“Not Nearly What It Used to Be”: A Mixed Methods Study on Hazing and Organizational Culture in Historically White Fraternities

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“NOT NEARLY WHAT IT USED TO BE”: A MIXED METHODS STUDY ON HAZING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN HISTORICALLY WHITE FRATERNITIES

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

The College of Human Sciences and Education

by

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B.A., Mercer University, 2010
M.S., Arkansas Tech University, 2012
M.A., Louisiana State University, 2021
August 2022
“If a woman is educated, she’s a better wife, a better mother, and she’s going to raise better children. Every woman who gets educated improves America and is an investment in the future.”

—Porter Osborne, Sr., *The Whisper of the River* by Ferrol Sams
I dedicate this dissertation to my personal cheerleaders who did not make it to celebrate this milestone with me:

My father, Jack Rogers, passed away in 2011. He was the first in his family to go to college and join a fraternity, and he believed I could do anything I wanted with my life. I hope I never lose his sense of adventure and willingness to ask bold questions.

My mother-in-law, Kathryn Riedel Davis, the original KRD, was the one who inspired and funded my application to LSU in November 2017. Unfortunately, she passed away shortly after I began my doctoral coursework, and I often wished I could call her during this process.

My running buddy, Ken Fryer, was only in my life for a short but critical time in 2020. We dreamed about both eventually having doctorates from LSU, and he always offered me a kind word or prayer when doctoral life was especially stressful.

Additionally, I dedicate this dissertation to the two children we lost while I was writing this dissertation. May this investment in my education make me a better wife and, someday, a better mother who raises better children.
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ABSTRACT

Hazing is a significant concern on college campuses, especially as students continue to die following hazing incidents in student organizations. Fraternities, particularly historically White fraternities (HWFs), have been the site of many recent hazing deaths. However, fraternity and sorority life leaders and advocates often argue that the chapters where hazing tragedies occur are the minority in a broader system that offers numerous contributions to society. Rather than a fraternity or sorority problem, hazing may result from cultural influences within and around the organization. Thus, the purpose of this study is to understand how organizational culture, such as chapter culture and institutional culture, relate to hazing among various HWF chapters.

This study employed an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, wherein I first distributed a survey to HWF members at a single institution in the quantitative phase of the study. Using a hypothetical conceptual model framed by Organizational Culture Theory and Pascarella’s (1985) General Model for Assessing Change, this study examined how students’ backgrounds, beliefs, and HWF chapter characteristics and culture contribute to experiences with hazing. The level of hazing experienced as new members negatively impacted members’ perceptions of their chapter culture, whereas chapter size had a positive impact. In addition, the chapter culture scales impacted members’ attitudes toward hazing differently. Chapter size and level of hazing experienced as new members both had positive relationships with member attitudes toward hazing.

After analyzing the survey responses using exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and path analysis, I invited students to interview in the study's qualitative phase. Participants described their chapters as supportive environments but
felt that the institution did not view HWFs positively. Additionally, participants discussed the effectiveness of hazing prevention policies and the state of the institution’s hazing culture following a student death due to hazing in 2017.

Following the analysis of the interviews, I integrated the findings of both phases to understand better how chapter culture and institutional culture contribute to hazing in HWFs. Finally, the study concludes with implications for theory and practice and recommendations for future research to continue hazing prevention efforts.
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Introduction

For decades, Historically White fraternities (HWFs) have been among the most influential forces in American colleges and universities (Syrett, 2009). In the fraternity and sorority life (FSL) system, organizations boast that their members have higher levels of engagement (Pike, 2003), personal development (Hayek et al., 2002), retention (Debard & Sacks, 2010), and persistence to graduation (Debard et al., 2006; Severtis & Christie-Mizell, 2007) than nonmembers. However, FSL organizations (FSLOs) face scrutiny and accusations that these benefits do not justify the adverse and harmful outcomes they cause (Brown, 2020; Flanagan, 2014; Kuh et al., 1996). In particular, severe hazing incidents in fraternities have led colleges and universities to question the value of FSLOs on their campuses.

As colleges and universities endure tragedies and public outrage following incidents in FSLOs, some institutions are reconsidering the role of FSL in campus life (Camera, 2017). While some institutions work to reform the culture of FSL from within, others face pressure from students and other groups to abolish FSL altogether (Brown, 2020; Camera, 2017). Biddix (2016) called for multiple stakeholders, including alumni volunteers and professionals who work for campuses or FSLO inter/national headquarters, to seek an understanding of the detrimental effects of FSL membership to inform their practice with undergraduate FSL chapters.

Calls for Abolition

Before the late nineteenth century, literary societies and fraternities were the main extracurricular activities at colleges (Syrett, 2009). Today, colleges and universities host numerous activities outside of the classroom for a multitude of interests. With so many options,
institutions increasingly question the value of hosting FSLOs whose behaviors—especially with hazing and alcohol—conflict with their espoused values (Camera, 2017; Chaleunphonh & Giacalone, 2020; Flanagan, 2014).

The prevalence of hazing, among several other issues in FSL, has led to calls for colleges and universities to abolish FSL as students and institutional stakeholders question the value of FSLOs. Kuh et al. (1996) encouraged institutions to reclaim their educational integrity by reforming fraternities, but more recent movements have called for abolishing fraternities and sororities. Whereas some movements seek a complete removal of FSLOs from the campus, others focus their efforts on Interfraternity Council (IFC) and National Panhellenic Conference (NPC) organizations (Marcus, 2020). However, FSL advocates argue that disbanding these organizations will lead to unregulated “underground” operations, which could pose a greater risk to students (Brown, 2020).

Historically, fears about losing financial support from wealthy alumni of FSLOs have helped quash efforts to abolish FSL on college campuses (Kuh et al., 1996; Syrett, 2009). Currently, there is a question of whether financial support will continue to sway decision-makers. In recent years, concerns about the conduct of FSL members and organizations have become more public. However, many colleges are in precarious financial situations due to state appropriations that have not returned to the levels before the Great Recession (State Higher Education Executive Officers, 2020) and increased costs surrounding COVID-19 (Anderson, 2020). Thus, now could be a difficult time to abolish FSL and potentially upset influential donors.
Advocates for FSL have noted that if campuses eliminate FSL, students might reorganize off campus, where they would have no institutional oversight (Camera, 2017). Rather than removing these organizations, NPC and NIC leaders have indicated that institutions would see better results if they maintained FSLOs and worked with the members to create change (Brown, 2020). Biddix (2016) proposed that FSL start demonstrating its relevance within higher education by showing how FSLOs connect to and support institutional priorities and strategic initiatives.

Despite compelling arguments to remove FSLOs from college campuses, students continue to seek membership in these organizations, and institutions provide resources that support them (Biddix, 2016). While some evidence supports abolishing FSLOs, these influential and powerful organizations are not going away on many campuses (DeSantis, 2007). On an institutional level, colleges and universities may feel inclined to keep FSLOs on campus because they show benefits in institutional engagement, student retention, and alumni support (Biddix, 2016). For the members, FSL is a social outlet that offers friendships, housing, connections, camaraderie, and a sense of belonging and community through brotherhood or sisterhood (Biddix, 2016; Syrett, 2009).

Certainly, FSLOs need to focus their efforts on overcoming the issues that proponents of abolition have cited. As practitioners and stakeholders address these issues within FSL, they must consider how the culture of their FSLOs and institutions influences college students’ development and success. Further, they must identify the cultural characteristics that contribute to the perpetuation of hazing and seek to disrupt those patterns. In many cases, the motivation to change will need to come from collegiate FSLO members. For example, Biddix and Underwood
(2010) described the power of peer educators in empowering fraternity members to enact change in their chapter and community. However, FSL professionals have many responsibilities and focus much of their energy on problem chapters, so they might not prioritize the long-term development of FSLOs (Biddix, 2016). Thus, Biddix (2016) recommended connecting FSLO members to campus resources and offering peer programming opportunities.

**Hazing**

In the 1700s and 1800s, college administrators who sought to establish order rather than individuality on campus viewed hazing as a tool to promote loyalty to the institution and integrate students from diverse economic backgrounds (Nuwer, 2004). By the 1920s, many colleges and universities had policies prohibiting hazing (Syrett, 2009). Yet, the behaviors continued, and fraternity hazing rituals in the 1960s became more dangerous (Syrett, 2009).

While definitions of hazing vary across research studies, a commonly used definition for hazing is “any activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group (such as a student club or team) that humiliates, degrades, abuses or endangers regardless of a person’s willingness to participate” (Hoover & Pollard, 1999, p. 8). Cimino (2013) found four “commonalities of hazing”: (p. 447) hazing is temporary, unidirectional, coercive, and coalitional. Examples of hazing include humiliation, substance abuse, and sexual abuse (Hoover & Pollard, 2000). In addition, Kuh et al. (1996) noted that the rewards and sanctions of hazing have created a complicated system for group bonding.

Despite years of documented incidents and problems, Biddix et al. (2014) noted a lack of empirical research about hazing. Moreover, they suggested that hazing is the least understood of
all problematic practices in FSLOs (Biddix et al., 2014). To further complicate the matter, hazing manifests itself differently across FSLOs (Parks et al., 2015).

The continuation of hazing in FSLOs endangers fraternal organizations and, more importantly, student lives. For decades, the number of hazing deaths occurring in fraternities has exceeded hazing deaths occurring in other organization types (Nuwer, 2004). In 2017 alone, four college students from across the United States died following hazing incidents in historically White fraternities (HWFs) (Camera, 2017; Reilly, 2017). Moreover, while national fraternities have established high ideals related to building community, living honorably and courageously, and strengthening one’s academic and mental health, hazing compromises those ideals, and current backlash against fraternities suggests abolishing them altogether (Nuwer, 2004; Reilly, 2017).

