL) Update Advisors and Inter/National Office (or equivalent), in accordance with VCU policy, on any conduct action charged against or taken against chapter organizations. This should include charges related to academic, risk management, or any other conduct in which the organization is being charged.
- (FSL) Partner with and collect from Inter/National Offices (or equivalent) all recruitment/intake expectations, programming requirements, academic standards, and risk management requirements.
- Review of council constitutions and bylaws to occur every two years and tracking of individual chapter constitutions and bylaws yearly.
- Annual Greek Life Retreat hosted by FSL to include council executive board members and individual chapter Presidents and two to three key executive board members.
- Prepare a responsible student module that can be an orientation training or module to highlight the Greek Life community as standalone or as part of being involved on campus. This module would be incorporated as a way to educate on the benefits of Greek Life as well as the responsibility of organizations.

- Establish educational training across the Greek membership. The quarterly training should focus on holistic timely topics that may include: Title IX, alcohol education, hazing education, membership development, and diversity, equity and inclusion training.
- Support and build up the various Greek Life Councils in creating buy-in at that council level and greek life membership level. This includes accountability that all chapters are actively participating in the councils scheduled meetings.
- Establish a program calendar to establish when individual chapters can host events or recruitment efforts. Support the councils hosting various campus wide events within the first six weeks of the semester to help spread the positive message and work of the Greek Community. In addition, this program calendar would highlight the important dates established by FSL.
- Establish clear academic standards (VCU currently states 2.7 GPA) and conduct standards for new members to join organizations.
- (VCU) Ensure that chapters and members understand that student code of conduct is in place both on campus and off-campus. This messaging should be consistent with Greek organizations and all student organizations. It is of important note that this representation is extremely important when you are acting on behalf of your chapter.

University & Community Relations Recommendations:

Open and Timely Communications

Overall perception that communications with regard to Greek life has historically been uneven and inconsistent. The following recommendations were made to enhance communications, foster transparency and build trust.

- Develop and invest in ongoing education and training focused on modeling the VCU Creed, what it means to be a good neighbor and citizen, and expectations for responsible behavior and adherence to social norms. Assume a valued-based approach that goes beyond compliance.
 - Develop a training/orientation module for sorority/fraternity students that can be integrated into the existing student orientation and/or a Greek Life retreat. Invite and include testimonials and/or reflections from neighborhood representatives. Note, there is a preference to include all students beyond Greek Life, especially Student Government Association (SGA).
 - Integrate ongoing education into civic education and community engagement. Topics may include defining what it means to attend a college in an urban setting, understanding basic ordinances for living off-campus, and expected social norms as a student-citizen.
 - Maximize the website and social media tools to feature service activities, recognize the positive aspects and contributions of Greek Life, create an annual flyer and/or our newsletter for ongoing communication and updates.
- Communicate “early and often” and utilize multiple channels. Students noted that there is significant information overload from administrative emails and they are often ignored given sheer volume and frequency. Communication to students should fit their preference, and how they best access information, such as mobile apps and device to device communications
- Optimize the value of Greek Life, especially the leadership and service component.

- Implement a calendar of volunteer events with neighbors to build relationships and provide an opportunity to give back together
- Host an annual “Meet Your Neighbor Night” or open house to “Get to Know the Greeks” at the start of the school year.
- Identify sorority and/or fraternity leadership to serve on the respective neighborhood associations to foster collaboration and joint problem-solving. Build this responsibility into their role as a Greek leader.

Event Planning and Coordination

The tool to register parties was deemed to be cumbersome and not user friendly. Concern was expressed by the students that the tool was being used as a tracking and monitoring device perceived to provoke fear of getting in trouble.

Proposed solutions to address event planning and ensure proper event registration.

- Office of Sorority and Fraternity life:
 - Define what parties need to be registered
 - Clearly communicate the process for registration and approval
 - Ensure each fraternity and sorority has a sober brother/sister available at each party
 - Restructure the Big Brother/Big Sister program for peer- to-peer mentoring.
 - Develop and implement a model for student-driven self-regulation for party control based on best practices.
- Encourage responsible behavior for adhering to guidelines and modeling the Student Code of Conduct.
 - Develop criteria for allocating SGA funding as a bonus and/or penalty for responsible behavior
 - Consider monetary and nonmonetary incentives for responsible conduct while taking a reasoned and balanced approach to avoid quid pro quo. Ideas to consider: reserved study space in library during exams, gifts cards, Lyft or Uber cards, Rambucks, basketball tickets.
 - Awards and Recognition: Create an annual award at the President’s level to recognize outstanding citizenship and/or community service. Awards could be made to an individual and/or a fraternity/sorority. Awards could be extended beyond Greek Life.
- Stricter oversight of fraternities and sororities. Ensure consequences and enforcement of non-compliant behavior are consistent with the Student Code of Conduct. Tie non-compliance to penalties such as inability to conduct chapter recruitment.
- Ensure neighbors understand the Student Code of Conduct and the process for non-compliance, especially as it relates to Registered Student Organizations.

Neighborhood Experience - Trash Pickup, Noise & Parking

- Ensure trash pick-up is built into an organized, planned effort after a party. Could be led by Sorority and Fraternity “Bigs and Littles”.
- Ensure trash receptacle are accessible and provide more where needed

Recognition and acknowledgement by the work group that noise disturbances are generally associated with parties. Recognition that enforcement of noise ordinances can be challenging to enforce and resources to ensure compliance are limited. Recommendations:

- Neighbors and Council members strongly encourage VCU to support the amendment and passage of a city-wide ordinance on noise reduction and enforcement.
- Students need to self-monitor and be accountable for managing noise levels responsibly.

Parking policy banning cars on campus for freshmen has been very effective as well as active permitting in the Fan district and GRTC ridership. Recommendations:

- Consider extending parking ban to upperclassmen
- Assess alternate use of VCU parking decks when not fully utilized
- Align reduction of cars and parking to long-term sustainability plan and alternative modes of transportation.

Engagement of Fraternity and Sorority Alumni and Parents Recommendation

- Partner with the Alumni Association to assess current levels of alumni engagement and where there are opportunities for future participation, especially as advisors. Develop plan with FSL office, Alumni Association and appropriate Greek Life representatives to increase participation (Spring 2023)

Incident Response and Resolution

High praise and accolades to Officer Luke Shrader for responding to incidents in a timely manner. His regular reporting and updates at neighborhood meetings are highly valued.

However, many neighbors would like real time monitoring rather than response and reporting after an incident has occurred. Recommendations:

- Extend VCUPD jurisdiction to the Randolph and Oregon Hill neighborhoods
- Convene taskforce to assess the problem and concerns more closely and consider all the options to address.

Housing

Discussion of the complexities of off-campus housing and the respective role and responsibilities of the university, sorority and fraternities, and landlords. Recommendations:

- Sororities and fraternities to voluntarily disclose housing location to build greater trust, transparency and promote safety
- Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life to convene a taskforce to develop the plan, set goals/objectives, process for disclosure, potential map of housing identified by Greek letters/signs and communications. Desire to seek mutual benefit for all stakeholders.
- Continue to partner with landlords to ensure compliance with zoning laws as appropriate.

Hazing Policy Recommendation:

- Draft policy in process