

UNDERGRADUATE MEMBERS PERCEPTIONS  
OF THE CURRENT MEMBERSHIP INTAKE PROCESS:  
AMONG SELECTED BLACK GREEK-LETTERED ORGANIZATIONS

Anthony M. Crenshaw

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Dr. Steven M. Janosik, Chairperson

Dr. Walter Kimbrough

Dr. Eric Norman

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# Undergraduate Members Perceptions of the Current Membership Intake Process: Among Selected Black Greek-Lettered Organizations

Anthony M. Crenshaw

(ABSTRACT)

When students leave home for college, many desire a sense of belonging. One way for students to cultivate this sense of belonging is by participating in formal and informal peer groups (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). Of all peer groups, Greek-lettered organizations, when serving as an effective peer group, have the most impact on its members (Chickering & Reisser, 1993).

As Greek-lettered organizations evolved, pledge processes were created as a means of promoting group values and continuing traditions (Nuwer, 1999). However, this pledge process led to accidents and deaths (Kimbrough, 2003; Nuwer, 1999; Ruffins, 1999). As a result, Black Greek-lettered organizations (BGLOs) replaced their pledge process with a membership intake process (Kimbrough, 1997, 2003; Ruffins, 1999).

Despite the end of pledging, BGLO members instituted “underground pledging,” unsanctioned events that occurred before, during, and/or after the membership intake process as a way to continue the pledge process (Kimbrough, 2003). As a result, students still perceive the pledge process as an instrumental part of the Black Greek experience and continue to participate in unsanctioned pledge activities that lead to injuries and deaths (Geraghty, 1997; Jones, 2000; Morgan, 1998; Rodriguez, 1995; Ruffins, 1997; 2001).

Very little research has been conducted on BGLOs. As such, it would seem that research is needed on how members experience and view the intake process. The present study attempted to address this gap by examining the activities that were associated with the membership intake

process, as well as current undergraduate members' perceptions of the pledge and membership intake processes.

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## CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

When students leave home for college, many develop a desire for a sense of belonging. Away from the influence of their parent(s) or guardian(s), new college students seek to develop coping mechanisms that will allow them to move from being dependent on their parents towards self-sufficiency. Students cultivate this sense of belonging and self-sufficiency by developing emotional and instrumental interdependence. Students achieve this is by participating in formal and informal peer groups (Chickering & Reisser, 1993).

When at college, students are exposed to several formal and informal peer groups. Two peer groups that have the greatest impact on members are students in residence halls and Greek-lettered organizations (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). For students who opt to live on campus, students living in residence halls are often the first peer group that the new student encounters. In this setting, students are exposed to their resident advisor, roommate, as well as peers who are involved in hall sponsored programs and associations (e.g. hall council). These individuals can serve as a peer group for the students. Likewise, students may also form informal peer groups in the residence hall. Students who spend time with fellow students and play sports together on a regular basis is one example of such a peer group.

Some may chose to identify with a Greek-lettered fraternity or sorority. Greek-lettered organizations had their beginnings with the inception of Phi Beta Kappa, founded in 1776 at the College of William and Mary. This co-curricular organization was designed to satisfy the students' needs to interact with their peers both socially and intellectually (Nuwer, 1999). Following the success of Phi Beta Kappa, the fraternity movement evolved with the founding of Kappa Alpha Society in 1825, the first traditional male social fraternity (Kappa Alpha Society, n.d.). With increased access to higher education, the proliferation of Greek-lettered organizations



continued, although segmented. The first female social sorority, Alpha Delta Pi, was founded in 1851 (Panhellenic Council, n.d.). Alpha Phi Alpha, the first intercollegiate fraternity for Black men in the United States, was founded in 1906 and Phi Iota Alpha, the first Latino fraternity, was founded in 1931 (Kimbrough, 2003; Nuwer, 1999).

The first Black Greek letter organization on record is Sigma Pi Phi, also known as the Boule. Sigma Pi Phi was formed in 1904 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania by a group of physicians and dentists for college and professionally educated African Americans (Kimbrough, 2003). However, the first BGLO for collegiate students did not emerge until the founding of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. at Cornell University in 1906. The National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC), founded in 1930, is a group of nine historically Black Greek letter organizations often referred to as Black Greeks or BGLOs, which exist on college campuses as well as through graduate/alumni chapters throughout the world.

Following in the footsteps of Alpha Phi Alpha, seven other Black Greek letter organizations were founded between 1906 and 1922; Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (1908), Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. (1911), Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. (1911), Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. (1913), Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. (1914), Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. (1920), and Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. (1922). Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc., the last organization to join the National Pan-Hellenic Council, was founded in 1963 and was inducted into the National Pan-Hellenic Council in 1996 (Kimbrough & Sutton, 1998). These organizations, although predominately Black, consist of 1.5 million college students or graduates from both sexes and a variety of races and nationalities (National Pan-Hellenic Council, n.d.; Ross, 2000).

As Greek-letter organizations evolved, fraternities developed pledge programs as a means to recruit prep school students before they enrolled in college. Over time, pledging progressed into a way of promoting group values and a means by which traditions could be continued (Kimbrough, 1997). During this time, pledge activities also began to serve as a conduit for hazing as pledge practices became a replacement for freshmen hazing practices that were falling out of favor with college administrators (Nuwer, 1999). Gradually, the purpose of these programs changed as fraternities used pledging as a way for students to “earn” their membership into a fraternity.

In response to hazing incidents and the negative perceptions surrounding Greek-lettered organizations, Black Greek-lettered organizations (BGLOs) began to modify their pledge process. Programs that would last a semester or more were condensed to standardized eight to 12 week programs. These programs were cut down again to standardized six-week programs in the 1980s. Simultaneously, BGLOs attempted to change the image of pledging as Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. adopted the term “membership intake” to replace pledging, while Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. implemented risk management programs. By the spring of 1986 the Alpha Phi Alpha risk management program required members and pledges to pass a test on the fraternity structure and included policies relating to pledging and hazing.

Although the actions were laudable, they failed to stop the incidents of hazing. For example, in 1984, a Hampton University student was killed in an underground hazing ritual while attempting to pledge Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. Though pledging was legal, the student died in an unsanctioned secret event that took place prior to the University’s official rush period (Ruffins, 1999).

Five years later, Joel Harris, an 18-year-old Morehouse College freshman, died of congenital heart failure while pledging Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. “underground,” meaning that the activities were not sanctioned by the fraternity or the university. In an off-campus apartment, 30 students, both members of the fraternity and those seeking membership, participated in a pledge session. At the pledge session, brothers punched and slapped prospective members as they were being quizzed about history of the Morehouse College chapter. This was done as a means to correct behavior or prevent future mistakes. Although Joel Harris was not subject to this abuse, because of a congenital heart defect, the intensity of the pledge session caused Joel to go into cardiac dysrhythmia, which resulted in his death (Kimbrough, 2003).

The death of Joel Harris persuaded the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) Council of Presidents, the governing council of the eight BGLOs (Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc., Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., and Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.), to abolish pledging and replace it with a membership intake process (Kimbrough, 1997, 2003; Ruffins, 1999). This new process banned certain elements of the pledge process (e.g., walking in a single line, dressing alike) and replaced the six-week pledge process with a new membership intake process that lasted from a few days to three weeks. The average process was designed to last one week (Kimbrough, 1997; Ruffins, 1999). Williams (1992) reported that the move to membership intake failed to penetrate all BGLOs. Black Greeks believed that going through a pledge process and gaining respect was sufficiently important to risk sanctions.

In response to these changes, undergraduate members began to institute a counterculture by continuing to pledge “underground,” a semisecret process designed to be invisible to administrators and fraternity or sorority officials while known to other undergraduates on campus (Kimbrough, 2003). While some chapters enacted pre-pledging by having members participate in unsanctioned events prior to the sanctioned pledge program, other chapters developed post-pledging (Kimbrough 1997, 2003). In post-pledging programs, fully initiated members willfully subjected themselves to pledging and hazing in exchange for respect (Kimbrough, 2003). Consequently, the membership intake era has been characterized by dissension.

Pledging is still prevalent in the culture of Black Greek letter organizations. The perpetuation of this culture has resulted in hazing injuries, deaths, and poor academic performance in many chapters (Kimbrough, 1997). In a move designed to keep the former pledge process alive, members involved in the intake process have attempted to mimic the pledge process without understanding the historical roots and purpose of that process (Jones, 2000). In addition, members have begun to ostracize BGLO members who do not pledge, by referring to them as “paper,” a term used for persons who were initiated into the organization by passing a test and completing the necessary paperwork for membership, and not pledging (Kimbrough, 2003; Pledging a brother, 1997).

In summary, when students leave home for college, many of them desire a sense of belonging. One way for students to cultivate this sense of belonging is by participating in formal and informal peer groups (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). Of all peer groups, Greek-lettered organizations, when serving as an effective peer group, have the most impact on its members (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). As Greek-lettered organizations evolved, Greek-lettered

organizations created pledge processes (Nuwer, 1999). Pledging was a means of promoting group values and continuing traditions. However, this pledging process led to accidents and deaths (Kimbrough, 2003; Ruffins, 1999). As a result, BGLOs replaced the pledging process with a membership intake process (Kimbrough, 1997, 2003; Ruffins, 1999). This process was designed to minimize risks to those seeking membership. However, there is some evidence that suggests that hazing and other risky behaviors persist in the intake process (Jones, 2000; Kimbrough, 1997, 2003; Pledging a brother, 1997; Ruffins, 1999; Williams, 1992). There is speculation that these risky behaviors persist in chapters because members believe they bind new members more closely to the organization (Williams, 1992). There is no evidence to support this speculation.

Research is needed on how members experience and view the intake process. The present study attempted to address this gap in the existing literature by examining (a) behaviors that current undergraduate members experience in the intake process, (b) the relationship between current practices, and current members' perceptions of current practices, and (c) the perception of members concerning the effectiveness of these practices in creating a sense of brotherhood or sisterhood.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was three-fold. First, this study was designed to determine the activities in which current undergraduate members report participating in as part of the membership intake process. Secondly, this study was designed to determine the activities that current undergraduate members perceive to be associated with the membership intake process of other BGLO chapters. Third, this study was designed to determine the intake activities that members deem to be effective in creating brotherhood or sisterhood. For the purpose of this

study, the membership intake process refers to the intake process that was implemented by BGLOs after 1990 and the former pledge process refers to intake process that was implemented for BGLO members initiated before 1990.

For purposes of this study, a Black Greek-lettered organization (BGLO) was defined as any one of the nine member organizations of the National Pan-Hellenic Council. The membership intake process refers to the intake process that was implemented by BGLOs after 1990 and the pledge process refers to intake process that was implemented for BGLO members initiated before 1990.

A quantitative technique was used in this study. The researcher developed a survey instrument to collect data about the activities associated with the membership intake process from participants. The sample included 107 current undergraduate members who attended the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual National Black Greek Leadership Conference in Clemson, South Carolina.

### Research Questions

Specifically, the study was designed to address the following research questions:

1. To what degree do current undergraduate members report participating in behaviors associated with the membership intake process?
2. To what degree do current undergraduate members report participating in behaviors associated with the former pledge process?
3. To what degree do current undergraduate members perceive that other undergraduate members participate in behaviors associated with the membership intake process?
4. To what degree do current undergraduate members perceive that other undergraduate members participate in behaviors associated with the former pledge process?

5. Are there differences between the activities that current undergraduate members' report and the activities in which they perceive other undergraduate members to participate?
6. To what extent do current undergraduate members believe that membership intake activities are effective in creating brotherhood or sisterhood?
7. To what extent do current undergraduate members believe that pledge process activities are effective in creating brotherhood or sisterhood?

### Significance of the Study

This study has significance for future practice, research and policy. In terms of future practice, results from this study will be useful to student affairs professionals, national officers of Black Greek-letter organizations, and staff who advise Black Greek-letter organizations. The results of this study will be significant to student affairs professionals and staffs who advise BGLOs. These results will inform student affairs professionals and BGLO advisors of (a) the activities that transpire during the membership intake process and (b) the similarities that exist between current practices and members perceptions of current practices. As a result, advisors of BGLOs and student affairs practitioners could use the results of this study to design program interventions to change members' perceptions of hazing and address misperceptions of the membership intake process. In addition, national BGLO officers might also find results of this study helpful by clarifying the activities that undergraduate members associate with the membership intake process. Officers may be more successful in combating hazing by addressing these practices in risk management sessions.

This study will have significance for future research. The present study addressed the differences in the actual and perceived membership intake activities as well as the activities that members thought were essential in creating brotherhood or sisterhood. Future studies might

focus on the moral development of members by examining the relationship between the members' level of moral development and the members' willingness to participate in hazing activities.

The present study identified the activities in which current undergraduate members participate as well as their perceptions of the membership intake process of other current undergraduate members. A future study could address current undergraduate members' perceptions of the former pledge process. This future study would enable researchers to understand the rationale behind undergraduate members' participation in and affinity with such activities.

Other research activities could investigate the cognitive development of undergraduate members who participate in unsanctioned membership intake activities. Such a study would relate to the present study by informing students, student affairs professionals, and officers in Black Greek letter organizations about the effects of participation in such activities on a student's cognitive development.

The present study was also significant for policy. This study will provide campus administrators data about activities that members thought were necessary for creating brotherhood or sisterhood, as well as the similarities between the actual and perceived membership intake activities for current undergraduate members. The results might assist campus administrators responsible for Greek organizations in the assessment of the policies related to membership intake and hazing.