Research has stated that students come to college accustomed to hazing or expecting to be hazed; for many students, hazing begins in high school or earlier, which creates a pattern that predisposes hazing (Biddix et al., 2014; Gershel et al., 2003; Hoover & Pollard, 1999). Hazing has progressed to levels that are violent and dangerous for students (Parks et al., 2015). As a result, students continue to die from hazing every year (Quintana, 2019).

Hazing detracts from college student development and success, as these activities occupy students’ time with degrading, humiliating, and potentially harmful activities that are unrelated to their educational progress (Allan et al., 2020). HazingPrevention.Org (n.d.) lists the impacts on hazing victims and perpetrators, such as decreased academic performance or adverse effects on interpersonal relationships. Victims may also experience sleep deprivation and “physical,
emotional, and/or mental instability” (HazingPrevention.Org, n.d.). Hazing activities also conflict with institutional missions and inhibit the training of ethical leaders (Allan et al., 2020).

At the same time, hazing victims may not recognize their experiences as hazing and could even note some benefits from the behaviors (Campo et al., 2005; Allan & Madden, 2008). In particular, male students believe that the friendships they cultivate through their organization are worth enduring the hazing (Campo et al., 2005; Véliz-Calderón & Allan, 2017). Other students reported that experiencing hazing gave them a sense of accomplishment and made them feel that they were truly part of the group (Allan & Madden, 2008). Moving forward, FSLOs need to demonstrate that members can reap social benefits without hazing.

**Statement of Research Problem**

Across the United States, college students are becoming seriously injured or dying following hazing incidents in FSLOs. Current initiatives to curb hazing on college campuses have not eliminated student deaths. Except for 2020, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, at least one college student has died from hazing each year since 1958, and many of these deaths occurred in HWFs (Nuwer, n.d.). Hazing activities distract from the original intent, purpose, and mission of FSLOs. While hazing occurs more broadly across many student organizations, fraternities frequently receive media attention for student deaths following severe hazing incidents (Allan & Madden, 2012; Collman, 2019). The effects of hazing extend to multiple levels of a college community; hazing affects individual students but also impacts the organization and the institution.

Hazing is a complex, multi-faceted issue, and scholarly research has indicated that organizational culture is a significant contributor to hazing acts in HWFs. Individual members
bring their specific backgrounds to their organizations, and their chapters are situated in the institution's broader context. On the other hand, fraternity chapter cultures may impact individual behaviors and influence their campuses' overall culture. Thus, this study focused on understanding how individual, organizational, and institutional cultures contribute to hazing behavior in HWFs. Specifically, this study sought to better understand the experiences of members and the cultures of chapters and institutions in order to make recommendations for ways that individuals, chapters, and institutions can provide healthier, safer experiences for undergraduate HWF members.

Existing research about hazing in fraternities has focused on how people define hazing and their attitudes toward hazing. Separate studies have reported findings about fraternities, gender roles, and race separately, but in the future, specific studies should examine hazing in HWFs and the environmental forces that influence it. For example, explicitly studying organizational culture may offer insight into why veteran members continue to haze newcomers.

In addition, as deaths in college fraternities continue to mount, HWFs are at risk of perishing on many campuses if the harmful behaviors that many fraternity men engage in do not cease. Further, few researchers have utilized qualitative methods such as interviews and focus groups to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of hazers and hazing victims in HWFs. If the researchers can navigate ethical concerns and properly build trust with their study participants, these methods would also create opportunities to understand how chapter culture contributes to students’ persistence in an organization following severe hazing experiences.
Purpose of Study

Hazing looks different across organizational types and even has varying iterations among councils when examining fraternities and sororities. Defining hazing is one issue, but addressing hazing is another. While colleges and universities have put forth educational efforts to deter and end hazing, Campo et al. (2005) recognized that updates to policy and enforcement of policy must occur alongside those efforts. Further, hazing in college fraternities has psychological and sociological motivations that must be understood in order to end the behaviors (Parks et al., 2015). Student backgrounds and chapter culture are critical pieces to consider as higher education administrators seek to disrupt hazing cycles.

In many cases, making permanent and sustainable changes to the chapter culture of HWFs and the FSL system will not be a simple and straightforward process, and Camera (2017) noted that “flagship universities and athletic powerhouses” (para. 17) might be particularly challenging. Although chapters and councils may be racially homogenous, FSL communities are diverse among campuses. Further, leaders and policymakers must not forget that many chapters and campuses do not face these concerns at an extreme level (Brown, 2020). Examining the culture of chapters and institutions will offer more specific insight into individual chapters' behaviors and how to address concerning behaviors in those chapters and institutions. Thus, the purpose of this study is to understand how organizational culture, such as chapter culture and institutional culture, is related to hazing within various HWF chapters.
Research Questions

1. Based on the current sample, how well do the three existing organizational culture scales (teamwork and collaboration, climate and morale, belonging and commitment) measure HWF members’ perspectives on chapter culture?

2. What is the underlying structure of the survey items that measure institutional culture and HWF members’ attitudes about hazing?

3. How do chapter culture, institutional culture, and hazing experienced as new members contribute to HWF members’ attitudes about hazing?

4. How do undergraduate members of HWFs describe the culture of their chapters and institutions?

5. How do undergraduate members of HWFs describe the prevalence of hazing in their chapters and within their institutions?

6. How does organizational culture (chapter culture and institutional culture) relate to hazing in HWF chapters?

Introduction to Methodological Approach

Existing studies about hazing have relied heavily on quantitative methods such as survey research (Allan & Madden, 2008; Allan et al., 2019; Campo et al., 2005; Keating et al., 2005). While surveys provide a starting point for hazing research, their results do not provide the complete picture of what is occurring in organizations that participate in hazing activities. Moreover, few studies (Montague et al., 2008) involve face-to-face contact with study participants. In this study, I employed a mixed-method research approach. After analyzing
definitions of mixed methods used by highly published researchers, Johnson et al. (2007) generated a composite definition of mixed methods research:

Mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration. (p. 123)

Specifically, I used an explanatory sequential mixed methods design. In this design, a researcher first collects and analyzes quantitative data to discover statistical trends and patterns. Then the researcher collects and analyzes additional qualitative data to explain the trends and patterns (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Following their study on hazing motivations, McCreary and Schutts (2019) noted that applying their survey instrument in a study with a mixed methods design would help future researchers determine outlying groups to focus on for additional qualitative study. This study is one of the first to apply a mixed methods design to hazing research.

**Quantitative Phase**

For the first portion of this study, I distributed a quantitative survey to undergraduate members of HWFs at a single institution. This study’s dependent variable was a composite score of the 17 hazing items from the New Member Experiences scale of the survey. First, I scored each item based on the frequency of occurrence ranging from 1 (never occurred) to 7 (occurred ten or more times). Then, I created a dichotomous variable where members who never experienced a behavior received a score of 0, and members who experienced the behavior once or more received a score of 1. From there, I computed a composite variable to calculate how many different hazing behaviors each respondent experienced as a new HWF member.
After the survey administration was complete, I explored the sample to see which demographics and backgrounds were represented in the sample. I sought to understand the individual traits and backgrounds of the individuals in the sample before analyzing their perspectives about chapter culture, institutional culture, and hazing. First, I used EFA to examine the structure of scales I developed to measure hazing attitudes and institutional culture. Then, I used CFA to determine how well previously validated scales about chapter culture measured perceptions of chapter culture in my sample. Finally, through path analysis, I analyzed relationships among individual beliefs and attitudes, chapter culture, institutional culture, and the composite of hazing behaviors that the respondents experienced as new members.

**Qualitative Phase**

After analyzing the results of the first phase of the study, I conducted individual semi-structured interviews with students who responded to the quantitative survey. Qualitative research recognizes the world's complexity and allows researchers to study social phenomena; specifically, qualitative research focuses on context (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). I recruited a pool of participants to provide a more comprehensive summary of students’ perceptions of chapter culture, institutional culture, and experiences with hazing in HWFs. The interview questions in this phase depended upon the findings of the quantitative phase. Following the qualitative phase, I integrated the data.

**Significance of Study**

Findings from this study contribute to existing knowledge about hazing behavior and culture in college students and student organizations. Applying path analysis in the quantitative phase provided a more nuanced understanding of how HWF members’ experiences with hazing
as new members impact their perceptions of chapter culture, institutional culture, and hazing. Additionally, this study’s specific focus on chapter culture will help administrators and leaders understand how cultural traits vary among organizations and how culture contributes to hazing in HWFs. Finally, as this study employs an explanatory sequential design, it will be among the first to immediately explain quantitative findings by utilizing qualitative methods in the same student population.

**Definition of Key Terms**

Active – An initiated undergraduate member of a fraternal organization (Gregory, 2003)

Chapter – An undergraduate or alumni/ae unit of an inter/national fraternity or sorority that has received a charter (Gregory, 2003)

Chartering – The process of creating a local chapter of an inter/national FSLO on a college or university campus (sometimes referred to as colonizing)

Formal recruitment – The organized process where FSLOs recruit new members; at many institutions, formal recruitment in HWFs is coordinated by the Interfraternity Council (IFC) and FSL Office and occurs in the fall semester

Fraternal organization – Inclusive term to describe men’s and women’s groups (fraternities and sororities) (Biddix et al., 2014)

Fraternity/sorority life (FSL) – Term used to describe fraternal organizations; may also be an office on campus that oversees fraternal organizations

Fraternity member – Member of men’s fraternal organization

Greek Life – Formerly used term to describe fraternal organizations. (Many fraternal organizations are recognized by letters of the Greek alphabet)
Hazing – “Any activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group (such as a student club or team) that humiliates, degrades, abuses or endangers regardless of a person’s willingness to participate” (Hoover & Pollard, 1999, p. 8)

Historically White Fraternity (HWF) – A fraternal organization whose membership initially consisted of White men only

Initiated member – HWF member who has completed the new member period and initiation process

Initiation – A formal ceremony in which a new member becomes a lifetime member (Gregory, 2003) – usually follows a new member (provisional) period of 6-8 weeks

Interfraternity Council (IFC) – Governing council for HWFs; IFC leaders are members of HWFs

Legacy – A member or potential new member is a legacy to an FSLO if they have a close family member (sibling, parent, aunt/uncle, or grandparent) who is an initiated member of the organization; legacy policies vary by organization

New member – A person who has joined an HWF but has not been through the process of initiation to receive full membership status

New member period – The provisional period before a new member is initiated

Pledge – Formerly used term to describe a new member of an FSLO

Pledgeship – Formerly used term to describe the new member period

Rechartering – The process of bringing an FSLO back to a college campus after the chapter has been inactive or suspended.

Rush – Formerly used term for formal recruitment – the term is rooted in practices when fraternity and sorority members would rush to the train station or board the train a few stops
before the university stop to gain a competitive advantage in meeting incoming students (Syrett, 2009)

**Limitations and Delimitations**

Sample bias and social-desirability bias are potential limitations of this study, as the findings are limited to the students who filled out the survey and participated in the interviews. For example, members of organizations that engage in hazing might be less inclined than other students to participate in a study that asks about hazing. Similarly, students who have hazed others or been hazing victims might portray their experiences in a socially desirable manner rather than conveying all details of their experiences in their organizations.

As it focuses on HWFs, this study's delimitations include the student organization type, institution type, and study location. As noted previously, HWFs have repeatedly had deadly hazing incidents in recent years. Often, severe hazing cases occur at large universities where FSL is a significant and influential part of the campus culture. For this study, I selected the institution (a large public institution in the Southeastern United States) because it has had several severe hazing incidents over the last decade, including a student death. As a cross-sectional snapshot of student experiences and perspectives, this study does not allow me to measure changes over time; however, the data and findings offer insight into current students' experiences, including how the student death continues to affect the campus and FSL community.
CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE\(^1\)

Introduction

Over the past two decades, scholarly research on hazing has begun to gain momentum. Empirical studies about student attitudes toward hazing and experiences with hazing in their organizations, as well as the differences in hazing across student organizations, have clarified some of the ways hazing impacts college students’ experiences. However, many studies are generic and do not isolate the experiences of students in a single organizational context. Several articles noted that a one size fits all approach will not eliminate hazing (Allan et al., 2019; Owen et al., 2008; Véliz-Calderón & Allan, 2017). Many scholars have called for future research that explores how hazing manifests across organizational types, institutions, and student identities (Keating et al., 2005; Owen et al., 2008; Parks et al., 2015; Véliz-Calderón & Allan, 2017). Additionally, Montague et al. (2008) believed that having more focus groups and expanding the study participants to more stakeholders would lead to a more thorough understanding of hazing.

While current empirical research provides a basic understanding of hazing, researchers have recommended a more in-depth exploration of the behaviors and responses to hazing (Montague et al., 2008; Richardson et al., 2012). For example, Allan et al. (2019) believed that additional studies should seek to understand what can cause hazing rates to increase or decrease

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and how institutional context affects hazing rates. Similarly, Owen et al. (2008) emphasized the importance of understanding hazing in the context of social norms.

Current research has also proposed several solutions for addressing hazing. For example, Campo et al. (2005) encouraged educators to involve students in developing and implementing interventions, educational efforts, and policy changes related to hazing. Extending the focus on educational opportunities, Roosevelt (2018) believed that educators should stop exhausting their efforts on enforcing policies related to minor hazing acts (“buffoonery”) and instead see those cases as educational opportunities to promote safer student behavior. Finally, Allan et al. (2019) noted that assessment and evaluation should follow the implementation of strategies to understand their effectiveness better.

Additionally, this literature review includes two sections related to the topic and my role as a researcher. These two sections highlight the sensitivity of the topic and the significant trust the study participants placed in me as a female researcher. First, the “Researching Sensitive Topics” section describes strategies other scholars have used to study uncomfortable, socially unacceptable, or illegal topics. Second, the “Women Researching Men” describes the experiences of other woman scholars who studied men. These experiences informed how I communicated and interacted with participants throughout the study.

What is Hazing?

Defining Hazing

Scholarly researchers have not settled on a single definition of hazing, which creates inconsistency when reviewing empirical literature. While many articles adopt the definition used by Hoover and Pollard (1999), some do not include a definition, which could lead to
misunderstandings when interpreting student behaviors and empirical study findings. Across research articles, descriptions of hazing activities expected of people joining a group as a prerequisite for their initiation or granting full membership status in the organization vary. For example, some articles refer to both mental and physical harm, including humiliation, degradation, abuse, or endangerment (Campo et al., 2005; Richardson et al., 2012; Allan & Madden, 2012; Véliz-Calderón & Allan, 2017; Allan et al., 2019; Massey & Massey, 2017). In other articles, the authors specifically state that an action can be considered hazing regardless of whether the person being hazed was willing to participate (Allan et al., 2019; Allan & Madden, 2012; Massey & Massey, 2017; Véliz-Calderón & Allan, 2017). Massey & Massey (2017) took their definition one step further and stated that an action could be considered hazing regardless of the intent of the person or group committing the hazing. Cimino (2013) mentioned that to be considered hazing, behaviors must appear unrelated or unattributable to items that would be relevant to the membership in the group; for example, athletic teams or military preparation might require physical preparation or assessments that are not considered hazing, so context becomes relevant in those cases.

Additionally, student definitions of hazing vary significantly. Following a period of growth in student organizations at Mississippi State University in the 1970s, Gordon et al. (1979) developed a survey instrument to assess the existence and extent of hazing on their campus. While most respondents indicated that their organization did not participate in hazing activities, when they were given a list of activities that were defined as hazing by the university, 40% of the participants agreed that their organization participated in at least one of those behaviors (Gordon et al., 1979). When they studied collegiate and alumni fraternity members from a single
university and examined their attitudes toward hazing, Baier and Williams (1983) lamented that there are multiple views and definitions regarding what constitutes hazing. Owen et al. (2008) commented that the number of illegal hazing acts might decrease if a clarified definition of hazing existed. They further posited that perpetrators might cease their problematic behaviors if they clearly understood that the behaviors were hazing. Moreover, victims might be more confident reporting if they could confirm that their experiences were hazing. After conducting an online survey within a single institution, Roosevelt (2018) noted that the construct of hazing had not been explained sufficiently, which has made the development of effective programming to eliminate hazing a challenge.

Further, student definitions of hazing often vary across different genders and organization types. Ellsworth (2006) observed that there were some behaviors that all participants recognized as hazing, but differences existed across the group types. Students are hesitant to identify behaviors they believe are harmless as hazing, so some researchers choose not to use the term hazing when distributing surveys or conducting interviews or focus groups (Allan & Madden, 2012). For example, in their survey, Allan and Madden (2012) included questions about hazing behaviors but did not identify them as hazing, and 61% of male participants reported experiencing one or more of the behaviors, but 9 out of 10 participants responded that they had not been hazed. Similarly, Campo et al. (2005) surveyed students from a single university and noted that when responding to an online survey, many students did not view behaviors as hazing unless they were extreme or severe, which created a separation between student definitions of hazing and how university policies define hazing. In a later study, Allan et al. (2019) noted a disconnect between students’ experiences and what qualifies as hazing. More than a quarter of
respondents indicated that they had experienced at least one behavior categorized as hazing, but only 4.4% identified that they had been hazed (Allan et al., 2019). Roosevelt (2018) also found that student definitions often do not align with university and legal definitions of hazing because students do not view low-risk hazing activities as actual hazing. When discussing hazing matters, students often used aliases such as “initiation,” “discipline,” “bonding,” “commitment,” “tradition,” and “building group unity” (Véliz-Calderón & Allan; Parks et al., 2015).

Developing intervention strategies becomes more difficult without a commonly understood definition of hazing. After exploring hazing definitions among students and administrators, Feuer (2019) highlighted that institutions have the opportunity to revise their policies and update them “to make them more consistent with personal definitions” (p. 46). Consistent with other scholarly literature, this study uses Hoover and Pollard’s (1999) definition of hazing: “any activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group (such as a student club or team) that humiliates, degrades, abuses or endangers regardless of a person’s willingness to participate” (p. 8).

**Purpose of Hazing**

Under the premise that hazing rituals help groups maintain their existence, Keating et al. (2005) proposed that organizations use hazing rituals to preserve the status of the group, teach new members skills they will use once they are members of the group, and encourage members to become dependent upon the group. Cimino (2011) observed that many hazing activities have no benefit for the hazer—that is, the person or people initiating the hazing activity—but the activities are ways for prospective members to demonstrate that they are willing to endure much to achieve membership in the organization. Some fraternities use hazing to “toughen up” their
members. DeSantis (2007) explained that having “tough” members has multiple purposes, including intimidating rival fraternities and impressing members of elite sororities. Smith (2009) found that HWF members feel a connection between hazing and the value of hard work. Through these activities, organizations hope to create stronger, more loyal members.

Keating et al. (2005) also believed that hazing rituals function to maintain existing group practices, including reinforcing group hierarchies. Campo et al. (2005) differentiated between hazing activities, negative team-building and initiation activities (TBIs), and positive TBIs, and they explored factors that would help students leave an organization where they were being hazed as well as which factors enable students to stop a friend who is hazing other people. Cimino (2011) stated that the veteran member's dominance seems temporary, and completing a hazing process elevates the status of a newcomer. Additionally, Keating et al. (2005) asserted that when people experience hazing, they may develop a dependence on or attachment to the people who inflict the treatment.