The study was also significant for policymakers in national offices of Black Greek-letter organizations. Results from this study informed policymakers of the activities that members



thought were necessary for creating brotherhood or sisterhood. The findings may prompt revisions to current membership intake policies.

Results from this study also informed policymakers in Black Greek-letter organization of the relationship between current practices and current members' perceptions of current practices. Findings from this study may encourage BGLO policymakers to reexamine current membership intake and chapter disciplinary policies.

### Limitations

There were several limitations associated with this study. First, undergraduate members of BGLOs were asked to report their participation in or knowledge of both sanctioned and unsanctioned activities. It is possible that they were not candid in their responses given that several of the unsanctioned activities are illegal. If respondents were less than candid, the results might be skewed.

Second, the study was primarily targeted towards members of Black Greek-letter organizations involved in the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC). This study did not target undergraduate members of other Black Greek-letter organizations. Consequently, the results are not to be generalized to all Black Greek-letter organizations.

Third, data were collected from a sample that included only those who attended the National Black Greek Leadership Conference. While this approach was designed to promote a high response rate, it also presented a disadvantage. It is possible that members who attended the National Black Greek Leadership Conference differ from other BGLO members. If so, the results may have been influenced.

Despite these limitations, the present study was important because it addressed the behaviors that members' believed were effective in creating brotherhood or sisterhood as well as

the similarities that existed between current practices and undergraduate members' perceptions of current practices. Results from this study were beneficial in developing an understanding of relationship between current practices and members' perceptions of the practices employed by other undergraduate members. This study also added to the body of literature on Black Greek-letter organizations.

### Organization of the Study

The present study is organized around five chapters. Chapter One provided an introduction to the study, the purpose and research questions of the study, and the significance of the study. Chapter Two reviews the literature on Black Greek letter organizations, pledging as an initiation rite, and pledging, hazing, and membership intake in BGLOs. The research design and data collection procedures are discussed in Chapter Three. The results from the study are outlined in Chapter Four. The final chapter discusses those results in detail and offers implications for future practice, research, and policy.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The lack of literature on the pledging and membership intake processes of Black Greek Letter Organizations (BGLOs) required a unique literature review. Overall, BGLO topics were examined. This led to the identification of three groups of studies. The literature in this section is organized around these three groups: the uniqueness of BGLOs, the benefits of joining of BGLOs, and pledging, hazing, and membership intake.

#### The Unique Nature of Black Greek-lettered Organizations

Research indicates that Black and White Greek letter organizations are very different and unique to themselves. This dual system initially existed because of the racial segregation that existed in America (McKenzie, 1990; Nuwer, 1999). However, today this duality is reflected in the differences that exist between these organizations in (a) visible culture, (b) organizational structure, (c) socioeconomic status of members, (d) time of initiation, and (e) purpose.

One of the differences between Black and White Greeks is in the visible culture. The artifacts that are present to outsiders define visible culture (Schein, 1992 as cited in Kimbrough & Sutton, 1998). In White Greek letter organizations, the visible culture consists of chapter houses, rush songs, and pledge books. For Black Greek letter organizations signs of visible culture include paraphernalia such as line jackets, audible calls, hand signs, stepping and the pledge process (Kimbrough & Sutton, 1998).

A second difference between the two entities is in organizational structure. Black Greek letter organizations are far more service-oriented than White Greek letter organizations. BGLOs also often have a considerably larger percentage of alumni who remain active with their campus chapters. Both of these qualities have been attributed to the social obligation and desire for high

achievement among Black Greek letter organizational members (Whipple, Baier, & Grady, 1991). This social obligation includes a philosophy of service that encourages service to the African American community (Kimbrough & Sutton, 1998). As a result, members of Black Greek letter organizations are generally more socially conscious than members of White Greek letter organizations (Whipple, et. al, 1991).

Students who join Black and White Greek organizations often come from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Thirty-four percent of the members of Black Greek letter organizations are from families with annual incomes of less than \$20,000 as compared to less than 4% of members of White Greek letter organizations. Conversely, only 16% of the members of Black Greek organizations have annual family incomes over \$50,000 as compared to 73% of the members of White Greek letter organizations (Whipple, et. al, 1991).

Differences also exist between White and Black Greek groups in terms of the time of initiation for new members. Four-fifths (82%) of members of White Greek letter organizations joined during their first year in college as compared to 8% of members of Black Greek letter organizations (Whipple, et al., 1991).

The research suggests that Black and White Greeks have different purposes. This difference is a result of the different constituencies in each group. Black Greek letter organizations were created to meet the unique needs of Black students in general (Kimbrough & Sutton, 1998). Several researchers have demonstrated that Black Greek letter organizations are an important group for Black students, both members and nonmembers, as they sponsor the major social functions for Black students at predominately White institutions (Douglas, 1998; McKenzie, 1990; Perka, Matherly, Fishman, & Ridge, 1992). White Greek letter organizations provide social functions for their own members and designees rather than White students in

general on campus (Whipple, et al., 1991). This difference in purpose and constituents may also be attributed to a number of other reasons including: the needs of Black students not being met by predominately White campuses, discrimination, disengagement from the university, and the difficulty of adjusting to life on a predominately White campus for non-White students.

McKenzie (1990) and Perka et al., (1992) indicate that Black students may join Black Greek letter organizations as a way to feel a sense of belonging at a predominately White institution.

Overall, several differences exist between Black and White Greek letter organizations. It is the distinct nature of the Black Greek experience that creates value, not only for the member, but the Black community at-large.

#### Value of the Greek Experience

Membership in Greek-letter organizations positively affects student involvement (Astin, 1993). As a result, members of Greek-letter organizations are less likely to drop out of college, are more likely to be involved on campus, be satisfied with their institution and their social lives, and are more likely graduate (Astin, 1984). With respect to Black Greek-letter organizations, the value of the Greek experience is rooted in service, leadership for the benefit of members and the Black community at-large, and the creation of a sense of belonging for members (Kimbrough & Hutcheson, 1998; McKenzie, 1990; Schuh, Triponey, Heim, & Nishimura, 1992).

#### *Service*

Service is a distinguishing characteristic of Black Greek letter organizations because it is the basis upon which they were founded (Rodriguez, 1995). As such, BGLO members are expected to assist in advancing the political, economic, and educational strivings of the Black community (McKenzie, 1990). One example of this endeavor is the Go to High School, Go to

College program launched by Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. This educational program encourages Black students to go to high school and matriculate to college (Ross, 2000).

Research indicates that Black students prefer to exhibit leadership skills through service activities in the local community as opposed to providing service to the campus (McKenzie, 1990). BGLO members substantiate this claim through numerous hours that are devoted to service projects that are tailored to meet the specific needs of individuals, families, and community groups (Schuh, et. al, 1992). BGLOs today offer scholarships to current and future college students, work at senior citizens centers, tutor children in elementary and secondary schools in addition to fighting other social ills (McKenzie, 1990; Schuh, et. al, 1992). Despite their small numbers, BGLOs have been commended for the amount of personal time and effort devoted towards service projects (Schuh, et. al, 1992).

Within Black Greek-letter organizations there appears to be a distinct correlation between service and leadership. BGLO involvement in community service provides members with the ability to make positive contributions to society. In fact, members' primary reason for seeking membership into one BGLO, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., was the organization's commitment to serving the campus, community, and Black population (Harris, 1998). Women in Harris' (1998) study felt that the organization provided them with the opportunity to make a difference on an intimate level. In addition, their participation in community service contributed to their development as leaders by testing their judgment, exercising their sense of responsibility, sharpening their intuitive skills and judging their impact on others (Harris, 1998).

### *Leadership*

BGLOs were created to provide leadership to uplift the race. Each BGLO is founded on principles regarding fellowship as well as the advancement of their members and humanity

(McKenzie, 1990). The number of Black leaders who are members of BGLOs effectively illustrates this principle. Renowned leaders associated with these organizations include Martin Luther King, Shirley Chisholm, Arthur Ashe, Mary McLeod Bethune, Johnny Cochran, Thurgood Marshall, Carol Moseley-Braun, and Bill Cosby (Kimbrough, 1995; Ross, 2000; Ruffins, 1999).

BGLO members are more involved in campus activities and organizations than Black non-members. After controlling for high school involvement, membership in a BGLO contributes positively to members' level of student involvement, whether it is in other student organizations or in the holding of formal leadership positions (Kimbrough & Hutcheson, 1998). Approximately 75 percent of BGLO members and 44 percent of non-members were actively involved and held office in at least one of, two or more campus or community groups (Kimbrough, 1995).

BGLO members have more confidence in their abilities to perform leadership-related tasks than non-members. In fact, approximately two-thirds of BGLO members believed that their leadership skills were enhanced because of their membership in a BGLO (Kimbrough, 1995). This may be due to the small size of BGLOs. The small nature of BGLOs provides their members with greater opportunities to practice skills and subsequently develop higher levels of leadership ability (Kimbrough, 1995; Kimbrough & Hutcheson, 1998).

Given this data, it is not surprising that the Black fraternity remains the most popular avenue for Black men to exercise leadership on predominately-White campuses. One rationale for this is that Black men at predominately-White colleges prefer to develop their leadership skills in the Black community as opposed to through campus-wide organizations (Sutton & Terrell, 1997). As a result, Black Greek letter organizations have facilitated experiential

leadership training for their members (Kimbrough & Sutton, 1998). Moreover, members report that their fraternity provided them with the confidence and leadership skills necessary to assume leadership positions outside of the fraternity (Sutton & Terrell, 1997).

Several studies indicate that membership in a Black Greek-letter organization is a conduit to membership in a mainstream organization (Sutton & Kimbrough, 2001; Sutton & Terrell, 1997). Members of Black Greek letter organizations are more involved in campus activities and organizations than non-BGLO members. This involvement included the holding of one or more leadership positions over a range of activities (Kimbrough & Hutcheson, 1998) In addition to being leaders among the Black student population, approximately two-thirds of fraternity members who held leadership positions within their fraternity were involved as members in campus-wide organizations (Sutton & Terrell, 1997). This suggests that membership in a Black Greek letter organization serves as a means through which students can enhance their leadership skills and student leadership (Kimbrough & Hutcheson, 1998).

BGLOs provide members with confidence, uncover hidden leadership skills, and encourage the assumption of leadership outside of the fraternity (Sutton & Terrell, 1997). Women involved in sororities also hold various campus positions, and those varied leadership roles assist them in using their skills in the organization and community (Harris, 1998). The increases in leadership experienced by members have made BGLOs a viable option for students seeking a sense of belonging while in college.

### *Sense of belonging*

The historical roots of several BGLOs are intertwined with the need for a sense of belonging. The founders of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. started the organization as a literary club. The purpose of this club was to form a closer bond with one another after six students



dropped out of Cornell the previous year (McKenzie, 1990; Ross, 2000). Less than three years later, 16 of 30 women enrolled at Howard University banded together socially in order to form Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (Kimbrough, 1995). In 1922, seven women banded together to form Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. at Butler University, a teacher's college in Indiana. Kimbrough (2003) suggests that the formation of the sorority was probably as much for survival in Klu Klux Klan territory, as it was the need for a bond in sisterhood. To date, it is believed that many Black students join BGLOs for a sense of belonging on predominately White campuses (McKenzie, 1990).

Black students, BGLO members and non-members alike, strongly agree that BGLOs are an asset to both the campus and student community. Furthermore, at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, members of BGLOs are acknowledged as model students, serving as the leaders and mentors for future leaders. When these findings are combined with research that indicates that four-fifths of Black students considered the notion of joining a BGLO, one can begin to understand the influence that these organizations hold within the Black student population (Kimbrough, 1995).

#### Pledging, Hazing, and Membership Intake

While Greek organizations such as BGLOs have been applauded for their leadership, service, and sense of belonging they provide for members, others have begun to question why students willingly participate in events that have led to their own injury and death (Sweet, 2001). From approximately 1920 to 1990 pledging was an artifact of BGLOs. Pledging is an initiation rite adopted by fraternities and sororities (Leemon, 1972). Arnold van Gennep (1960) suggests that initiation rites occur in three phases: separation, transition, and incorporation. In the separation phase, fraternities present themselves as an attractive option for non-members and

attempt to screen out undesirable candidates (Sweet, 2001). During the beginnings of BGLOs, the separation phase would take place in the form of a pledge club. A pledge club was designed as a vehicle by which the brotherhood would familiarize themselves with the prospective brother. During this time a member of a pledge club was educated, trained, and evaluated for membership (Williams, 1992).

The second phase of initiation rites is the transition phase. The transition phase marks the beginning of a quasi-membership status, where aspirants cannot consider themselves a part of or independent from the group. During the transition phase, aspirants are often asked to take a vow of secrecy, given symbols of the organization, and asked to complete a series of task or tests (Sweet, 2001). In BGLOs, the transition phase is represented by the pledge programs that evolved from 1930 until the end of pledging in 1990 (Kimbrough, 2003). During this time Kimbrough (2003) states that separation between members and aspirants was clear as pledge classes were regarded as second-class citizens. As pledging continued to evolve, the separation became even more distinct as pledge classes, or pledges, began to dress alike, carry similar objects (paddles, bricks, lamps, and shields) and move together in single file lines (Kimbrough, 2003). Sweet (2001) indicates that it during the transition stage that aspirants tend to endure hazing incidents, as a means of testing their loyalties to the group. Paddling, (or taking wood), and Hell Week are two examples of hazing incidents that occurred during the pledge process.