Prevalence of Hazing

More undergraduate students reported that they had been hazing victims than admitted to committing hazing behaviors; fraternity members reported experiencing the highest number of hazing behaviors compared to other groups (Owen et al., 2008). Allan et al. (2019) stated that their study identified lower rates of hazing than previous studies (specifically Allan and Madden (2008) and Hoover and Pollard (1999)). They suggested that future studies try to identify what has contributed to the decrease in hazing; assessment data about strategy implementation and evaluation could provide insight into these changes (Allan et al., 2019). Further, the authors
recommended expanding this research to more diverse educational environments, as their study only included research universities (Allan et al., 2019).

In the study by Owen et al. (2008), the number of undergraduate students reporting that they had been victims of hazing (67.3% for “organizational harassment” and 34.8% for “harm to self and others”) was notably higher than the number of students who admitted to committing hazing behaviors (46.5% for “organizational harassment” and 22.2% for “harm to self and others”), which suggests that a small number of hazers are responsible for hazing a large group of newcomers. Furthermore, most respondents reported experiencing hazing indirectly. That is, they heard about hazing behaviors but had not been exposed to them in their groups, which caused the researchers to wonder if the prevalence of hazing might be exaggerated because a small number of events could be communicated to many students through social media or in-person conversations (Owen et al., 2008).

Sutton et al. (2000) found that although campus-based professionals could identify hazing behaviors, many did not admit that physical or psychological hazing behaviors were occurring in their communities. On the other hand, Massey and Massey (2017) found that one typical attitude students have toward hazing is that it happens but not to them. Similarly, other studies (Baier & Williams, 1983; Owen et al., 2008; Tollini & Wilson, 2010) have found that in many cases, students believe hazing is more severe in other groups than in their group. Owen et al. (2008) speculated that campus beliefs about the prevalence of hazing might be based on myths rather than facts, and the inaccurate information spreads as people continue sharing the same erroneous information over time.
Influential Factors of Hazing

Attitudes and Perspectives Toward Hazing

Scholarly research has documented how widely students’ attitudes and perspectives toward hazing vary based on many factors. Campo et al. (2005) observed that people affiliated with fraternities, sororities, or varsity athletic teams who believe that hazing increases group cohesion are more likely to report that they were hazed. Additionally, the perceived level of the harshness of the initiation may increase the importance that students ascribe to the organization. Keating et al. (2005) observed that participants who experienced uncomfortable inductions also emphasized other group members’ opinions. When members value difficult initiation processes, they do not report the behaviors to their institutions (Hart, 2020). The lack of reporting adds to the challenges of addressing the hazing culture in FSLOs (Hart, 2020).

In addition to increased commitment and valuation of the organization among new members, hazing can promote dependency among members. This dependency manifests itself socially, cognitively, and emotionally (Keating et al., 2005). McCready and Dahl (2022) indicated that when fraternities recruit new members, they may specifically seek students whose views on hazing are similar to their veteran members’ attitudes.

Sensemaking about hazing also varies considerably. In a study by Montague et al. (2008), participants in focus groups believed there was a threshold where hazing behavior is appropriate. However, discussion board posts in the same study indicated that most respondents did not see any appropriate hazing uses (Montague et al., 2008). Owen et al. (2008) found that when trying to understand the hazing that they experienced, people who are hazed tend to make sense of the events in a pro-hazing manner. Not surprisingly, as hazers committed more hazing acts, they
reported greater acceptance of hazing; among hazing victims, their attitudes toward hazing were also more positive as the number of hazing experiences increased (Owen et al., 2008). DeSantis (2007) and Richardson (2014) observed that stakeholders and administrators who have been hazed themselves were more unlikely to condemn hazing than those who were not hazed. Campo et al. (2005) proposed that people who engage in hazing have determined that joining the group and receiving the benefits of membership make the costs of hazing worth enduring. Similarly, Kimmel (2018) noted that many people begin to believe that passing through trauma makes them stronger.

On a Canadian campus that did not have fraternities or sororities, Massey and Massey (2017) found three central attitudes toward hazing: “It isn’t hazing or it doesn’t count as hazing,” “It is hazing, but it’s okay,” and “It happens, just not to me” (p. 54). In some cases, members might develop positive feelings about hazing as long as the activities do not cause significant harm. Many respondents did not classify activities as hazing unless participation was forced or the activity would cause harm; if organizations had a rationale for the activity, students did not identify those activities as hazing (Massey & Massey, 2017). While students identified some traditions, rites of passage, and team-building activities as hazing, they justified the hazing behaviors by identifying positive results of those activities (Massey & Massey, 2017).

Some participants in Massey & Massey’s (2017) study identified hazing behaviors that happened to other students but typically did not state that they had been hazed. Many of these students did not classify their experiences as hazing because they had chosen to participate rather than being forced (Massey & Massey, 2017). Similarly, Smith (2009) found that many students do not consider their experiences to be hazing. In Smith’s (2009) study, participants often felt
that the hazing activities they participated in were comparable to societal structures that create class distinctions, such as grade-level separations, internships, and entry-level jobs.

However, respondents in the study by Owen et al. (2008) indicated that they did not believe hazing has much value, and they believed hazing is a serious problem rather than a regular part of healthy membership experiences. Respondents reported that they disagreed that hazing makes newcomers stronger, allows new members to bond with each other, and helps newcomers prove that they are tough. They also disagreed that hazing behaviors are socially acceptable (Owen et al., 2008).

**Sociodemographic Traits**

Research has begun to delineate how some sociodemographic traits contribute to hazing. For example, Véliz-Calderón & Allan (2017) recommended additional hazing research about specific identities (race, sexual orientation, religious orientation) and contexts (high prestige versus lower prestige groups, social media). The researchers believed that these identities influence the way students define and perceive hazing (Véliz-Calderón & Allan, 2017). Additionally, they urged professionals to work with students to see how gender schemas can influence and even normalize certain hazing behaviors (Véliz-Calderón & Allan, 2017).

Scholarly literature has also identified specific connections among hazing, race, gender, and fraternity affiliation. For example, Tingley et al. (2018) studied fraternity and sorority members at a single university and examined attitudes about hazing by council. Of all fraternity and sorority members, White men and Interfraternity Council (IFC) members believed most strongly that new members should conform to hazing rules, which could also suggest complicity in hazing behaviors (Tingley et al., 2018). Similarly, Campo et al. (2005) identified three factors
that increased a student’s likelihood of participating in hazing: being male, joining a fraternity, and thinking that one’s friends approve of the hazing behavior. As this study focuses specifically on men in HWFs, this section contains literature about that population.

**Gender**

Compared to women, men have been significantly more likely to have experienced hazing behaviors when joining campus organizations, and they were more likely to report hazing other students in their organizations (Allan et al., 2019). Cimino’s (2011) vignettes revealed a difference between men and women; men desired more severe hazing than women did. This finding agrees with a previous study that found men less likely than women to believe that new member processes (“pledging”) ought to be positive and that men were more likely to ascribe value to conforming to pledge rules (Cokley et al., 2001). Campo et al. (2005) found that men were more likely than women to participate in hazing behaviors, as more female respondents recognized the potential for harm from hazing. Moreover, being male was one of three factors that researchers identified as significantly increasing the likelihood of participating in hazing behaviors (Campo et al., 2005). Noting that male students who support hazing may maintain those attitudes throughout their undergraduate experiences, McCready and Dahl (2022) suggested that fraternities increase their efforts to vet potential newcomers’ hazing motivations before extending invitations to join.

Another possibility is that young men may become entrenched in a culture of silence. Often, young men are so afraid of being marginalized or shunned that they do not speak up, even when they recognize that a behavior is wrong, dangerous, or against their personal values (Kimmel, 2018). This culture of silence becomes a culture of complicity; when bystanders do not
speak up, those engaging in the behavior believe that they can get away with it because others support them (Kimmel, 2018).

Using gender theory, Véliz-Calderón and Allan (2017) analyzed how students define hazing. The researchers recognized that college students might use gender schemas to help make sense of hazing behaviors. Specifically, the researchers believed that examining gender differences might enhance the current knowledge of why some students minimize or normalize hazing (Véliz-Calderón & Allan, 2017). For example, male participants in the study described hazing experiences that required displays of physical strength or excessive alcohol consumption (Véliz-Calderón & Allan, 2017). Additionally, male students reported feeling degraded by older members, yet believing that the friendships gained through their fraternity made all steps to the initiation, including the hazing, worthwhile (Véliz-Calderón & Allan, 2017). Finally, while both men and women recounted having the option to not participate in hazing activities, men in the study believed that refusing to participate would make them ineligible for membership (Véliz-Calderón & Allan, 2017).

**Race**

Parks et al. (2015) examined how race and sex impact hazing in FSLOs; they found that fraternity hazing manifests itself differently depending on the council and organization type. Specifically, violent acts of hazing occur more frequently in Black FSLOs than historically White FSLOs (Parks et al., 2015). The authors also noted that fraternities are more likely than sororities to engage in physically violent hazing practices (Parks et al., 2015).

When comparing White students and minority students, Allan et al. (2019) found that White students were more likely than minoritized students to agree that hazing is effective for
creating group bonds and that hazing is a not problem on their campus. However, White students were less likely to report hazing even if they believed it would make a difference. White students’ responses also suggested that being able to report hazing anonymously would not increase their likelihood of disclosing hazing behavior (Allan et al., 2019).

**Hazing in Fraternities**

Many fraternity leaders and university administrators have resolved themselves to the fact that hazing will persist as long as fraternities exist (DeSantis, 2007). Indeed, they recognize that hazing is a deep-rooted aspect of FSL culture, and they believe “that the best they can do is to implore chapters practicing it to do so more safely, less cruelly and abusively, and above all, as inconspicuously as possible” (DeSantis, 2007, p. 173). Studies have revealed that FSLO members and athletes report more exposure to hazing than other students (Allan et al., 2019; Allan & Madden, 2012; Campo et al., 2005; Owen et al., 2008). Compared to athletes, fraternity and sorority members in a study by Keating et al. (2005) reported experiencing more embarrassing or socially deviant activities. In contrast, athletes were likely to experience physical or painful hazing. While Campo et al. (2005) agreed that fraternities and sororities were the organizations most likely to engage in hazing activities, they also reported that FSLOs were more likely than other organizations to participate in positive team-building activities.

Students also recognize the close association between hazing and fraternity life. For example, when Tollini and Wilson (2010) studied negative stereotypes of fraternities on one college campus, two of five fraternities observed that hazing is a prevalent stereotype about fraternities, and they believed it is a particularly damaging stereotype because it discourages potential members from exploring fraternity life and impacts organizations’ ability to recruit new
members. However, the study participants felt that the stereotypes represented only a small portion of fraternity members or were false. Similar to Massey and Massey’s (2017) study, when participants identified hazing on their campus, it was always about organizations other than their own (Tollini & Wilson, 2010).

Students who are not affiliated with a fraternity or sorority have been documented as perceiving a greater risk of potential harm from hazing than fraternity and sorority members, who were more likely to believe that hazing activities are fun (Campo et al., 2005). Further, White IFC members in other studies have emphasized a preference for difficult pledging and initiation processes (Tingley et al., 2018). Cimino (2011) recognized that within fraternities, several hazing events might be spread out over several weeks, and the time between the events allows newcomers to either leave the organization or continue participating. This continued participation can solidify members’ commitment to the group. After enduring hazing as new members, initiates often believe it is their turn to inflict the same treatment they experienced (DeSantis, 2007).

Another group examined hazing behaviors and found that fraternity hazing manifests itself differently depending on the council and type of organization; specifically, a large national survey found that violent acts of hazing occur more frequently in BGLOs than predominately White fraternities and sororities (Parks et al., 2015). White fraternities ($n = 94$) significantly outnumber Black fraternities ($n = 9$), but White fraternities only have three times the number of reported hazing cases that Black fraternities have (Parks et al., 2015). In HWFs, physical hazing accounted for 16 percent of the total hazing cases, but in BGLOs, physical hazing was present in 68 percent of cases (Parks et al., 2015). While Black fraternities are perceived as being more
physically violent in their hazing practices, some sociologists have suggested that BGLOs might not be more violent than their White counterparts, but they are watched more carefully on and near college campuses than White fraternities (Parks et al., 2015).

Baier and Williams (1983) surveyed collegiate and alumni fraternity members from a single institution. They found that alumni members estimated that hazing occurred more often than collegians did, and alumni found hazing more acceptable than the collegians did. In addition, many respondents felt that their peers supported hazing more strongly than they did; even when they did not believe that hazing was purposeful and valuable, some participants reported voicing support for the continuation of hazing behaviors because they felt that their brothers supported it (Baier & Williams, 1983). Further, respondents said that hazing is a problem nationally and at their institution, but they did not believe it was a problem within their specific chapter (Baier & Williams, 1983).

A study by Richardson et al. (2012) used the Theory of Reasoned Action to evaluate how the severity of hazing contributes to students’ inclination to report hazing. The researchers studied members of social fraternities and sororities and their intent to report hazing by exposing study participants to hazing scenarios of varying levels of severity. As severity increased, students were more likely to report hazing behaviors. In the “not severe” condition, some students did not identify the behavior as hazing at all, but even moderate hazing scenarios significantly increased students’ intentions to report the behavior (Richardson et al., 2012).

McCreary et al. (2016) acknowledged that the college fraternity is a unique setting that influences moral judgment and disengagement in its members; their personal interests can affect their attitudes about hazing and their willingness to intervene in severe hazing situations. Using
vignettes, McCreary et al. (2016) assessed whether or not fraternity members differentiated between fraternity hazing and adolescent bullying. Specifically, McCreary et al. (2016) measured moral judgment, moral disengagement, and personal interest among fraternity members and non-members. They found that fraternity members were more likely to intervene in an adolescent bullying scenario than a hazing scenario, and they took longer to initiate an intervention than non-members in both types of scenarios.

Using an online survey, Roosevelt (2018) collected data from members of a single fraternity from 191 chapters to gain an understanding of which hazing behaviors members had experienced, their perception of hazing as a problem in their organization and on their campus, and their attitudes about behaviors identified as hazing. Respondents to the survey were skeptical about the role of hazing in building committed organizational members (Roosevelt 2018). However, Roosevelt (2018) acknowledged that undergraduate students often do not consider their low-risk new member activities to be hazing, and this conflation of buffoonery has created different understandings of hazing between students and campus professionals. A standard definition of hazing will be necessary if efforts to end hazing are to be meaningful.

**Leadership Status and Hazing**

Students who serve as leaders in their FSLOs may have different attitudes from other chapter members. While DeSantis (2007) believed that he had convinced student leaders that hazing is dangerous and not beneficial, he admitted that he had less success among the “rank-and-file brothers.” Schoper et al. (2020) commented that leaders would develop a more complex understanding of their world, which will increase the extent to which they “notice, consider,
question, and engage in their experiences” (p. 103). Thus, leaders may be more inclined than other members to challenge the status quo rather than continuing whatever was done to them.

**Alcohol Use in HWFs**

The connection between alcohol use and fraternity membership has been well-documented in scholarly research. Often, students who join FSLOs drank alcohol before they joined their chapters. For example, studies have found that students who are greatly involved in FSLOs were more likely to drink alcohol before college and experience greater increases in consumption in the first years of college (Capone et al., 2007; Caron et al., 2004).

Research has demonstrated that young men are more likely than young women to drink to excess (Addiction Center, 2021). In one study examining the drinking behaviors of intercollegiate athletes and FSL members, Meilman et al. (1999) found that FSL members have higher levels of involvement with drinking than intercollegiate athletes. Moreover, intercollegiate athletes who also joined FSLOs consumed three to four times as much alcohol and binge drank twice as frequently as students who were not affiliated with FSLOs or intercollegiate athletic teams (Meilman et al., 1999). Wechsler & Wuethrich (2002) reported that three-fourths of all students and 80 percent of male students who joined FSLOs were binge drinkers; further, the phenomenon of binge drinking appeared in White students but not Black, Hispanic, or Asian students. Noting that existing research had identified patterns of heavy drinking in fraternities but not offered much explanation of why the differences exist among chapters, McCready (2019) explored how masculine norm climates might contribute to differences in alcohol consumption. Following an analysis of survey responses using hierarchical
linear modeling (HLM), this study found that fraternity men's alcohol consumption varies significantly depending on the chapter context (McCready, 2019).

Heavy alcohol use is commonly involved in severe hazing in fraternities. Since the 1980s, there have been numerous deaths and injuries related to alcohol use and hazing in HWFs (Parks & Parisi, 2019). In 2017, four male fraternity new members died in alcohol-related hazing rituals (Nuwer, n.d.). Further, Parks et al. (2015) found that White fraternities \( n = 210 \) vastly outnumbered Black fraternities \( n = 16 \) with regard to the number of mental hazing, alcohol hazing, prank hazing, and sexual hazing cases reported. Parks and Parisi (2019) asserted that “young fraternity men are often – mistakenly – confident in their own invincibility,” (p. 4), which might suppress efforts to reform a culture that centers around excessive alcohol use in HWFs.

**Solutions for Hazing**

Finding a solution to end hazing on college campuses has presented many challenges in part because of the broad spectrum of hazing behaviors. Roosevelt (2018) emphasized the importance of prohibiting Type I (most severe) hazing not because it violates rules but because it causes harm to members. Rather than applying a disproportionate label of “hazing” to non-harmful activities, the researcher encouraged professionals to treat these activities as educational opportunities (Roosevelt, 2018). Further, the study urged stakeholders to focus on severing new-member activities from alcohol, as alcohol directly harms new members and impairs initiated members' judgment (Roosevelt, 2018). Over time, fraternal organizations and institutions of higher education have proposed and tested methods to stop hazing and prevent future hazing incidents. Policies and messages disseminated through authority figures, rapid response to
reported hazing, no tolerance for hazing, and leadership development to prevent hazing are a few examples (Campo et al., 2005). Other ideas have included offering direct support from the institution to hazing victims, increasing educational efforts about hazing, and making the university unwelcoming to hazing practices (Campo et al., 2005). Bystander intervention programs have also been effective for many institutions (Mallon, 2019).

Practitioners, researchers, and administrators must also recognize how students view hazing differently. Owen et al. (2008) found that, when asked about solutions to hazing, perpetrators (hazers) had more negative views of the solutions than non-perpetrators; however, perpetrators and non-perpetrators agreed that solutions developed within the group would be more effective than solutions from outside of the group. Thus, an organizational policy against hazing might more effectively address hazing than a policy or workshop from a college or university. Similarly, student involvement in addressing hazing could increase the effectiveness of programs and policies. Campo et al. (2005) suggested that an intervention developed starting with understanding students’ perceptions about stopping hazing would be more effective than an intervention that did not include student input. For example, students can help administrators understand why hazing occurs in an organization; while some groups look to uphold a tradition, others simply do not realize that their behaviors are hazing (Woody et al., 2020).

However, institutions must not rely too heavily on educational efforts alone. Campo et al. (2005) believed that efforts based primarily on education have not prevented or eliminated hazing. The researchers suggested that combining educational efforts with policy change and enforcement would be beneficial (Campo et al., 2005). Further, understanding students’ perceptions about stopping hazing would help with developing more effective solutions to hazing.
(Campo et al., 2005). After observing gender differences in hazing behaviors, Véliz-Calderón and Allan (2017) encouraged student affairs professionals to consider differentiating hazing prevention education and efforts by gender. Owen et al. (2008) felt that organizations and institutions should pilot social norms programs rather than continuing programs that primarily emphasize policy enforcement. Social norms programs could help change the chapter culture of HWFs that engage in hazing behaviors.