The incorporation phase is the final step in the initiation process. During the initiation stage members are awarded full membership in the group. By the end of the initiation phase, members adopt the values and codes of conduct expected of members. As such, the initiation rite is responsible for changing pledges reference group from others (parents, friends) towards fraternity pledges and members (Sweet, 2001).

During the pledge process of BGLOs, many of these activities were viewed as tools used to develop prospective members' character. The shaved head, the painted symbols of the fraternity on the skulls of pledges, and branding other body parts encouraged pledges to identify with the group rather than retain their individual identities.

Throughout the pledge process, pledges were required to submit to the whims of their "big brother" or "big sister" (Kimbrough & Sutton, 1998; Marriott, 1990; National Black fraternities, 1990). These acts of humility, defined as putting the interests of others before self, are seen as important values when teaching members to accept a lifelong commitment to community service and the ideals of BGLOs (McKenzie, 1990; Williams, 1992).

Pledging became a way of promoting group values and a means by which traditions could be continued within BGLOs (Kimbrough, 1997). While pledging, line brothers/sisters (persons who are pledging together at the same time) are often encouraged to help one another make it through (Ruffins, 1998). "All of these things—the need for unity, for taking responsibility for another's actions, for understanding that one's actions will affect the entire group—have particular resonance in terms of the Black experience" (Giddings, 1998, as cited in Kimbrough, 1997).

In general, the pledging experience was demanding. Canon (1993) states that:

... it is the demanding nature of the [BGLO] pledging experience that lays the foundation for the ties that are sustained over the life spans of the members. Assistance in career advancement, support in moving into new social circles, and generosity in time of need are generally expected and provided without question. (as cited in Williams, 1992).

However, that same demanding pledging experience often opened the door to hazing, injuries, death, and ultimately the end of the pledge process. From 1970 to 1990, thousands of Black students reportedly allowed themselves to be struck repeatedly with wooden paddles, kicked,

slapped, and punched. Additionally, during that same period several pledges died (National Black fraternities, 1990; Nuwer, 1999).

In 1983, during the initiation of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity at Tennessee State University, pledge Vann Watts, died of alcohol poisoning after being forced to drink during initiation. Watts' blood alcohol level was 0.52 percent at the time of his death (National Black fraternities, 1990; Nuwer, 1999).

Joel Harris, a student at Morehouse College with a congenital heart defect, died a few hours after brothers punched and slapped Harris' fellow line brothers, who were being quizzed about history of the Morehouse College chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha in 1989. Although Joel Harris was not subject to this abuse, the intensity of the pledge session caused Joel to go into cardiac dysrhythmia, which resulted in his death (Kimbrough, 2003). Harris' death accelerated the shift in membership recruitment and educational philosophies that ended the pledge era and introduced the membership intake era (Kimbrough, 1997).

In response to these deaths, the negative image surrounding BGLOs, and the threat to the existence of BGLOs, members of the NPHC Council of Presidents voted to abolish pledging and replace it with a membership intake process (Council of Presidents, 1990; Kimbrough, 1997; Kimbrough, 2000; Kimbrough & Sutton, 1998, Marriott, 1990; National Black Fraternities, 1990; Ruffins, 1997; Ruffins, 1999). This new process was designed to eliminate the problematic elements of the pledge process (e.g., walking in a single line, dressing alike) and replaced them with a process where applicants were interviewed and required to attend educational seminars. These educational seminars were designed to teach new members about the organization (Kimbrough, 1997; Marriott, 1990; Ruffins, 1999). This new membership intake

process lasts from a few days to three weeks, with the average process being one week (Kimbrough, 1997; Ruffins, 1999).

However, not all BGLOs have fully embraced the new membership intake process (Williams, 1992). Two years after the end of pledging, Williams (1992) conducted a national study of undergraduate members. In a sample in which more than 50 percent of the participants that held a chapter office and attended a national meeting of their organization, Williams identified four themes. Williams' study concluded that undergraduate members felt that (a) the new process was enacted too quickly and without their input, (b) the national definitions of hazing were too broad and encompassed activities that they did not consider hazing, (c) bonding opportunities were lost to membership intake, and (d) the issue of gaining respect was important enough for undergraduates to risk sanction by engaging in underground or illegal pledging (Kimbrough, 1997; Sutton & Kimbrough, 2001, Williams 1992). Only 22 percent of the students in the Williams study believed that membership intake would end hazing in BGLOs (Williams, 1992; Kimbrough, 2003).

In an attempt to continue the pledge process, BGLO members instituted "underground pledging," unsanctioned events that occurred before, during, and/or after the membership intake process (Kimbrough, 2003). Consequently, a culture currently exists in BGLOs that promotes the activities associated with pledging. In addition, this culture often ostracizes students who decide not to engage in those activities (Kimbrough & Sutton, 1998; Morgan, 1998). As a result, students continue to participate in unsanctioned pledge activities, some of which lead to injuries and deaths (Geraghty, 1997; Jones, 2000; Morgan, 1998; Rodriguez, 1995; Ruffins, 1997; 2001).

One example of participation in the continuation of unsanctioned activities is the case of Joseph Snell. Snell, a student at the University of Maryland who was pledging Omega Psi Phi

Fraternity, was beaten with a hammer, a chair leg, and a brush. Snell, who was considered too light-skinned, was whipped and had his face placed next to a space heater, in an effort to make his complexion darker. After enduring more abuse, Snell submitted an anonymous letter to police. Following the initiation of the police investigation, Snell was attacked by brothers of the fraternity as well as his six line brothers. As a result of this abuse, Snell transferred to another school and was awarded over \$300,000 in damages (Kimbrough, 2003; Nuwer, 1999).

The lawsuits continued in the 1990s after the death of Michael Davis at Southeast Missouri State. Four years after the abolishment of pledging, Davis died as the result of serious injuries that he received at the hand of members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity. After being beaten the night before, Davis was taken back to his apartment. The next day, one of the fraternity members contacted the paramedics because Davis was not breathing. Seven undergraduate members were charged with involuntary manslaughter and four alumni members were charged with hazing because of these activities. The Davis death was featured on national news and talk shows alike, and resulted in a \$2.25 million settlement against Kappa Alpha Psi (Kimbrough, 2003).

Despite the lawsuits, BGLOs continued their hazing. In 1999, at Grambling State University, a student claimed that he and a dozen other pledges were slapped and beaten with canes and paddles over a two-day period while attempting to join Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity (Three Gambling Students, 1999). The same year, the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity chapter at Mississippi State University was suspended after a student pledging the fraternity required medical attention at the campus' student health center as a result of being paddled (Fraternity Suspended, 1999). Michlen Robinson, a former student at Norfolk State University, sued Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity after allegedly being assaulted during his initiation into the fraternity. It is

during this time that Robinson believes he received a punctured lung from two-fisted punches called thunderclaps (Former Norfolk State, 2002).

Joseph T. Green, Jr., 25, died after he collapsed on the track of a local high school before dawn on January 25, 2001. Green, who had been admitted to the hospital with a temperature of 103.7, died of acute asthma and overheating after he was ordered to jog and perform calisthenics during a fraternity activity for the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity at Tennessee State University. Although no criminal charges were filed, Tennessee State suspended the schools' chapter of Omega Psi Phi for five years. In addition, Mr. Green's parents filed a \$15 million lawsuit against Omega Psi Phi fraternity (Fraternity Faces, 2002; Ruffins, 2001).

An 18-year old student pledging Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity at Old Dominion University experienced chest pains, collapsed and stopped breathing in March 2001. After being hospitalized the medical staff noticed extensive bruises on the student's hands and buttocks. In a written statement to police, one of the two other pledges said that they had been offered the choice of joining the fraternity by becoming a "paper" member and going through the official membership intake process or by pledging. According to the report, the pledges were told that pledging would entail mental, physical, and emotional abuse and result in all of the respect, benefits, and privileges of the organization. The pledges allegedly chose the abuse and had been on line (pledging) for at least 50 days (Ruffins, 2001). Each of these accounts validated research by Kimbrough (2000) who conclude that the membership intake process is a failure. In his replication of the Williams' study, 51.3 percent of respondents indicated that they participated in a pledge program. This was surprising given the fact that more than 94 percent of participants in this study joined their organizations after 1996, six years after the abolishment of pledging. This

study confirmed reports that membership intake did not end the risky behaviors associated with pledging but forced it underground. One respondent in the study reported:

Everyone knows the nonpledging policy [membership intake process] is not really in action. Every organization at every school pledges in some form or another. Some are just better at covering stuff up. If there is a nonpledging organization on your campus, everyone knows it and they don't get spoken to, or even ignored or ridiculed at events... Sometimes those that don't pledge at first will [later] just to gain the respect of fellow Greeks. (p. 88)

The study also revealed that students are being hazed even after becoming members of the fraternity. In general, Kimbrough discovered that while undergraduate members in 1999 had a more favorable outlook towards membership intake, they still overwhelmingly believed that they had less of a voice in the selection of new members and were unable to screen aspirants. Consequently, members' support of the membership intake process was only moderately greater than the 1992 undergraduates' (Kimbrough, 2000; Kimbrough, 2003).

The activities associated with the pledge process are still perceived by members as instrumental to the preservation of Black Greek organizations. In hopes of keeping the pledge process alive, members who continue to engage in behaviors associated with the pledge process have attempted to mimic the pledge process without understanding the historical roots and purpose of the process (Jones, 2000).

In conclusion, research indicates that White and Black Greeks differ in terms of visible culture (Kimbrough & Sutton, 1998), organizational structure (Kimbrough & Sutton, 1998, Whipple, et. al, 1991), socioeconomic status of members (Whipple, et. al, 1991), time of initiation (Whipple, et al., 1991) and purpose (Douglas, 1998; Kimbrough & Sutton, 1998;



Perka, et. al, 1992). These differences have resulted in the value of the Black Greek experience being rooted in service, leadership for the benefit of members and the Black community at-large, and the creation of a sense of belonging for members (Kimbrough & Hutcheson, 1999; McKenzie, 1990; Schuh, et. al, 1992).

Membership in a BGLO contributes positively to members' level of student involvement, whether it is in other student organizations or in the holding of formal leadership positions (Kimbrough, 1995). Moreover, membership in a Black Greek-letter organization provides members with confidence, uncovers hidden leadership skills, and is a conduit to membership in a mainstream organization (Sutton & Kimbrough, 2001; Sutton & Terrell, 1997). While Greek organizations such as BGLOs have been applauded for their leadership, service, and sense of belonging they provide for members, others have begun to question why students willingly participate in pledge activities that lead to injury and death (Sweet, 2001).

Pledging is an initiation rite that changes pledges reference group towards fraternity pledges and members (Sweet, 2001). As such, the demanding pledging experience opened the door to hazing, injuries, death, and ultimately the end of the pledge process (Nuwer, 1999). Despite the end of pledging, BGLO members instituted "underground pledging," unsanctioned events that occurred before, during, and/or after the membership intake process as a way to continue the pledge process (Kimbrough, 2003). As a result, students still perceive the pledge process as an instrumental part of the Black Greek experience. As such, members continue to participate in unsanctioned pledge activities that lead to injuries and deaths (Geraghty, 1997; Jones, 2000; Morgan, 1998; Rodriguez, 1995; Ruffins, 1997; 2001).

Very little research has been conducted on BGLOs. There are currently no studies that examine how members experience and view the intake process. The present study attempts to fill

that gap. Results from this study contributed to the body of literature on Black Greek letter organizations as well as to the work on hazing in higher education.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was three-fold. First, this study was designed to determine the activities in which current undergraduate members report participating in as part of the membership intake process. Secondly, this study was designed to determine the activities that current undergraduate members perceive to be associated with the membership intake process of other BGLO chapters. Third, this study was designed to determine the intake activities that members deem to be effective in creating brotherhood or sisterhood. For the purpose of this study, the membership intake process refers to the intake process that was implemented by BGLOs after 1990 and the former pledge process refers to intake process that was implemented for BGLO members initiated before 1990.

Data were collected using a survey designed by the researcher to gain a better understanding of the activities that were associated with the membership intake process, as well as current undergraduate members' perceptions of the pledge and membership intake processes. Specifically, this study was designed to explore the following research questions:

1. To what degree do current undergraduate members report participating in behaviors associated with the membership intake process?
2. To what degree do current undergraduate members report participating in behaviors associated with the former pledge process?
3. To what degree do current undergraduate members perceive that other undergraduate members participate in behaviors associated with the membership intake process?
4. To what degree do current undergraduate members perceive that other undergraduate members participate in behaviors associated with the former pledge process?

5. Are there differences between the activities that current undergraduate members' report and the activities in which they perceive other undergraduate members to participate?
6. To what extent do current undergraduate members believe that membership intake activities are effective in creating brotherhood or sisterhood?
7. To what extent do current undergraduate members believe that pledge process activities are effective in creating brotherhood or sisterhood?

This chapter describes the methodology employed in the study including sample selection and instrumentation. Procedures used to collect and analyze the data are also discussed.

### Sample Selection

The research questions posed in the study suggested the need to select participants who met specific selection criteria. Since this study focuses on activities associated with the membership intake process, participants in this study were required to be current undergraduate members of a Black Greek Letter Organization who went through the membership intake process. It was the assumption of the researcher that current undergraduate members were the members who were most likely to be involved in the activities associated with the membership intake process.