Additionally, there are several considerations for administrators and policymakers to take into account as they implement new policies and programs. For example, different organizations have varied cultural and historical backgrounds that impact how hazing manifests (Parks et al., 2015). Further, as individuals strive to make sense of their hazing experiences, they often demonstrate acceptance toward their experiences; thus, if they are to be effective, hazing laws and policies must acknowledge that accepting or consenting to hazing behaviors does not defend those behaviors (Owen et al., 2008). Finally, as they develop solutions and implement new measures to prevent hazing, colleges and universities must be mindful that different organizations have varying levels of resources and may require additional support from the institution to combat hazing (Cuyjet & Brown, 2020). There will not be a singular solution that works for all types of organizations, so administrators must tailor their approaches to their diverse audiences (Owen et al., 2008).

Institutional and organizational stakeholders must commit to sparking cultural change and supporting their students and members as they strive to eliminate hazing. For example, reporting hazing presents challenges for victims who are worried about revictimization or retaliation by hazing perpetrators and their FSLO chapters (Chaleunphonh & Giacalone, 2020;
Mallon, 2019). Research and anecdotal accounts have revealed the power of FSLOs. DeSantis (2007) argued that if these organizations can use their power for good, they “have the potential to create an even safer and more supportive climate for change than does society in general” (DeSantis, 2007, p. 222).

A common strategy of colleges and universities seeking to address hazing is to begin with fraternities, sororities, and varsity athletic teams (Campo et al., 2005). While hazing occurs in these groups, and it is crucial to address the behavior, hazing also happens in other types of organizations. Because first-year students report fewer experiences with hazing than upper-level students, a possible solution is to integrate educational and interventional efforts to end hazing into first-year programs (Campo et al., 2005). In addition, some hazing victims become isolated from other social groups and are afraid of being alone if they leave the group where they are being hazed. Some participants indicated that having supportive friends outside the organization would help them leave the hazing organization (Campo et al., 2005).

Beyond the campus, inter/national organizations must also emphasize how hazing affects their specific organizations (Cromwell & Pualwan, 2020). Through organizational rituals, members of FSLOs are bonded to each other as family (Cromwell & Pualwan, 2020). When the inter/national organization acknowledges that it must take responsibility and address hazing, members will receive messages from an organization that may have more significant meaning to them than their college or university.

Some research has recognized the importance of peer-to-peer relationships and interactions in disrupting hazing. While most young men do not engage in egregious behaviors, most of them also do not feel empowered to stop a potentially dangerous situation (Kimmel,
Further, men are more likely than women to feel pressured to engage in risky or dangerous activities such as hazing rituals (Addiction Center, 2021). Although Kimmel (2018) recognized that it is risky for young men to confront their peers, he also noted that when one person speaks up, others feel empowered to break their silence as well. While many young men do not directly engage in hazing, they also do not speak up or stop the behaviors they witness. Kimmel (2018) concluded that the culture of entitlement begins to dissolve when young men confront each other and prioritize standing up for what they believe is right.

**Culture**

In 2017, Florida State University suspended its FLSOs—55 fraternities and sororities—following an alcohol-related death of a freshman fraternity member and the arrest of another fraternity member with charges of selling cocaine (Reedy, 2017). At that time, the University President, John Thrasher, called for significant changes in the FSL system and stated, “For this suspension to end, there will need to be a new normal for Greek life on campus. They must participate in that culture” (Reedy, 2017).

While Kimmel (2018) believed that most young men are “good guys,” they are often surrounded by violence and other extreme expressions of masculinity as seen in elements of American culture. DeSantis (2007) similarly described how FSLOs reinforce gender roles that may “impede students’ intellectual and emotional growth and limit the range of possibilities open to them in their postcollege lives” (p. 221) more than any other factor. This study focuses specifically on the culture of an organization (HWF chapter) and the culture of the institution where it is situated.
Similar to hazing, there are many definitions of culture. Schein (2017) posed the following definition of culture:

the accumulated shared learning of [a] group as it solves its problems of external adaptation and internal integration; which has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, feel, and behave in relation to those problems.

This accumulated learning is a pattern or system of beliefs, values, and behavioral norms that come to be taken for granted as basic assumptions and eventually drop out of awareness (p. 6).

Culture influences organizations at multiple levels, such as how organizations achieve their purposes, exist in various environments, and manage their internal operations (Schein, 2017). Further, Schein (2017) asserted that culture provides structural stability for organizations, as the culture continues even as members leave.

**Chapter Culture**

An organization's culture is one of many factors that may contribute to hazing behaviors. Allan and Kerschner (2020) warned administrators not to categorize all fraternities together, as these groups have many differences in history and culture. Instead, they explained that “culture, race, gender, and other identity factors are vital factors to consider in any analysis of hazing behavior and in the design of response and prevention efforts” (Allan & Kerschner, 2020, p. 9). Often, newcomers to an organization do not gain access to central aspects of the culture until they have achieved permanent status in the group and learned the organization’s secrets (Schein, 2017).

Reflecting on how the culture of FSLOs develops, Cuyjet and Brown (2020) observed that “the prevalent culture in most Greek-letter organizations is a microcosm of the cultural characteristics of its members that were introduced to the group from the larger societal norms”
That is, broader norms influence the internal chapter culture of an FSLO. However, as organizations exist for longer durations, the members’ thoughts and emotions tend to become more similar (Schein, 2017).

Within institutions, the culture of FSLOs often varies depending on the shared assumptions and perceived status of the chapter in the institutional social structure. Schein (2017) described “cultural DNA,” which contributes to an organization’s identity and stability. Any attempts to change an organization’s culture must be mindful of the cultural DNA. Communication, trust, and teamwork are critical for the effective operation of organizations, so organizations may implement additional levels of hierarchy to manage the members as they grow (Schein, 2017).

**Institutional Culture**

Although FSLOs have formal structures for their internal operations, they must also consider the larger environments where they exist when making decisions (Schein, 2017). Chapters that haze their new members consider the extent to which the institution will tolerate their behaviors. As Schein (2017) explained, organizations can only engage in activities that “the larger culture affords, tolerates, or supports” (p. 181).

Colleges and universities must consider their broader culture rather than focusing on specific teams or organizations when determining approaches to terminate an institutional hazing. For example, administrative hearings for individuals or chapters do not permanently shift a campus culture that tolerates hazing (Kimbrough, 2020). Noting that targeted prevention efforts are necessary for addressing hazing in student organizations, Allan and Kerschner (2020) also recognized the importance of generating cultural shifts across an entire institution. That is,
integrating targeted efforts with a broader hazing prevention approach on campus will be critical to ending hazing in FSLOs and on campuses. Kimbrough (2020) believed that institutions seeking to end hazing must “have complete buy-in from the campus leadership” (p. 204), beginning with the president.

However, institutions that want sustained culture change must demonstrate the value of the change to their students. Groups with firmly rooted cultures and practices might not be open to culture change and may instead require complete dismantling (Schein, 2017). Institutions seeking to disrupt the hazing cycle must consider the unique traditions and relationships between the organization and the institution (Chaleunphonh & Giacalone, 2020). Moreover, culture changes will only persist if the members gain success and satisfaction from the new practices, so the institution must demonstrate how the new approach is more effective (Schein, 2017).

**Researching Sensitive Topics**

Due to its harmful nature, hazing is a sensitive research topic. Lee (1993) concisely defined “sensitive research” as “research which potentially poses a substantial threat to those who are or have been involved in it” (p. 4). Elaborating on this definition, Lee (1993) described three threats of sensitive research. The first, intrusive threat, refers to the disclosure of private, stressful, or sacred information. The second, deviance and social control, describes how study content may be stigmatizing or incrimination. Finally, political threats refer to how the research explores the interests of powerful people or institutions. Because hazing impacts individuals and broader systems, all three threats apply to hazing research. Sieber and Stanley (1988) noted that failing to study controversial topics due to their divisive nature is an “avoidance of responsibility” as “sensitive research addresses some of society’s most pressing social issues and
policy questions” (p. 55). However, researchers must be intentional about their research strategies as they examine sensitive topics.

Because of the various threats, researchers studying sensitive topics may encounter methodological problems and difficulties accessing the study population (Lee, 1993; Lee & Renzetti, 1990). Once the researcher has connected with the study population, they must work to build trust with the study participants. Studying “literate, articulate, self-conscious people with the power, resources and expertise to protect their reputation” (p. 77) may present additional challenges for researchers (Punch, 1986). Common strategies to connect with this population include “building rapport, reciprocity, appropriate and sensitive use of open questions, self-disclosure, ensuring a comfortable environment and appropriate timing” (Elmir et al., 2011, p. 16). Researchers must be mindful of potential discomfort that their participants might feel and strive to maintain a supportive, respectful environment for their participants (Elmir et al., 2011).

Further, researchers must consider how their ethical responsibilities to their participants are elevated compared to relatively innocuous study topics (Lee, 1993). Even when trust is established, researchers must remain aware that the threatening nature of the study may lead participants to conceal information, which limits “the availability and quality of data with usually adverse consequences for levels of reliability and validity” (Lee, 1993, p. 2). These considerations are critical during data analysis.

Beyond the participants, researchers may also shape their studies by considering the relationship between the topic and its social context (Lee, 1993). Particularly in organizations where culture and traditions inform members’ identities, participants may feel that the researchers implicitly threaten the organization and may take extra care to protect how they are

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portrayed in research (Lee, 1993; Schein, 2017). Researchers ultimately have the ethical responsibility to consider the ramifications of their work, including how outsiders might distort or misrepresent the findings and what the consequences of identifying the organization might be (Lee, 1993; Schein, 2017).