The researcher hoped to retrieve 150 responses. Since data were needed from a relatively large number of respondents, the researcher elicited data at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Black Greek Leadership Conference (NBGLC) at Clemson University.

The National Black Greek Leadership Conference (NBGLC) was created in 1986 as a means to address the unique needs of undergraduate students in BGLOs. The conference was also designed to give undergraduate members of Black Greek Lettered Organizations (BGLOs) the opportunity to network and discuss issues that face them on predominately White campuses.

Since 1986, the conference has expanded its mission to include address issues that face undergraduates, including intake, and has grown to over 500 delegates (National Black Greek Leadership Conference, 2003).

### Instrumentation

The Membership Intake Process (MIP) survey was designed specifically for this study. The MIP survey was designed to address the research questions relating to the activities associated with and undergraduate members' perceptions of the membership intake and pledge processes. Additionally, the survey was designed to measure which activities current undergraduate members believed were effective in creating brotherhood or sisterhood.

The MIP survey consisted of four sections. The first section of the instrument, entitled Membership Intake Process, elicited data about the activities that undergraduate members associated with their chapter's current membership intake process. For example, participants were asked to report the degree to which they participated in activities such as community service, standing in a line, and learning fraternity/sorority hymns. In the MIP section, participants had three options for responses: F=Frequently, S=Sometimes, N=Never.

The second section of the instrument, entitled Undergraduate Norms, elicited data about the activities in which undergraduate members believed other undergraduate members to have participated under their membership intake process. For example, participants were asked to report the extent to which they perceive that other current undergraduate members participate in activities such as community service, standing in a line and learning fraternity/sorority hymns. Participants had three options for responses: F=Frequently, S=Sometimes, N=Never.

The third section of the instrument was entitled Fraternal Bonds. In the Fraternal Bonds section of the MIP survey, participants were asked to indicate the activities that current

undergraduate members believed to be effective in creating brotherhood or sisterhood.

Participants had four response options: VE=Very effective, E=Effective, I=Ineffective and VI=Very ineffective.

The final section was created to obtain demographic information about the participants. In this section participants were asked to report their: (a) organizational affiliation (fraternity, sorority), (b) student classification, (c) family affiliation with a BGLO (mother, father, grandparent, sibling), (d) length of membership, (e) whether they were a chapter officer, and (f) year their chapter was founded.

### Validity and Reliability

The validity of an instrument refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness, and usefulness of specific inferences made from test scores (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). Face validity is a form of validity. One way to establish and enhance face validity is to have experts review the instrument prior to its use in a study. The researcher had three experts review the MIP survey and provide feedback about the questions and content to enhance the face validity of the instrument.

The reliability of an instrument refers to the consistency, stability, and precision of test scores over time and populations (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). One method of establishing reliability is pilot testing. Pilot testing is a means to establish the content validity of the instrument and to improve questions and format (Creswell, 2003). In this study, the MIP survey was piloted on one occasion at three institutions for convenience. The first institution chosen for this study was a large, public, research, land-grant institution in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. The first institution enrolled approximately 21,294 undergraduate students in the fall of 2003. Of these 39 (.18%) students belonged to one of the six BGLOs on campus (Fall 2003 Chapter Rankings, 2004; On Campus Enrollment, n.d.).

The second institution chosen for this study was a large, public, comprehensive institution in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. The second institution enrolled approximately 15,360 undergraduate students in the fall of 2003. Of these 51 (.33%) students belonged to one of the six BGLOs on campus (K. Karnes, personal communication, April 15, 2003; Old Dominion University Institutional Research and Assessment, n.d.).

The last institution chosen for this study was a small, public, regional Historically Black university located in the southeastern region of the United States. The third institution enrolled approximately 2,946 undergraduate students in the fall of 2003. Of these 108 (3.67%) of belonged to one of the eight BGLOs on campus (W. Kimbrough, personal communication, April 29, 2004).. Participants who participated in the pilot test provided feedback on the instrument. This feedback was used to revise the instrument and increase reliability.

As a result of the pilot study, it was discovered that respondents had some difficulty distinguishing between the words “membership intake” and “pledge” process. This discovery led to the exclusion of questions 7 and 24 from survey results.

The average completion time was seven minutes. Of the 10 respondents, only one requested clarification regarding a question on the MIP Survey. Therefore, it was concluded that the survey was clear and understandable for the majority of BGLO members in the pilot study.

The final goal of the pilot study was to determine whether participants who actually report engaging in elicit behaviors associated with the former pledge process. To address this question, the researcher analyzed pilot participant data from the Membership Intake Process section of the MIP survey. Results indicated that respondents did not have

any problems reporting participation in activities associated with the former pledge process.

Based on this pilot study, the procedures for the actual study were finalized. In the following sections, the procedures used for sample selection, data collection, and data analysis are discussed.

### Data Collection Procedures

Before beginning the data collection process, the researcher received approval from the Institutional Review Board for Research Using Human Subjects (IRB) at his home institution. After obtaining permission from the IRB to conduct the study, the researcher contacted a National Black Greek Leadership Conference National Board member to receive permission to collect data at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual National Black Greek Leadership Conference at Clemson University.

Once the researcher received permission from the National Black Greek Leadership Conference National Board, he worked with the appropriate contact person to get surveys and cover letters inserted into the conference packets. In this cover letter, the researcher identified himself, offered a short description of the study, provided an Informed Consent letter, as well as information on which survey to complete and where to return the survey.

Upon arriving at the National Black Greek Leadership Conference, the researcher secured space from the conference contact person. The booth was open from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. on day one, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. on day two, and 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. on third and last day of the conference. The booth was stocked with additional surveys, information on the study, information on collection stations, as well as pens for participants to use to complete the survey. Collection stations were



checked and emptied periodically throughout the day as well as at the end of the last session for the day.

### Data Analysis Procedure

Once all of the completed instruments were received from respondents, the researcher analyzed the data. The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). After completing this step, attention was turned to the research questions posed in the study.

The first research question examined the degree to which current undergraduate members report participating in behaviors associated with the membership intake process. In the Membership Intake Process section of the MIP survey, participants were asked to report the degree to which they participated in various activities during their chapter's membership intake process. The activities included in this section contained activities that are historically associated with either the pledge or membership intake processes. Of these 22 activities, 11 (questions 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 12, 13, 14, 17, 21, and 22) are permissible under the membership intake process. Participants had three options for responses: F=Frequently, S=Sometimes, N=Never. The researcher calculated the frequencies with which respondents reported participation in each of the 11 membership intake activities. These descriptive statistics were used to answer the research question.

The second research question examined the degree to which current undergraduate members report participating in behaviors associated with the former pledge process. In the Membership Intake Process section of the MIP survey, participants were asked to report the degree to which they participated in various activities during their chapter's membership intake process. The activities in the Membership Intake Process section included 10 activities that are

historically associated with the pledge process (questions 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 18, and 20). In addition, question 4 was repeated as question 19 to gauge the validity of respondents' responses. For each activity, participants had three response options: F=Frequently, S=Sometimes, and N=Never. The researcher calculated the frequencies with which respondents reported participation in each of the activities associated with the former pledge process. These descriptive statistics were used to answer the research question.

The third research question in this study looked at current undergraduate members' perceptions of the membership intake activities that other current undergraduate members participate in as part of their chapter's membership intake process. In the Undergraduate Norms section of the MIP survey, participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they believed that other undergraduate members participated in certain activities such as community service as part of their chapter's membership intake process. Of the 22 activities listed, 11 of these activities (questions 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 12, 13, 14, 17, 21, and 22) were permissible under the membership intake process. For each activity, participants had three response options: F=Frequently, S=Sometimes, and N=Never. The researcher calculated the frequencies with which participants responded to each membership intake question. These descriptive statistics were used to answer the research question.

The fourth research question in this study examined the degree to which current undergraduate members perceive that other current undergraduate members participate in activities that are associated former pledge process as part of their chapter's membership intake process. In the Undergraduate Norms section of the MIP, participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they perceived that other undergraduate members participated in 10 activities (questions 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20) associated with the pledge process such as walking

in a straight line and taking wood. Participants' responses were coded: F=Frequently, S=Sometimes, and N=Never. The researcher calculated the frequency with which participants responded to each of the 15 activities. These descriptive statistics were used to answer the research question.

The fifth research question in this study addressed similarities between the activities that current undergraduate members report participating in under the membership intake process and the activities that they perceive other undergraduate members to participate in under the same membership intake process. Participants in the Membership Intake Process section of the MIP survey were asked to report the degree to which they participated in certain activities as part of their chapter's membership intake process. Likewise, participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they perceived certain activities, such as community service and walking in a straight line, to be associated with the membership intake process of other current undergraduate members. The frequencies with which MIP survey participants responded to each question were calculated. The researcher then conducted a series of bivariate correlations to see if there were any significant relationships between the activities of current undergraduate members and their perceptions of the activities of other current undergraduate members.

The sixth research question in this study examined whether current undergraduate members believed that membership intake activities were effective in creating brotherhood in BGLO fraternities and sisterhood in BGLO sororities. In the Fraternal Bonds section of the MIP survey, participants were asked to indicate whether they believed that certain activities, such as community service, were effective in creating brotherhood or sisterhood. Participants' responses were coded: VE=Very Effective, E=Effective, I=Ineffective, and VI=Very Ineffective. The

researcher calculated the frequency with which participants responded to each question. These descriptive statistics were used to answer these questions.

The seventh research question in this study examined whether current undergraduate members believed that pledge activities were effective in creating brotherhood in BGLO fraternities and sisterhood in BGLO sororities. In the Fraternal Bonds section of the MIP survey, participants were asked to indicate whether they believed that certain activities, such as walking in a line, were effective in creating brotherhood or sisterhood. Participants' responses were coded: VE=Very Effective, E=Effective, I=Ineffective, and VI=Very Ineffective. The researcher calculated the frequency with which participants responded to each question. These descriptive statistics were used to answer these questions.

In conclusion, this chapter described the sample selection, data collection, and data analysis procedures used in this study. The data collection and analysis procedures described in this chapter were deemed sufficient to address the research questions posed in the study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

This chapter is intended to report the results of the study. The first section describes the changes that were made to the data collection procedures. The second section provides a description of the sample. Finally, the chapter concludes with the results of the study. The results of the study are reported in the order of the research questions.

#### Changes in Data Collection Procedures

A lack of communication between the researcher and the conference chair resulted in some minor changes in the procedures used to collect the data from those described in Chapter Three. Surveys were distributed before the conference keynote address instead of with the registration information. On the opening night of the conference, the researcher introduced himself as well as described the purpose of the survey during a conference announcement. The following day the researcher distributed surveys prior to the conference keynote address. Surveys were then collected by the researcher after every session except for the closing session.

#### Description of the Sample

Three hundred sixty-seven students and administrators attended the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Black Greek Leadership Conference (NBGLC) at Clemson University on October 4-6, 2003. The NBGLC was created in 1986 and is designed to give undergraduate members of Black Greek-Lettered Organizations (BGLOs) the opportunity to network and discuss issues that face them on predominately White campuses. The researcher garnered 105 usable surveys from the 320 undergraduate conference participants. This represents a 33% response rate. The demographic characteristics of the sample are described and summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

*Characteristics of the Respondents (N=105)*

Characteristics	N	(%)
<b>Organizational Affiliation</b>		
NPHC Fraternity	50	(47.6%)
NPHC Sorority	47	(44.8%)
Other	7	(6.7%)
No Report	1	(1.0%)
<b>Student Classification</b>		
Sophomore	9	(8.6%)
Junior	22	(21.0%)
Senior	74	(70.5%)
<b>Family Affiliation with a BGLO (e.g. mother, father, grandparent, sibling)</b>		
Yes	54	(51.4%)
No	51	(48.6%)
<b>Chapter Officer</b>		
Yes	89	(84.8%)
No	16	(15.2%)
<b>Length of Membership</b>		
1-2 semesters	31	(29.5%)
3-4 semesters	43	(41.0%)
5+ semesters	27	(25.7%)
No Report	4	(3.8%)

Of the 105 respondents, 50 respondents (47.6%) were members of a NPHC Fraternity. Forty-seven respondents (44.8%) were members of a NPHC Sorority. Seven members (6.7%) were members of other Black Greek Lettered Organizations. One respondent (1%) chose not to disclose his or her organizational affiliation.

The sample was not evenly distributed in terms of student classification. Nine participants (8.6%) indicated that they were sophomores. Twenty-two participants (21%) were juniors. The remaining 74 participants (70.5%) were seniors.

In regards to familial affiliation with a BGLO, 54 (51.4%) respondents indicated that a member of their family (e.g. mother, father, grandparent, sibling) was a member of BGLO. The remaining 51 respondents (48.6%) indicated no family affiliation with a BGLO.

Eighty-nine (84.8%) sample participants identified themselves as a chapter officer. Sixteen respondents (15.2%) indicated that they held no such position.

In the demographics section of the MIP survey, respondents were asked to report the number of semesters that they held membership in a BGLO. The responses range from 1 semester to 13 semesters. To condense the data, the researcher grouped the number of semesters into three categories: 1-2 semesters, 3-4 semesters, and 5 or more semesters. Within these categories, 31 respondents (29.5%) held membership for either one or two semesters in their organization. Forty-three respondents (41.0%) held membership for three or four semesters in their organization and 27 respondents (25.7%) held membership for at least five semesters. Finally, four respondents (3.8%) did not report their length of membership.