**Women Researching Men**

Although female researchers are multifaceted and complex, gender is an especially noticeable difference when women enter male-dominated environments. While the gender difference presents obstacles to establishing rapport with participants and obtaining reliable results in an interview setting, overcoming these challenges is possible (Williams & Heikes, 1993). At times, women studying men reinforce gender norms by being helpful, understanding, attentive to their participants, and interested in their participants’ experiences (Holmgren, 2013).

**Accessing the Research Setting**

Often, female researchers face challenges gaining access to male-dominated research settings (Easterday et al., 1977). This reluctance to admit a female researcher may stem from a belief that the findings of the study will not be relevant to the participants. However, some groups and organizations express concern about the study findings being used to paint them in a negative light (Horn, 1997). As a result, groups with little to gain from a research study may not feel inclined to participate.

Once admitted to conduct their research, female researchers often remain marginalized in male-dominated environments. However, this marginality has its advantages. For instance, Gurney (1985) felt that her marginalized position allowed her to view the environment where she did fieldwork from a more detached and critical perspective.
Interviewer-Respondent Dynamics

Much of the published scholarship about women researching men describes female researchers’ experiences doing fieldwork in a male-dominated environment (e.g., Gurney (1985)). However, studies that use interviews also highlight gender differences between the researcher and participants. Mac an Ghaill and colleagues (2013) explained that interviews are simultaneously “an opportunity to display masculinity, but also a space where masculinities are under threat” (p. 78). Further, the dynamics of online interviews may differ from in-person interviews. Male interview participants may attempt to engage with the researcher outside of the study, inappropriately sexualize the researcher to assert control, or disrupt the professionalism of the interview in other ways (Mac an Ghaill et al., 2013; Schwalbe & Wolkomir, 2001).

Throughout their study, researchers must demonstrate to their participants that they are competent and trustworthy (Horn, 1997). Specifically in situations where the interviewer and respondent have different gender identities, the researcher and participant co-construct the gendered nature of the interview (Holmgren, 2013). Williams and Heikes (1993) suspected that study participants are likely to consider gender differences in an interview setting, explaining that “voluntary research participants will likely try to avoid offending or threatening the interviewer with unflattering or socially undesirable opinions and will tend to frame responses in ways designed to minimize this possibility” (p. 288). Similarly, Horn (1997) noted that male participants might not share information with female researchers when they are unsure that a woman could handle the full details; when this occurs, the interview data may be less rich and deep.
In interview settings, women researchers may find that they are walking a fine line between holding a casual conversation and conducting a formal interview (Horn, 1997). Female researchers must balance being non-threatening to their participants with demonstrating that they are competent professionals (Gurney, 1985). Some women who research men make concerted efforts to appear harmless to their participants (Horn, 1997). It is possible that a female researcher’s harmlessness will give her access to information that participants would not share with a male researcher (Easterday et al., 1977). For example, Horn (1997) described using “confessions of ignorance” to indicate that she was not setting up her participants, but her perceived ignorance also led participants to share more shocking stories during their interviews.

While appearing harmless to gain access to a research setting has its advantages, being non-threatening may create challenges for female researchers as they develop and maintain rapport with the study participants (Gurney, 1985). Lefkowich (2018) explained that “intentionally embodying certain feminine characteristics associated with nurturance, incompetence, or weakness can perpetuate the harmful stereotypes about women who discredit their expertise as researchers” (p. 4). One dilemma that women researchers studying men face is how (or whether) to respond to sexist or sexualized remarks from their participants. In some cases, male participants may flirt with female researchers to demonstrate vulnerability or a need to share their personal experiences (Mac an Ghaill et al., 2013). While female researchers may challenge or ignore the comments, either response “can have detrimental effects on the research” (Easterday, 1997, p. 341). Horn (1997) reported that she typically smiled or laughed because she did not want to alienate her participants by rejecting them. Gurney (1985) noted that respondents might lose respect for female researchers who do not respond negatively or correct a blatantly
sexual comment, but reacting too strongly may damage the rapport between researcher and participant.

Interestingly, some women researchers’ rationale for tolerating comments or treatments that make them feel uncomfortable sounds similar to hazing victims’ rationale for continuing in organizations that mistreat them. For example, Gurney (1985) wrote, “I was always the polite and courteous researcher who tolerated much and said little. I occasionally wondered if I was betraying my beliefs and values, but I allowed it to continue” (p. 56). Because she felt that the risks of confronting her participants outweighed the potential benefits, she explained, “I therefore tolerated things which made me uncomfortable, but convinced myself they were part of the sacrifices a researcher must make” (Gurney, 1985, p. 56).

**Theoretical Framework**

This study is grounded on two theories. First, Pascarella’s (1985) General Model for Assessing Change frames student development and describes how students’ background characteristics affect their development in college. Second, this study uses Organizational Culture Theory (OCT) to explore how shared norms evolve and influence organizations.

Pascarella’s (1985) General Model for Assessing Change proposed that college students develop and grow differently depending on various factors, including the student’s background and pre-college traits. This model also asserted that an institution's structure and organization influence how and with whom students socialize. In addition, Pascarella (1985) also recognized that subenvironments within an institution might influence how students learn. Thus, students’ development in college is a product of individual, organizational, and institutional traits and experiences.
Schein (2004) noted that an “intriguing aspect of culture as a concept is that it points us to phenomena that are below the surface, that are powerful in their impact but invisible and to a considerable degree unconscious” (p. 8). As a result, studying organizational culture presents many challenges. However, Tierney (1988) provided a framework for the specific application of OCT to higher education. Specifically, this framework offers suggestions for how higher education managers and researchers could diagnose their institutional culture and address their cultural issues. Cultural issues do not exist in isolation but are instead influenced by multiple levels and facets of campus life. By utilizing OCT, this study acknowledged and sought to understand how the culture of institutions and individual fraternity chapters impacts members’ attitudes about hazing.

**Contribution of the Present Study**

There has been general research about fraternal organizations and research specific to sororities, Black Greek life organizations (BGLOs), and cultural GLOs. However, there is a gap in empirical literature related explicitly to HWFs (Parks et al., 2015). As more severe instances of hazing from majority White organizations, including deaths, are emerging in national news, it is essential to examine what is happening behind the fraternity house doors where White fraternity men reign.

This study explored culture in HWF chapters to understand how chapter culture contributes to members’ attitudes about hazing. Answering the study’s research questions helps address gaps in the existing literature by including a comprehensive analysis of many demographic and background traits of HWF members; existing studies have not been able to disaggregate data to the same extent as this study. Further, existing literature about hazing has
rarely examined how hazing motivations are affected by individual members' characteristics and experiences (McCready & Dahl, 2022). This study’s cultural focus also provided a way to examine hazing from a new perspective.

Moreover, few studies about hazing have utilized qualitative methods such as interviews or focus groups. This study’s explanatory sequential mixed methods approach allowed for a deeper analysis of individual student experiences than previous studies have presented. Whereas survey data provided an overview of student characteristics and chapter culture, the interviews offered deeper insight into the experiences of students from multiple HWF chapters.
CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Despite numerous tragedies and student deaths caused by hazing, fraternity hazing remains a concern for FSLOs and higher education more broadly (Quintana, 2019). As higher education institutions respond to hazing incidents and seek to dismantle the behaviors, there has been little empirical research to inform their interventions, policies, and programs (Biddix et al., 2014). Moreover, much of the published research is aggregated, making it difficult for colleges and universities to understand the nuances of student experiences within different organizational types, much less individual fraternity chapters. While some studies (Keating et al., 2005; Owen et al., 2008) have included several demographic traits for group comparisons, this study extended previous work by collecting substantial data about student and chapter characteristics.

As stated in Chapter 1, the purpose of this study was to understand how organizational culture, such as chapter culture and institutional culture, influence hazing among various HWF chapters. This study explored student experiences and the organizational culture of fraternity chapters at a single institution. Using an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, the first phase of this study utilized a quantitative electronic survey, and individual interviews followed in the qualitative phase. Additionally, this study sought to answer six research questions:

1. Based on the current sample, how well do the three existing organizational culture scales (teamwork and collaboration, climate and morale, belonging and commitment) measure HWF members’ perspectives on chapter culture?

2. What is the underlying structure of the survey items that measure institutional culture and HWF members’ attitudes about hazing?
3. How do chapter culture, institutional culture, and hazing experienced as new members contribute to HWF members’ attitudes about hazing?

4. How do undergraduate members of HWFs describe the culture of their chapters and institutions?

5. How do undergraduate members of HWFs describe the prevalence of hazing in their chapters and within their institutions?

6. How does organizational culture (chapter culture and institutional culture) relate to hazing in HWF chapters?

**Research Setting**

This study took place at a public doctoral university in the Southeastern United States. This institution is classified as a “Very High Research Activity (R1)” institution. It is the flagship institution for the state as well as a land-grant, sea grant, and space grant institution. Additionally, the university fields teams in Division I sports, and the athletics program—“big-time sports”—is a significant aspect of the institutional culture.

As a presence on campus for more than 150 years, FSLOs are also significant players in campus culture. In fall 2021, the institution enrolled more than 12,000 male undergraduate students, and 16 percent (1,937) were members of one of 16 IFC fraternities. Chapter sizes range from 16 to 189 members, with the median chapter size being 131. Median counts of active and new members were 87 and 41, respectively. Of the fraternities that comprised the campus IFC in fall 2021, the oldest was chartered in the 1860s, and the most recent was chartered in the 2010s. However, chapters have been removed from campus and rechartered later; fraternities may be
removed or suspended from campus due to low membership or violations of organizational or institutional policy, among numerous other reasons.