## Results of the Data Analysis

### *Intake Process Behaviors*

The first research question examined the degree to which current undergraduate members reported participating in behaviors associated with the membership intake process. In the Membership Intake Process section of the MIP survey, participants reported the degree to which they participated in 11 activities associated with their chapter's membership intake process. The researcher calculated the frequencies with which respondents reported participation in each of the 11 membership intake activities. The frequencies for each activity were calculated and presented in Table 2.

The resulting lists of frequencies revealed that a majority of the respondents participated in each of the 11 Membership Intake Process activities on either an occasional or frequent basis. "Frequently" and "Sometimes" responses were collapsed to compare participation to non-participation in MIP activities. Participation in MIP activities ranged from a low of 73.3% to a high of 100%.

Seven of the 11 items had participation rates of over 90 percent. The top five activities included: learning information about my organization (participation rate=100%), learning and reciting organizational founders (100%), learning fraternity/sorority hymns (98.1%), learning and reciting the Greek alphabet (98%), and learning the organization's ritual (96.2%). Conversely, the data revealed four membership intake activities with non-participation rates of more than 10%. These activities included carrying a symbolic object (non-participation rate=26.7%), being referred to as a Crescent, Sphinxman, Archonian, Pyramid, etc. (non-participation rate=24.3%), participation in mandatory study hall (non-participation rate=21.0%) and being required to dress up (non-participation rate=14.7%). While each of these activities had



participation rates of at least 73.3%, the contrast between the non-participation rates of these four items and the previous seven should be noted.

### *Pledge Process Behaviors*

The second research question examined the degree to which current undergraduate members reported participating in behaviors associated with the former pledge process. In the Membership Intake Process section of the MIP survey, participants were asked to report the degree to which they participated in various activities associated with the former pledge process during their chapter's membership intake process. The frequencies for the 10 activities associated with the former pledge process are reported in Table 3.

The majority of members reported frequent participation in 8 of the 10 activities: establishing a closer bond with line brother(s) or sister(s) (88.2%), establishing a closer bond with older members in the chapter (72.8%), participation in a set (64.2%), learning and reciting chapter founders (76.7%), standing or walking in a line (78.4%), saluting or greeting big brothers or sisters (76.2%), performing exercise or calisthenics (58.3%), and being referred to by line number (72.1%). After collapsing "Frequently" and "Sometimes" to gauge participation, the data revealed that the majority of members also participated in one of the remaining activities, running errands for big brother(s) or sister(s) (72.1%).

While the majority of respondents reported significant participation in 9 of the 10 activities, the data also revealed three pledge activities with participation rates of less than 75%. These activities were: being paddled or receiving wood (participation rate=50.5%), running errands for big brothers or sisters (72.1%), and participation in a set (72.6%).

Table 2

*Member Participation in Membership Intake Process Activities*

Activity	<i>N</i>	F (%)	S (%)	N (%)
Participation in community service	103	67 (65.0%)	32 (31.1%)	4 (3.9%)
Learned organization's rituals	105	96 (91.4%)	5 (4.8%)	4 (3.8%)
Learned fraternity/sorority hymns	105	93 (88.6%)	10 (9.5%)	2 (1.9%)
Was referred to as a...	103	64 (62.1%)	14 (13.6%)	25 (24.3%)
Learned Black history	104	65 (62.5%)	30 (28.8%)	9 (8.7%)
Learned information about my organization	104	103 (99.0%)	1 (1.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Learned and recited the Greek alphabet	102	91 (89.2%)	9 (8.6%)	2 (2.0%)
Learned and recited my organization's founders	104	99 (95.2%)	5 (4.8%)	0 (0.0%)
Carried a symbolic object (brick, ivy, lamp, etc.)	101	59 (58.4%)	15 (14.9%)	27 (26.7%)
Participated in mandatory study hall	105	56 (53.3%)	27 (25.7%)	22 (21.0%)
Was required to dress up	102	57 (55.9%)	30 (29.4%)	15 (14.7%)
Participated in activities only associated with my organization's membership intake process	104	68 (65.4%)	26 (25.0%)	10 (9.6%)

F=Frequently; S=Sometimes; N=Never

### *Perceptions of Others—Intake Process Activities*

Research question three examined current members' perceptions of the activities that other current undergraduate members participate in as part of their chapter's membership intake process. In the Undergraduate Norms section of the MIP survey, participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they believed that other undergraduate members participated in membership intake process activities such as community service as part of their chapter's membership intake process. As shown in Table 4, members in this sample perceived that other members frequently participated in 7 of the 11 membership intake process activities. The percentage of perceived participation ranged from a low of 32.6% for participation in community service to a high of 82.1% for learning information about their organization. After collapsing the data to compare participation to non-participation, members perceived that the majority of members participated in each the 11 activities on either a frequent or occasional basis. Activities with higher perceptions of occasional participation than frequent participation included: participation in community service, learning of Black history, and participation in mandatory study hall.

### *Perceptions of Others—Pledge Process Activities*

The fourth research question in this study examined current undergraduate members' perceptions of other current undergraduate members' participation in activities that are associated former pledge process as part of their chapter's membership intake process. To answer this research question frequencies of members responses were calculated.

Table 3

*Member Participation in Pledge Process Activities*

Activity	<i>N</i>	F (%)	S (%)	N (%)
Ran errands for big brothers/sisters	104	45 (43.3%)	30 (28.8%)	29 (27.9%)
Was paddled or received wood	99	34 (34.3%)	15 (15.2%)	50 (50.5%)
Established a closer bond with line brother/sisters	102	90 (88.2%)	10 (9.8%)	2 (2.0%)
Established a closer bond with older members in the chapter	103	75 (72.8%)	27 (26.2%)	1 (1.0%)
Participation in a set	95	61 (64.2%)	8 (8.4%)	26 (27.4%)
Learned and recited chapter founder's	103	79 (76.7%)	15 (14.6%)	9 (8.7%)
Stood or walked in a line	102	80 (78.4%)	10 (9.8%)	12 (11.8%)
Saluted or greeted big brothers/sisters	101	77 (76.2%)	10 (9.9%)	14 (13.9%)
Ran errands for big brothers/sisters*	102	49 (48.0%)	25 (24.5%)	28 (27.5%)
Performed calisthenics (exercise)	103	60 (58.3%)	24 (23.3%)	19 (18.4%)
Was referred to by line number	104	75 (72.1%)	13 (12.5%)	16 (15.4%)
Participation in activities associated with the pledge process	101	68 (67.3%)	23 (22.8%)	10 (9.9%)

F=Frequently; S=Sometimes; N=Never

\*repeat question for validity purposes

The majority of members perceived that other members frequently participated in each of the 10 activities associated with the former pledge process. After collapsing “Frequent” and “Sometimes” to gauge perceived participation, members’ perception of others’ participation ranged from a low of 86.0% a high of 96.7%. The top five activities associated with the pledge process that members perceived other members to participate in were: establishing a bond with line brothers or sisters (96.7%), standing or walking in a line (93.3%), learning and reciting chapter founders (94.6%), establishing a closer bond with older members in the chapter (94.6%) and saluting or greeting big brothers/sisters (92.3%). Table 5 summarizes the remaining frequencies of members’ perceptions of other members’ participation in activities associated with the former pledge process.

#### *Similarities between Behaviors and Perceptions*

The fifth research question in this study addressed similarities between the activities in which current undergraduate members report participating and the activities in which they perceive other undergraduate members to participate as part of the membership intake process. Participants in the Membership Intake Process section of the MIP survey were asked to report the degree to which they participated in certain activities as part of their chapter’s membership intake process. Likewise in the Undergraduate Norms section, participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they perceived certain activities, such as community service and walking in a straight line, to be associated with the membership intake process of other current undergraduate members.

A bivariate correlation was used to answer the fifth research question. Results of the bivariate correlations (as shown in Table 6) revealed that 18 of the 21 activities that members reported participating in were positively and significantly correlated ( $p < .05$ ) with members’

Table 4

*Other's Participation in Membership Intake Process Activities*

Activity	N	F (%)	S (%)	N (%)
Participation in community service	95	31 (32.6%)	58 (61.1%)	6 (6.3%)
Learning of organizational rituals	97	60 (61.9%)	34 (35.1%)	3 (3.1%)
Learning of fraternity/sorority hymns	96	68 (64.8%)	24 (22.9%)	4 (4.2%)
Being referred to as a...	94	57 (60.6%)	26 (27.7%)	11 (11.7%)
Learning of Black history	93	37 (39.8%)	41 (44.1%)	15 (16.1%)
Learning of information about their org.	95	78 (82.1%)	13 (13.7%)	4 (4.2%)
Learning and reciting of the Greek alphabet	94	75 (79.8%)	17 (18.1%)	2 (2.1%)
Learning and reciting of their organization's founders	94	70 (74.5%)	20 (21.3%)	4 (4.3%)
Carrying of a symbolic object (brick, ivy, lamp, etc.)	91	47 (51.6%)	34 (37.4%)	10 (11.0%)
Participation in mandatory study hall	94	37 (39.4%)	44 (46.8%)	13 (13.8%)
Being required to dress up	91	44 (48.4%)	35 (38.5%)	12 (13.2%)
Participation in activities only associated with my organization's membership intake process	90	53 (58.9%)	29 (32.2%)	8 (8.9%)

F=Frequently; S=Sometimes; N=Never

Table 5

*Others' Participation in Pledge Process Activities*

Activity	<i>n</i>	F (%)	S (%)	N (%)
Running errands for big brothers/sisters	96	56 (58.3%)	28 (29.2%)	12 (12.5%)
Being paddled or receiving wood	93	50 (53.8%)	30 (32.3%)	13 (14.0%)
Ability to establish a bond with line brothers/sisters	92	64 (61.0%)	25 (27.2%)	3 (3.3%)
Ability to establish a closer bond with older members in the chapter	92	51 (55.4%)	36 (39.1%)	5 (5.4%)
Participation in a set	90	53 (58.9%)	26 (28.9%)	11 (12.2%)
Learning and reciting of chapter's founders	93	62 (66.7%)	26 (28.0%)	5 (5.4%)
Standing or walking in a line	92	62 (67.4%)	26 (28.3%)	4 (4.3%)
Saluting or greeting big brothers/sisters	89	57 (64.0%)	26 (29.2%)	6 (6.7%)
Running errands for big brothers/sisters*	93	56 (60.2%)	31 (33.3%)	6 (6.5%)
Performing calisthenics (exercise)	91	49 (53.8%)	30 (33.0%)	12 (13.2%)
Being referred to by line number	92	61 (66.3%)	24 (26.1%)	7 (7.6%)
Participation in activities associated with the pledge process	95	60 (63.2%)	32 (33.7%)	3 (3.2%)

F=Frequently; S=Sometimes; N=Never

\*repeat question for validity purposes

perceptions of other members' activities. Learning organizational rituals, learning fraternity and sorority hymns, and learning information about the organization were the only three activities where members' activities were not significantly correlated to members' perception of other members' activities.

#### *Effectiveness of Pledge and Intake Activities*

The sixth research question examined whether current undergraduate members believed that membership intake activities were effective in creating brotherhood in BGLO fraternities and sisterhood in BGLO sororities. The researcher calculated frequencies to answer this research question. The results of the analysis are summarized in Table 7. "Very effective" and "effective" responses and "ineffective" and "very ineffective" responses were collapsed to compare activities that were rated effective to activities rate ineffective. The majority of members reported that each of the 11 membership intake activities were effective. However, two activities, carrying a symbolic object (brick, ivy, lamp, etc.) and being referred to as a Crescent, Sphinxman, Pyramid, etc. received ineffective ratings of 40.8% and 27.8% respectively.

The final research question examined whether current undergraduate members believed that pledge activities were effective in creating brotherhood in BGLO fraternities and sisterhood in BGLO sororities. To address this research question the researcher calculated frequencies of members' responses. To compare activities that were rated effective to activities that were rated ineffective, the "effective" and "very effective" and the "ineffective" and "very ineffective" responses were collapsed. The results of the analysis are summarized in Table 8.



Table 6

*Correlation between Members' Activities and Members' Perception of Others*

Activity	N	Pearson correlation	Sig.
Participation in community service	94	.448**	.000
Learned organization's rituals	97	.111	.280
Learned fraternity/sorority hymns	96	.194	.058
Running errands for big brothers/sisters	96	.502**	.000
Was paddled or receiving wood	90	.308**	.003
Was referred to as.	93	.426**	.000
Established a closer bond with line brothers/sisters	91	.215*	.041
Established a closer bond with older members in the chapter	91	.468**	.000
Participation in a set	86	.533**	.000
Learned information about my organization	94	.158	.127
Learned and recited the Greek alphabet	92	.574**	.000
Learned and recited organization's founders	94	.219*	.034
Learned and recited chapter's founders	92	.283**	.006
Stood or walked in a line	91	.579**	.000
Carried a symbolic object	89	.458**	.000
Saluted or greeted big brothers/sisters	89	.552**	.000
Running errands for big brothers/sisters	92	.406**	.000
Performed calisthenics (exercise)	90	.500**	.000
Participation in mandatory study hall	94	.552**	.000
Was required to dress up	91	.453**	.000
Was referred to by line number	91	.614**	.000

Note: \*significance at the .05 level and \*\* indicates significance at the .001 level (2-tailed)

Table 7

*Effectiveness of Membership Intake Process Activities*

Activity	<i>n</i>	VE (%)	E (%)	I (%)	VI (%)
Participation in community service	101	71 (70.3%)	28 (27.7%)	2 (2.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Learned organization's rituals	102	78 (76.5%)	22 (21.6%)	2 (2.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Learned fraternity/sorority hymns	100	70 (70.0%)	24 (24.0%)	6 (6.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Was referred to as a...	97	33 (34.0%)	37 (38.1%)	21 (21.6%)	6 (6.2%)
Learned Black history	96	72 (75.0%)	17 (17.7%)	6 (6.3%)	1 (1.0%)
Learned information about my organization	99	83 (83.8%)	15 (15.2%)	1 (1.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Learned and recited the Greek alphabet	97	55 (56.7%)	33 (34.0%)	8 (8.2%)	1 (1.0%)
Learned and recited my organization's founders	99	78 (78.8%)	20 (20.2%)	1 (1.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Carried a symbolic object (brick, ivy, lamp, etc.)	98	27 (27.6%)	31 (31.6%)	30 (30.6%)	10 (10.2%)
Participated in mandatory study hall	96	63 (65.6%)	21 (21.9%)	8 (8.3%)	4 (4.2%)
Was required to dress up	96	42 (43.8%)	38 (39.6%)	10 (10.4%)	6 (6.3%)
Participated in activities only associated with my organization's membership intake process	97	56 (57.7%)	28 (28.9%)	9 (9.3%)	4 (4.1%)

VE=Very Effective; E=Effective; I=Ineffective; VI=Very Ineffective

Table 8

*Effectiveness of Pledge Process Activities*

Activity	<i>n</i>	VE (%)	E (%)	I (%)	VI (%)
Ran errands for big brothers/sisters	98	23 (23.5%)	25 (25.5%)	35 (35.7%)	15 (15.3%)
Was paddled or received wood	95	17 (17.9%)	20 (21.1%)	30 (31.6%)	28 (29.5%)
Established a closer bond with line brother/sisters	99	84 (84.8%)	14 (14.1%)	1 (1.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Established a closer bond with older members in the chapter	98	69 (70.4%)	25 (25.5%)	4 (4.1%)	0 (0.0%)
Participation in a set	90	36 (40.0%)	34 (37.8%)	13 (14.4%)	7 (7.8%)
Learned and recited chapter founder's	98	71 (72.4%)	24 (24.5%)	3 (3.1%)	0 (0.0%)
Stood or walked in a line	97	36 (37.1%)	37 (38.1%)	19 (19.6%)	5 (5.2%)
Saluted or greeted big brothers/sisters	95	33 (34.7%)	35 (36.8%)	21 (22.1%)	6 (6.3%)
Ran errands for big brothers/sisters*	95	23 (24.2%)	18 (18.9%)	41 (43.2%)	13 (13.7%)
Performed calisthenics (exercise)	96	33 (34.4%)	35 (36.5%)	15 (15.6%)	13 (13.5%)
Was referred to by line number	99	34 (34.3%)	33 (33.3%)	26 (26.3%)	6 (6.1%)
Participation in activities associated with the pledge process	97	48 (49.5%)	35 (36.1%)	11 (11.3%)	3 (3.1%)

VE=Very Effective; E=Effective; I=Ineffective; VI=Very Ineffective

\*-repeat question

The majority of members rated 8 of the 10 pledge process activities as either “very effective” or “effective.” The effectiveness of these activities ranged from a low of 67.9% to a high of 98.9%. Similarly, members rated 2 of the 10 pledge process activities, running errands for big brothers or sisters and being paddled or receiving wood as “ineffective” or “very ineffective.” Furthermore, at least one-fifth of respondents rated six activities as “ineffective” or “very ineffective.” These activities included the two activities deemed ineffective as well as participating in a set (22.2%), standing or walking in a line (24.8%), saluting or greeting big brothers or sisters (28.4%), performing calisthenics or exercise (29.1%), and being referred to by line number (32.4%).

### Summary

The results of this study revealed that the majority of BGLO members participate in 20 of 21 activities associated with both the pledge and membership intake processes. Members also perceived that the majority of other members’ participate in each of the 21 activities associated with either the pledge or membership intake process. Furthermore, the data also revealed a positive and significant correlation between members’ participation and their perception of other members’ participation for 18 of 21 activities. Lastly, this study revealed that the majority of BGLO members rated 19 of 21 activities associated with either the pledge or membership intake process as either effective or very effective. These results and their implications for future practice and research are discussed in Chapter Five of this study.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was three-fold. First, this study was designed to determine the activities in which current undergraduate members report participating in as part of the membership intake process. Secondly, this study was designed to determine the activities that current undergraduate members perceive to be associated with the membership intake process of other BGLO chapters. Finally, this study was designed to determine the intake activities that members deem to be effective in creating brotherhood or sisterhood. For the purpose of this study, the membership intake process refers to the intake process that was implemented by BGLOs after 1990 and the former pledge process refers to intake process that was implemented for BGLO members initiated before 1990.

This chapter is designed to examine the results of this study and their implications for future practice, research, and policy. The chapter will begin with the results of the study. Next, the researcher examines how the results relate to prior research. Implications for future practice, policy, and research are examined in the next section. Then the limitations to the study are presented. In the final section, the researcher draws some general conclusions about the undergraduate members perceptions' of the membership intake process.

#### *Intake Process Behaviors*

The first research question examined the degree to which current undergraduate members report participating in behaviors associated with the membership intake process. To explore this question, the researcher calculated the frequencies with which respondents reported participation in each of the 11 membership intake activities. "Frequently" and "Sometimes" responses were collapsed to compare participation to non-participation in MIP activities. Participation in MIP

activities ranged from a low of 73.3% to a high of 100%. These results suggest that the overwhelming majority of participants in this study participate in membership intake process activities. This would be expected since prospective members usually engage in membership intake activities such as participating in community service, learning the Greek alphabet, and learning information about their respective organization including the organization's founders and fraternity/sorority hymn as part of the membership intake process that is conducted by fraternity or sorority officials.

### *Pledge Process Behaviors*

The second research question examined the degree to which current undergraduate members report participating in behaviors associated with the former pledge process. To gauge participation, the researcher calculated the frequencies for the 10 activities associated with the former pledge process. The majority of members reported frequent participation in 8 of the 10 activities, and moderate-to-low participation in the remaining two activities. These findings suggest that current undergraduate members believe in and continue to practice the tenets associated with the former pledge process: pledge lines (e.g., walking in a line, being referred to by line number), learning chapter founders, greeting big brothers or sisters, participating in a set (the place where these activities are most likely to occur), and establishing a closer bond with older members and line brothers or sisters. One of the most interesting points about this finding is the overall pattern of the results.

While BGLO members have not changed their stance on pledging, they have modified their responses to more accurately reflect the push towards membership intake. Although an overwhelming majority of respondents reported walking in a line and greeting big brothers or sisters, only a moderate number of respondents reported participating in a set and more than one-

eighth of participants (13) did not respond to this item. In addition, the four lowest rated items (paddling, running errands, performing calisthenics, and participating in a set) are clear violations of either BGLO, institutional, or state policy. While students may still participate in these activities, these results would further suggest that the BGLOs as well as colleges and universities have done a better job of communicating risk management and hazing policies in the areas of performing calisthenics, paddling or receiving wood, and participation in set to current undergraduate members. However, if student affairs practitioners and BGLO officials are truly committed to eradicating pledge process activities, more work has to be done. Several implications for future policy will be discussed later in the chapter.

#### *Perceptions of Other Members' Behaviors*

Research questions three and four respectively examined current members' perceptions of other members' participation in activities associated with the membership intake and pledge process. After collapsing the data to compare participation to non-participation, the majority of members perceived that members overwhelmingly participated in each of the activities associated with both processes.

Once again the pattern of results provides for an interesting discussion. For example, it is interesting to note that the three activities that students were least likely to perceive other members' participation in (participation in community service, learning of Black history, and participation in mandatory study hall) are in essence the three activities that are the most closely aligned with the ideals of BGLOs (service, scholarship, and the uplifting of the Black race).

On the contrary, participants believe that students overwhelmingly participate in each of the pledge process activities, such as being paddled ("receiving wood") and running errands for older members on either a frequent or occasional basis. Both of these findings suggest that the

students have drifted away from the purpose of their organizations. One reason for this may be the proliferation of negative press surrounding hazing in BGLOs. Given the absence of a formalized pledge process, students may inaccurately assume that the detailed accounts that are presented in the press are accurate accounts of what happens in most chapters. The results of this study, which indicate that students are less likely to participate in activities than members' perceive, do not support this argument.

#### *Relationship between Members' Perceptions and Behaviors*

The fifth research question in this study addressed similarities between the activities in which current undergraduate members report participating and the activities in which they perceive other undergraduate members to participate as part of the membership intake process. The results of the bivariate correlation revealed that 18 of 21 activities that members reported participating in were positively and significantly correlated ( $p < .05$ ) with members' perceptions of other members' activities. Of these activities, each of the 10 pledge process activities and 8 of the 11 membership intake activities were positively and significantly correlated. These results suggest a direct relationship between the activities that members participate in and activities that members' perceive other members to participate in as part of their respective membership intake process. These findings, particularly in terms of pledge process activities, are noteworthy and will be discussed in relation to previous research later in this chapter.

#### *Creating Brotherhood/Sisterhood*

Research question six examined whether current undergraduate members believed that participation in membership intake activities were effective in creating brotherhood in BGLO fraternities and sisterhood in BGLO sororities. The results revealed that members' overwhelming believed that 9 of the 11 membership intake activities were either effective or very effective (see



Table 7). This suggests that members believe that these nine activities contribute to one of the primary tenets of Greek-lettered organizations, brotherhood or sisterhood. On the other hand, students reported a moderate level of effectiveness for two activities associated with the membership intake process, carrying a symbolic object and being referred to as a Sphinxman, Crescent, Pyramid, etc.

There are two possible hypotheses that may explain these results. First, these two activities, while still a part of the membership intake process, are more commonly associated with the former pledge process. As such, participants may not fully comprehend the purpose of such activities and may view them as ceremonial in nature. Consequently, members may not place value on these activities and recognize the contribution that such activities may have on brotherhood or sisterhood. Secondly, because these activities have been historically associated with the pledge process, there is a chance that participants may have participated in a membership intake process that did not incorporate these activities. As a result they would either (a) not be able to accurately gauge the effectiveness of such activities or (b) see no such need for these activities.

The final research question examined whether current undergraduate members believed that pledge activities were effective in creating brotherhood in BGLO fraternities and sisterhood in BGLO sororities. The findings associated with this research question, revealed that students believed that 8 of the 10 pledge activities were either effective or very effective. At least 95% of current members view pledge activities or the outcomes associated with such activities, such as learning and reciting chapter founders and the ability to establish a closer bond with older members of the chapter and line brothers or sisters as effective. However, it is interesting to note that at least 25% of current members view pledge activities such as participation in a set,

standing or walking in a line, performing calisthenics, and saluting or greeting big brothers or sisters as an ineffective means to achieve these outcomes. These results imply that (a) a number of undergraduate BGLO members do not view these activities as effective and/or (b) current members do not understand the original purpose of these activities and thus are unable to achieve their intended outcomes.

The majority of current undergraduate members, 51% and 61% respectively, also reported that two pledge process activities, being paddled or receiving wood and running errands for big brothers or sisters, were either ineffective or very ineffective. These results are not consistent with members' self-reported participation and perception of others' participation in these activities. These results reinforce the argument that students desire to achieve a sense of belonging from other members' in their chapters, organizations, and other BGLO members in general. This data is consistent with prior research and will be expanded upon in the next section.

#### Relationship of the Findings to Prior Research

When the results of the posed study are compared to prior research, the findings in this study support prior research. The present results revealed that students engage in activities associated with the former pledge process. Previous research indicates that pledging is used as a means of continuing traditions (Kimbrough, 1997). The results of this study support this research as well as research that indicates that pledging is still part of the culture of Black Greek Lettered Organization (Kimbrough 1997, 2000). Furthermore, this study also supports research that indicates that the move to membership intake failed to penetrate all BGLOs (Williams, 1992).

In the present study, current undergraduate members believe in and continue to practice the tenets associated with the former pledge process: pledge lines (walking in a line, being referred to by line number), learning chapter founders, greeting big brothers or sisters,

participating in a set, and establishing a closer bond with older members and line brothers or sisters. Moreover, current members in this study believed that the majority of pledge process activities were effective. These results support a study that examined members' perceptions of the no-pledge policy for new member intake by undergraduate members in BGLOs (Williams, 1992). The results of that study revealed that members never fully embraced the membership intake process. In fact, members believed that pledge process activities bind new members more closely to the organization, and these opportunities were lost to membership intake (Williams, 1992).

The findings related to the relationship between students participation in and perceived effectiveness of pledge process activities revealed that current undergraduate members participate in pledge process activities such as being paddled ("receiving wood") and running errands despite the fact that they do not believe that these activities are effective in creating brotherhood or sisterhood in their organizations. These findings support prior research on BGLOs as well as student development theory. Students join Greek lettered organizations to obtain a sense of belonging (Chickering & Reisser, 1993, McKenzie, 1990). In addition, members have indicated that gaining respect of other members was important enough to engage in underground or illegal pledging and risk sanctions (Williams, 1992). These results suggest that members need to develop social competence not only with members of BGLOs on their respective campuses, but on the campuses of other current undergraduate members as well.

Finally, previous research indicated that the membership intake process was designed to eliminate the problematic elements of the pledge process (e.g., walking in a single line, dressing alike) and replaced those with a process where applicants were interviewed and required to attend educational seminars (Kimbrough, 1997; Marriott, 1990). Results from this study reveal

that current members overwhelmingly continue to participate in pledge processes in addition to membership intake process activities. However, it is interesting to note that members believe that activities such as running errands, receiving wood, standing or walking in a line, and saluting or greeting big brothers or sisters are ineffective or moderately effective. These results are consistent with research that indicates that members have attempted to mimic or participate in pledge process without understanding the historical roots and purpose of that process (Jones, 2000). This lack of understanding may be directly correlated to students' belief that these activities are low to moderately effective.

#### Implications for Practice, Policy, and Future Research

While some will suggest that the results of this study support the end of undergraduate intake for BGLOs, further exploration on this topic lends support towards a modified membership intake process. The problems associated with the former pledge process (see chapter two) convinced BGLO officials to declare the former pledge process a failure. In a drastic attempt to eliminate hazing activities that have become a part of the pledge process, BGLO officials instituted the membership intake process in 1990. However, the results from this and preceding studies indicate that the current membership intake process has failed to meet the expectations of current undergraduate members, and thus eradicate the negative behaviors associated with the former pledge process. A move to eliminate undergraduate intake will not contribute any efforts toward understanding current undergraduates' fascination with the culture of the former pledge process. Furthermore, while the move will relieve BGLOs from liability on the surface, the move would open each BGLO to a number of issues that will result from a loss of control including "ghost members" and chapters (persons or chapters that are not recognized by the national organization) and protection of the organization's copyright and ritual.

At the current time, the elimination of undergraduate intake is not an option. BGLOs currently do not have the administrative staff necessary to address the issues that will unfold from the elimination of undergraduate intake. In the same manner, reverting back to the former pledge process is not an option either. While the move back to the former pledge process may lead to greater interventions by alumni and student affairs administrators, there is not guarantee that the move will decrease the number of hazing incidents. Furthermore, reverting back to the former pledge process would be just as drastic as the move from the pledge process to the current membership intake process. A modified membership intake process could address each of these issues and create a greater sense of belonging and commitment among undergraduate members by incorporating several aspects of the former pledge process (e.g. greeting big brothers/sisters), while still alienating some of the negative behaviors associated with the former pledge process.

The implications discussed in this chapter will be discussed from the perspective of a modified intake process. National officers of Black Greek-letter organizations as well as student affairs professionals, particularly those who work with or advise BGLOs, can use these results. Each constituency can benefit from these results as they look to combat hazing and increase the value of the Black Greek experience.

The first group that could benefit from the findings of this study is national officers of Black Greek letter organizations. The findings suggest that national BGLO officers should reexamine the membership intake process. Findings from this study revealed that pledge activities are still prevalent in the membership intake process of most current undergraduate members. Furthermore, this study also revealed that members believe that the majority of pledge process activities are effective. National BGLO officers should attempt to design a modified membership intake process that would give students the ability to develop a sense of belonging

as well as participate in membership intake process activities that produce outcomes associated with the former pledge process such as: learning chapter founders, greeting big brothers or sisters, and establishing a closer bond with older members and line brothers or sisters. In addition, national officers may want to seriously consider the reestablishment of pledge lines as part of the membership intake process. This action would provide BGLOs with the opportunity to counter “underground” pledging while allowing older members and student affairs practitioners the opportunity to provide direction and greater oversight in the activities associated with the membership intake process.

National officers of BGLOs should also attempt to develop social norming tools or marketing materials that provide current members with an accurate account of other current members’ participation in the membership intake process. Results from this study revealed that current members perceive that other members are less likely to learn Black history and participate in community service or mandatory study hall and more likely to participate in each of the pledge process activities on either a frequent or occasional basis. One explanation for these results is that the negative press surrounding BGLOs has had a negative effect on students’ perceptions of the membership intake process of other members. Since prior research has indicated that one reason students participate in the pledge process is to gain respect of other members, national officers should consider releasing actual statistics to curbe students’ attitudes regarding pledge process activities. For example, the majority of members in this study indicated that running errands and receiving wood for members were ineffective activities. By creating marketing promotions that highlight this data, students may be less likely to participate in these activities as a means of developing social competence among their peers.

The findings also have implications for student affairs practitioners, particularly those

who advise or have working relationships with BGLO members. The results from this study suggest that student affairs administrators should place a focus on the activities and intended outcomes (including social belonging) associated with the membership intake process of undergraduate members. Undergraduate members in this study indicated that the perception they hold of other members' participation in membership intake activities has an effect on their participation, regardless of whether they believe the activity to be effective or not. As such, student affairs practitioners should have look to establish marketing materials that use social norming data. This data should highlight data that reports students' actual participation in and perceived effectiveness of membership intake process activities. In addition, administrators that work with Greek organizations should provide an environment for students to freely articulate their views on the membership intake process including activities associated with the pledge process.

Student affairs administrators should also use the experiences of BGLO chapter advisors and alumni members by encouraging the formation of a chapter advisor/alumni council that would be comprised of the chapter advisor and a number of chapter alumni. In addition to providing an accurate depiction of the former pledge process, this alumni council could provide support to current undergraduates as well as the student affairs administrators that serve them. By building collaborations with chapter members, alumni, and BGLO officials, student affairs practitioners will have a greater chance of shifting student norms.

The majority of the members in this study reported participating in 20 of the 21 activities (participation in community service, being referred to as a Sphinxman, Crescent, Pyramid, etc., carrying a symbolic object such as a brick, participating in mandatory study hall, being required to dress up, running errands for big brothers/sisters, establishing a closer bond with line

brothers/sisters, establishing a closer bond with older members in the chapter, participating in a set, standing or walking in a line, greeting big brothers/sisters, performing calisthenics, being referred to by line number, and learning organizational rituals, fraternity/sorority hymns, Black history, information about their respective organization, learning and reciting the Greek alphabet, organizational founders, and chapter founders), with frequent participation in 19 of the 21 activities (previously listed activities excluding running errands for big brothers/sisters). Knowing that students do not often understand the legal ramifications of these activities BGLO advisors can develop case studies that encourage chapter officers or BGLO members in general, to examine these activities from a judicial or legalistic perspective. This activity may have a positive influence of students' perceptions of these activities, particularly pledge process activities.

The overall results of the study reveal that current undergraduate members believe in and continue to practice tenets associated with the former pledge process including pledge lines (walking in a line, being referred to by line number), learning chapter founders, greeting big brothers or sisters, participating in a set, and establishing a closer bond with older members and line brothers or sisters. This information is in direct contrast to the information that Greek advisors receive from the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC). The NPHC Council of Presidents Joint Position Statement against Hazing indicates that pledging and pledge lines have been abolished as a process for membership. In addition the statement indicates that members and prospective members are prohibited from engaging in hazing, pledge, or pre-pledge lines, and that all persons who participate in such activities will be held personally liable to the victim (Council of Presidents, 1990). This inconsistency suggests that student affairs practitioners that work with BGLOs should work with the NPHC and the respective individual organizations to



receive guidance as to which activities or behaviors are tolerated under this policy. Furthermore, BGLO advisors should work with the NPHC and the respective organizations to enforce these procedures should violations occur.

### *Significance for policy*

This study also has implications for future policy. The present study revealed that the majority of current members participate in 20 of the 21 activities examined in this study. Moreover, students reported participation in 9 of the 10 pledge process activities. National officers of BGLOs may seriously want to examine incorporating several activities or intended outcomes associated with the former pledge process into the current membership intake process. While students overwhelmingly participate in membership intake process activities, their participation in pledge process activities in addition to membership intake process activities seem to indicate that membership intake process activities alone do not satisfy the intended outcomes of current undergraduate members. By establishing a modified membership intake process, BGLOs can incorporate several activities that students believe are effective, decrease litigation related to hazing and encourage participation and oversight from older members and student affairs practitioners.

The present study revealed that the majority of current members participate in activities associated with the former pledge process. Several of these activities are against organizational policy, institutional policy, or state/federal law. Should national officers of BGLOs elect to forgo changes to the membership intake policies, national officers of BGLOs and student affairs practitioners must work together to create stringent and concrete disciplinary policies for BGLO members and chapters. By adopting stringent policies related to the former pledge process, and

more specifically hazing, current undergraduate members will begin to take their respective organization's stance against hazing more seriously.

#### *Significance for future research*

This study also has implications for future research. The present study examined (a) the activities that current undergraduate members report participating in as part of the membership intake process, (b) the activities that current undergraduate members perceive to be associated with the membership intake process of other BGLO chapters and (c) the intake activities that members deem to be effective in creating brotherhood or sisterhood. A future study might explore the same research questions, but conduct the research using a different technique. Another researcher may want to conduct interviews with current undergraduate members to examine their participation, perception of others' participation, and perceived effectiveness of membership intake process activities. This qualitative study might yield richer data and would further add to the body of research related to the membership intake process of BGLOs.

Second, another study could examine the membership intake process activities between undergraduate members of the National Panhellenic Conference (NPC), the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC), National Interfraternity Council (NIC), and National Association of Latino Fraternal Organizations, Inc (NALFO). Such a study might provide student affairs practitioners and national officers of Greek lettered organizations with data that would identify trends and behaviors that exist across councils. Furthermore, such a study may encourage increased cooperation among the four councils.

Finally, this study examined the relationship between the activities that current undergraduate members' report and the activities that they perceive other undergraduate members to participate in. A future study could explore the factors (including need for sense of

belonging) that encourage students to participate in activities that they do not perceive to be effective as part of the membership intake process. The results of that study could offer national BGLO officers and student affairs practitioners insights on the reasons why students seek membership in BGLOs.

### Limitations of the Study

This study, as with any study, had several limitations. The first limitation was related to the data collection procedures. Several chapter advisors and university administrators were present during the administration of the study. As such, respondents may have been less than candid with their responses regarding their participation in and perceived effectiveness of activities listed on the MIP Survey, particularly activities associated with the former pledge process.

Secondly, respondents in this study were asked to report their participation in or knowledge of both sanctioned and unsanctioned activities. It is possible that they were not candid in their responses given that several of the unsanctioned activities are illegal. If respondents were less than candid, the results might be skewed.

The final limitation to the study was the fact that the survey instrument did not include all of the activities that students may participate in as part of chapter's membership intake process. The MIP survey only specified 21 activities that could be incorporated into a chapter's membership intake process. There are an infinite number of activities that students may participate in and deem to be an effective part of their membership intake process; and this instrument did not allow respondents to indicate other activities that may have participated in as part of their membership intake process. If certain activities were omitted, the results of this study may not paint a complete picture.

Despite these limitations, the results of this study provided necessary insight into the membership intake process of current undergraduate members affiliated with BGLOs. The results indicate that the majority of students participate in activities associated with both the current membership intake process as well as the former pledge process. In addition, the findings suggest that students participate in former pledge process activities that they do not deem to be effective as a means of achieving a sense of belonging and social competence with BGLO members from their respective chapters, campuses, organizations. Finally, the findings suggest that students perceive that students are less likely to participate in membership intake activities, and more likely to participate in pledge process activities. As such, student affairs practitioners and national officers of BGLOs need to adopt program interventions that paint an accurate depiction of the membership intake process, alter the current membership intake process to reflect the intended outcomes of current members, or aggressively take legal action against students who violate the membership intake policies of BGLOs.

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APPENDIX A  
MIP SURVEY

**Membership Intake Process Survey**

**Directions: Please take a moment to reflect on your membership intake process. As you read the following statements, please indicate....**

As you read the following statements, please indicate....

	1) ...the degree to which you participated in the activities as part of your membership intake process:				2) ... the degree to which you perceive that other current undergraduate Black Greeks participate in the following activities as part of their membership intake process:				3) ... the degree to which you believe this activity is effective in creating brotherhood or sisterhood:			
	Your Participation				Perception of Others' Participation				Effectiveness of Activity			
	Frequently	Sometimes	Never		Frequently	Sometimes	Never		Very Effective	Effective	Ineffective	Very Ineffective
<b>Score Each Item on Each of the Three Scales on the Right</b>												
performed community service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
learned my organization's rituals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
learned fraternity or sorority hymns	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ran errands for big brother(s) or sister(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
was paddled or received wood	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
was referred to as a Crescent, Sphinxman, Lamp(ad)os, Pyramid, Ivy, Scroller, Archonians	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
participated in activities that I believe were associated with the pledge process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
learned Black history	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
established a closer bond with my line brother(s) or line sister(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
established a closer bond with older members in the chapter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
participated in a set	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
learned information about my organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
learned and recited the Greek alphabet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**TURN PAGE OVER**



MIP SURVEY (CONTINUED)

Score Each Item on Each of the Three Scales on the Right	Your Participation			Perception of Others' Participation			Effectiveness of Activity				
	Frequently	Sometimes	Never	Frequently	Sometimes	Never	Very Effective	Effective	Ineffective	Very Ineffective	
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
learned and recited my organization's founders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
learned and recited my chapter's founders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
stood or walked in line	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
carried a symbolic object (brick, ivy, lamp, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
saluted or greeted big brother(s) or sister(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ran errands for big brother(s) or sister(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
performed calisthenics (exercise)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
participated in mandatory study hall	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
was required to dress up	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
referred to by line number	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
participated in activities that are only associated with my organization's membership intake process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

  

Demographic Information (please complete each of the 5 sections):

Organizational Affiliation:  NPHC Fraternity  NPHC Sorority  NAFLO Fraternity  NAFLO Sorority  Other

Classification:  Freshmen  Sophomore  Junior  Senior  Grad/Professional  None of the above

Is someone in your family a member of a NPHC organization?  Yes  No

Are you currently a chapter officer?  Yes  No

How many semesters have you been a member of your organization? \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for completing the Membership Intake Process Survey. Results from this study will inform national Black Greek officers and college administrators of undergraduate members' perceptions of the current membership intake process. Thanks for letting your voice be heard.**



## APPENDIX B

### MIP SURVEY ACTIVITIES

#	Activity	Process Reflected	Question Label
1	Performed community service	Membership Intake	MIP1
2	Learned my organization's rituals	Membership Intake	MIP2
3	Learned fraternity or sorority hymns	Membership Intake	MIP3
4	Ran Errands for big brother(s) or sister(s)	Pledge	P1
5	Was paddled or received wood	Pledge	P2
6	Was referred to as a Crescent, Sphinxman, Pyramid, etc	Membership Intake	MIP4
7	Participated in activities that I believe were associated with the pledge process	N/A	none
8	Learned Black history	Membership Intake	MIP5
9	Established a closer bond with line brother(s) or line sister(s)	Pledge	P3
10	Established a closer bond with older members in the chapter	Pledge	P4
11	Participated in a set	Pledge	P5
12	Learned information about my organization	Membership Intake	MIP6
13	Learned and recited the Greek alphabet	Membership Intake	MIP7
14	Learned and recited my organization's founders	Membership Intake	MIP8
15	Learned and recited my chapter's founders	Pledge	P6
16	Stood or walked in a line	Pledge	P7
17	Carried a symbolic object (brick, ivy, lamp)	Membership Intake	MIP9
18	Saluted or greeted big brother(s) or sister(s)	Pledge	P8
19	Ran errands for big brother(s) or sister(s)*	Pledge	Repeat
20	Performed calisthenics	Pledge	P9
21	Participated in mandatory study hall	Membership Intake	MIP10
22	Was required to dress up	Membership Intake	MIP11
23	Referred to by line number	Pledge	P10
24	Participated in activities that are only associated with my organization's membership intake process	N/A	

APPENDIX C

RESULTS FROM THE PILOT STUDY

Activity	<i>N</i>	F (%)	S (%)	N (%)
Participation in community service	10	4 (40%)	5 (50%)	1 (10%)
Learned organization's rituals	10	10 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Learned fraternity/sorority hymns	9	7 (78%)	1 (11%)	1 (11%)
Was referred to as a...	10	9 (90%)	0 (0%)	1 (10%)
Learned Black history	10	5 (50%)	4 (40%)	1 (10%)
Learned information about my organization	9	9 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Learned and recited the Greek alphabet	10	9 (90%)	0 (0%)	1 (10%)
Learned and recited my organization's founders	10	9 (90%)	1 (10%)	0 (0%)
Carried a symbolic object (brick, ivy, lamp, etc.)	10	4 (40%)	0 (0%)	6 (60%)
Participated in mandatory study hall	10	4 (40%)	3 (30%)	3 (30%)
Was required to dress up	10	8 (80%)	1 (10%)	1 (10%)
Participated in activities only associated with my organization's membership intake process	9	7 (78%)	2 (22%)	0 (0%)

F=Frequently; S=Sometimes; N=Never

RESULTS FROM PILOT STUDY (CONTINUED)

Activity	<i>N</i>	F (%)	S (%)	N (%)
Ran errands for big brothers/sisters	10	2 (20%)	7 (70%)	1 (10%)
Was paddled or received wood	10	1 (10%)	3 (30%)	6 (60%)
Established a closer bond with line brother/sisters	10	8 (80%)	0 (0%)	2 (20%)
Established a closer bond with older members in the chapter	10	4 (40%)	4 (40%)	2 (20%)
Participation in a set	9	7 (78%)	1 (11%)	1 (11%)
Learned and recited chapter founder's	10	9 (90%)	0 (0%)	1 (10%)
Stood or walked in a line	9	8 (89%)	1 (11%)	0 (0%)
Saluted or greeted big brothers/sisters	10	8 (80%)	2 (20%)	0 (0%)
Ran errands for big brothers/sisters*	10	2 (20%)	6 (60%)	2 (20%)
Performed calisthenics (exercise)	10	5 (50%)	4 (40%)	1 (10%)
Was referred to by line number	10	8 (80%)	1 (10%)	1 (10%)
Participation in activities associated with the pledge process	9	8 (89%)	1 (11%)	0 (0%)

F=Frequently; S=Sometimes; N=Never

\*repeat question for validity purposes

**ANTHONY M. CRENSHAW**  
ACRENSHA@VT.EDU  
101 MAIN CAMPBELL (0003)  
BLACKSBURG, VIRGINIA 24060  
(540) 232-4422  
<http://www.filebox.vt.edu/users/acrensha>

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## **EDUCATION**

**M.A. Ed, Higher Education and Student Affairs**, July 2004

**Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University** (Virginia Tech), Blacksburg, VA

**Thesis:** Undergraduate Members Perceptions of the Current Membership Intake Process: Among Selected Black Greek-Lettered Organizations

**Additional Coursework:** Corporate Finance, Special Events Management, and Franchising Management

**B.S.B.A., Management**, August 1999

**Old Dominion University**, Norfolk, VA

Overall GPA: 3.12

Accomplishments: Old Dominion University Honors College  
College of Business and Public Administration Honors Program

## **RELATED EXPERIENCE**

**Graduate Hall Director**, Student Programs, Virginia Tech, August 2003 – present

- Coordinate the day-to-day management of two residence halls: one housing 93 international students in traditional housing and the other housing 233 upperclassmen and graduate students in a suite-style building
- Directly supervise, train, and evaluate a staff of 8 Resident Advisors, 1 Resident Advisor Coordinator, and co-supervise 1 Resident Computer Consultant
- Co-instruct EDHL 2883 *Introduction to Residence Life*, a three-credit course for new Resident Advisors
- Serve in on-call crisis duty rotation responsible for 8,900 on-campus students
- Advise two Hall Councils
- Coordinate the RA selection group interview process
- Serve as a university hearing officer adjudicating football, off-campus, and Virginia Tech Police Department referred judicial cases
- Successfully manage a programming and Hall Council budgets of \$1,126
- Committees: Duty RA Common Area Rounds (opposite sex bathrooms, suite, suite bathroom) Review committee; Drillfield Area Marketing Committee; Drillfield Area Programming Committee (chair); Fall Training Leadership Workshop Training and Class curriculum committee; Mid-year Resident Advisor Coordinator Selection committee; Oak Lane [Greek housing] Complex Director Search committee

**Chair, 2005 Black Alumni Reunion**, Old Dominion University Black Alumni Council,

January 2004-present

- Organize all aspects of the biennial Black Alumni Council reunion, such as selection of the reunion theme and the overall reunion program, budgeting for the event and acting as a liaison with the Old Dominion University Office of Alumni Relations for specific arrangements.
- Select chairs of reunions programs and events, outline their duties and responsibilities.
- Work with Black Alumni Council webmaster to plan the reunion website and virtual marketing materials
- Utilize focus groups with top donors, volunteers, and alumni association members to create the vision for the reunion
- Conduct quarterly BAC reunion meetings

**Coordinator for New Student Orientation**, LOBOrientation, University of New Mexico,  
May – August 2003

- Directly supervised approximately 2,700 orientation program participants
- Co-supervised 21 New Student Orientation Leaders
- Conducted LOBOrientation student participant experience and Orientation leader skill assessments
- Liaison and contact person for LOBOrientation corporate sponsors
- Administered LOBOrientation and Family Connection staff payroll
- Served as the contact person for academic, student affairs, and auxiliary departments
- Served as a liaison to the University of New Mexico's Family Connection program

**Graduate Hall Director**, Residential and Dining Programs, Virginia Tech, August 2002 – May 2003

- Coordinated the day-to-day management of a co-educational traditional style residence hall housing 408 undergraduate students
- Directly supervised, trained, and evaluated a staff of 11 Resident Advisors
- Co-instructed *Introduction to Residence Education*, a three-credit course for new Resident Advisors
- Served in on-call crisis duty rotation responsible for 8,900 on-campus students
- Served as the advisor to the East Ambler Johnston Hall Council
- Successfully managed a programming and Hall Council budget of \$916
- Coordinated several aspects of Resident Advisor selection process

**Practicum**, Dean of Students Office, Virginia Tech, January 2003 – May 2003

- Conducted an assessment of the Black Cultural Center at Virginia Tech
- Planned, promoted, executed, and evaluated programming interventions that met the diverse needs of the black student population and Virginia Tech community
- Conducted a comparative study of Black Cultural Centers at SCHEV peer institutions

**Project Director**, The Harambee Project, Old Dominion University Black Alumni Council,  
November 2001 – August 2002

- Devised an educational one-day conference designed to motivate and nurture current and future Black student leaders on campus
- Responsible for facilitating conference meetings and recruiting alumni to serve on various conference committees
- Coordinated conference marketing materials, including conference logo, brochure, and sponsorship letters, for individual, corporate, and organizational sponsors

**Long-Term Substitute Teacher**, Norfolk Public Schools, Norfolk, VA, January 2001 – June 2002

- Taught Algebra 1, Geometry, and SAT Math courses to secondary pupils utilizing courses of study adopted by the Board of Education
- Developed daily and unit lesson plans that stressed a “discovery” approach, and effectively integrated appropriate instructional aids
- Provided individualized and specialized instruction to new and expectant teen mothers

**Assistant Manager**, Finish Line, Norfolk, VA, October 1999 – March 2000

- Directly supervised 15 – 30 employees
- Responsible for marketing, sales management, recruiting, personnel management and department management
- Work with management team to ensure smooth operation of the \$1.4 million store



### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

- Serve as the primary advisor to the Virginia Tech chapter of Student African American Brotherhood (SAAB), an academic and social support network for Black males at Virginia Tech
- Serve as the primary advisor to the Payne and Main Campbell Hall Councils
- Coordinate the leadership development series for members of the Virginia Tech chapter of the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC)
- Coordinated the leadership self-assessment for New Student Orientation Leaders at the University of New Mexico
- Served as Chair of HarvestFest 2003: “*Walking in the Ways of a Believer*”, a one-day spiritual conference designed to reinvigorate and assist the body of Believers at Virginia Tech in taking their rightful place and receiving what God has for them

### RESEARCH

- Analysis of Student Affairs Auxiliary Operations (2004, mixed methods)  
Conducted a mixed methods study of the Office of Student Programs, a \$43 million student affairs auxiliary operation at Virginia Tech ([www.studentprograms.vt.edu](http://www.studentprograms.vt.edu))
- Assessment of the Black Cultural Center at Virginia Tech (2003, qualitative)
- Case Study of Hampton University (2003, qualitative)
- From Alpha to Omega: Examining the Similarities and Differences Between the Interfraternity Council, National Pan-Hellenic Council, and Panhellenic Council at Virginia Tech (2003, mixed methods)
- Leadership self-assessment of New Student Orientation leaders at the University of New Mexico (2003, quantitative)
- The Residential Leadership Community (RLC): An Examination of a co-curricular learning community at Virginia Tech (2002, qualitative)
- Undergraduate Members Perceptions of the Current Membership Intake Process: Among Selected Black Greek-Lettered Organizations (2003, quantitative)

### PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

- Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated
- Association of College Unions International
- Old Dominion University Black Alumni Council
- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)
- Virginia Association of College and University Housing Officers (VACUHO)
- Virginia Association of Student Personnel Administrators (VASPA)

### COMPUTER EXPERIENCE/PROFICIENCY

- Adobe PageMaker
- Microsoft Office XP (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook)
- Microsoft FrontPage
- Microsoft Publisher
- Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)

### ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Consultant**, Crenshaw Consulting Group, Newport News, VA, March 2002 – present

- Offer low-cost business consultations to small business owners and non-profit organizations
- Assist in the design and implementation of business and marketing plans

**Agent**, New York Life, Norfolk, VA, March 2000 – December 2000

- Provided expert guidance and innovative solutions in the areas of personal, business, estate, and employee benefit planning for individuals and small business
- Obtained life and health, series 6, and series 63 licenses

## REFERENCES

### **J.D. White**

(current direct supervisor)  
Drillfield Area Coordinator  
Student Programs  
Virginia Tech  
109 East Eggleston (0428)  
Blacksburg, VA 24061-0428  
(540) 231-9812  
[jwhite7@vt.edu](mailto:jwhite7@vt.edu)

### **Steve Janosik, Ed. D.**

(thesis chair)  
Associate Professor  
Higher Education and Student Affairs Program  
Virginia Tech  
308 E. Eggleston Hall (0302)  
Blacksburg, VA 24061-0302  
(540) 231-9702  
[sjanosik@vt.edu](mailto:sjanosik@vt.edu)

### **Laura E. Valdez**

(practicum supervisor)  
Manager, New Student Orientation  
University of New Mexico  
MSC06 3600  
University of New Mexico  
Albuquerque, NM 87131  
(505) 277-7869  
[lvaldez@unm.edu](mailto:lvaldez@unm.edu)