In 2017, a student named Sam Clark (pseudonym) died from alcohol hazing in his fraternity. Over the last few decades, two students have died from hazing at this university, and reports of hazing incidents continue to occur. Further, the university has suspended multiple fraternities for hazing and other disciplinary reasons. However, it does not seem that hazing is present to the same degree in all fraternity chapters; some chapters do not engage in hazing at all. This study examined cultural differences among HWF chapters and described how students’ demographic traits and chapters’ traits and culture might impact the prevalence of severe hazing in these groups.

**Research Design**

Because it was predetermined to utilize multiple methods, this study was a fixed mixed methods study. I used an explanatory sequential design; that is, the quantitative portion of the study preceded the qualitative portion (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The study's initial quantitative phase provided a general understanding of students’ backgrounds, HWF chapter traits, and experiences with hazing. Then, the qualitative data built on the quantitative results to help explain the findings from the study's first phase (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Previous research has applied this design to studies of college preparatory programs’ effectiveness (Knaggs et al., 2015), workplace experiences of academics working outside of their home countries (Camacho, 2020), the impact of transformational leaders in engineering schools (Al-Mansoori & Koç, 2019), and barriers that first-year community college STEM students face (Wang et al., 2020).
Quantitative Phase

Hypothetical Conceptual Model

For the quantitative phase of the study, I developed a hypothetical conceptual model (Figure 3.1) that presents relationships among multiple aspects of a student’s background and the HWF chapter's culture. Allan and Kerschner (2020) noted that identity factors, including culture, race, and gender, should be included in both analyzing hazing behaviors and designing hazing prevention efforts and responses to hazing incidents. Unlike past studies, this study also examined numerous elements of students’ backgrounds, such as other family members in FSLOs, their reasons for joining an HWF, and how long they have been fraternity members. Further, this survey asked respondents to report their fraternity affiliation so the analysis could differentiate responses among HWF chapters.

First, the model explores students’ background characteristics and how they relate to severe hazing experiences in an HWF chapter. The model proposes a relationship between students’ backgrounds and three areas: individual beliefs and attitudes, chapter culture, and severe hazing behaviors experienced as new members. Individuals may be inclined to participate in or avoid severe hazing based on their backgrounds. Similarly, students’ backgrounds influence their beliefs and attitudes about hazing. Additionally, individuals bring unique traits to their fraternities that contribute to their chapter’s culture.

Similar to individual backgrounds, the characteristics of an HWF influence the chapter’s culture and the likelihood of engaging in severe hazing. Hazing behaviors may manifest differently depending on the age and size of the chapter. Further, the length of the new member
period and fraternity housing facilities may change the nature of hazing activities that an HWF engages in.

Organizational culture, which the model proposes to be built upon individual backgrounds and chapter characteristics, influences the remaining areas of the model. In this study, I operationalized “organizational culture” as “chapter culture.” This distinction refers to the specific HWF chapter rather than the inter/national HWF broadly. The model hypothesizes that organizational culture directly affects severe hazing behaviors in HWFs. However, the

Figure 3.1. Hypothetical Conceptual Model
model also suggests that organizational culture contributes to severe hazing behaviors by affecting individual beliefs and attitudes.

**Survey Instrument**

The electronic survey instrument in this study was developed using the Qualtrics platform and was distributed to participants through their institutional e-mail accounts. Before proceeding to the survey, respondents reviewed and agreed to consent language. Scholarly literature has indicated that students are more likely to answer questions about sensitive or embarrassing topics on a web survey as opposed to a paper survey (Pealer et al., 2001). Further, electronic survey completion times have been lower than traditional paper surveys (Pealer et al., 2001). Finally, electronic surveys simplify data entry and reduce errors during the data analysis stage (Pealer et al., 2001).

Previous research has identified a disconnect between what students classify as hazing and how their institutions define hazing (Allan et al., 2019; Allan & Madden, 2008, 2012; Hoover & Pollard, 1999). Thus, several studies using surveys did not use the term “hazing” when asking students to describe their personal experiences or behaviors in organizations. Following the examples of previous research, this study also refrained from using the term “hazing” when asking students about specific behaviors they encounter in their fraternities.

Additionally, the study was designed more broadly to be about members’ overall experiences rather than only about hazing. Lee (1993) noted that gradually posing several less threatening questions can be an effective approach for studying sensitive topics. Thus, I embedded questions about members’ experiences with hazing among items about their background, fraternity experience, and perceptions of the institution.
Scales

In the quantitative phase, the survey instrument contained extensive questions about demographic information and organizational information. As demonstrated in the study by Campo et al. (2005), college students’ experiences with hazing are intricate and complex. A strength of several previous studies has been the ability to distinguish among many demographic characteristics. For example, Keating et al. (2005) distinguished between gender, class year, and organization type for new and initiated members. Similarly, Owen et al. (2008) included questions about students’ organizational affiliation, which allowed the researchers to examine results between chapters and councils. Collecting demographic and organizational information allowed me to make meaningful comparisons between individuals and groups represented in the study and helped develop the interview protocol for the qualitative portion of the study. Because culture is a function of group and individual behaviors (Schein, 2017), I needed to gather information about the chapter as well as individual members.

The survey similarly sought to understand the effect of the closer environment, the fraternity chapter. The survey included scales about chapter characteristics, chapter culture, institutional culture, students’ attitudes about hazing and hazing interventions, and students’ experiences with hazing during their new member process. Observing that individual and institutional factors both impact student experiences in college, Hwang (2002) asserted that a student’s major or department would influence students more immediately than the institution. As members become more committed to an organization, their personal goals may become the same as the organization’s objectives (Schein, 2017). Similarly, a fraternity chapter may have a more significant influence on students than the institution. The way that chapters treat new
members and cultivate a sense of teamwork and belonging may contribute to a chapter culture that supports hazing.

**Chapter Culture.** The culture of an HWF chapter is central to the hypothetical conceptual model for this study. The hypothetical model proposes that individual and chapter characteristics contribute to chapter culture, and chapter culture impacts individual beliefs and attitudes, institutional culture, and severe hazing behaviors that new fraternity members experience. Schein (2017) warned that culture is such a broad concept that researchers must have specific goals in mind; otherwise, assessing culture can quickly become “a vast bottomless pit” (p. 81) if there is not a clear focus on specific issues within the organization. In this study, I used existing scales of organizational culture to measure and analyze chapter culture.

Glaser et al. (1987) designed the Organizational Culture Survey (OCS) to measure aspects of organizational culture, which contained 31 questions over six scales. Although the six scales in the survey do not encompass all dimensions of organizational culture, Glaser et al. (1987) believed they “are central to any construction of organizational culture, around which rituals develop and stories evolve” (p. 174). Glaser et al. (1987) described teamwork as coordinated efforts and interpersonal communication, and they described climate and morale as “reported feelings about work conditions, motivation, general atmosphere, and organizational character” (p. 194). In a study of multiple organizations, the researchers found each scale to be internally reliable with Cronbach’s alpha values above .8: Teamwork & Conflict (α = .87), Climate & Morale (α = .84), Information Flow (α = .82), Involvement (α = .86), Supervision (α = .91), and Meetings (α = .89). The survey instrument in this study examined aspects of the chapter culture of HWFs by adopting items from the Teamwork & Conflict and Climate & Morale scales.
of the OCS. I changed all mentions of “People I work with” in the OCS to “Members of my chapter,” and I replaced “This organization” with “My chapter.”

Additionally, the management of FSLOs differs from traditional organizations because FSLOs report to the institutions that house them as well as their inter/national headquarters. Thus, I altered the “Labor and management have a productive working relationship” item from the Teamwork & Conflict scale to two items: “My chapter has a productive working relationship with SU” and “My chapter has a productive working relationship with its inter/national headquarters.” Because I did not include several of the items about conflict management in my survey, I refer to this scale as Teamwork and Collaboration. I retained all five items from the Climate & Morale scale on the OCS and added three items about diversity to assess additional aspects of the chapter culture. Specifically, these items examined the extent to which they believe their chapter is accepting of different races, religions, and sexual orientations.

Additionally, I used items from the revised Three-Component Model (TCM) of Commitment by Meyer et al. (1993). The TCM measures organizational commitment using three scales: affective commitment (desires), normative commitment (obligations), and continuance commitment (costs). Allen and Meyer (1996) examined the internal consistency of the TCM scales and reported the reliabilities in multiple studies. Across the studies, Cronbach’s Alpha was greater than or equal to 0.65, with most being greater than 0.70. The median reliabilities were $\alpha = .85$ (affective), $\alpha = .79$ (continuance), and $\alpha = .73$ (normative) (Allen & Meyer, 1996). I altered the TCM’s 7-point Likert scale to a 5-point Likert scale to match other items in the survey. Similar to items from the OCS, I changed mentions of “my organization” or “this organization” to “my chapter.” I also modified any items that would need to be reverse-scored to avoid
confusion for survey respondents. For example, rather than “I do not feel like ‘part of the family’ in my chapter,” my survey item read, “I feel like ‘part of the family’ in my chapter.” Finally, the revised TCM scales had six items each, but I only included three or four items per scale in my survey to reduce the overall survey length.

**Institutional Culture.** I created two scales to measure institutional culture, the Best Interests scale and the Hazing Policies and Resources scale. The Best Interests scale was based on items from the Fraternity and Sorority Experience Survey (Piazza Center, n.d.) that asks about members’ perceptions of relationships with different groups and stakeholders in fraternity/sorority life. The Fraternity and Sorority Experiences Survey asks fraternity and sorority leaders to rate their level of agreement that their chapter has a good relationship with several groups, but I wanted to understand the extent to which all members feel supported by various stakeholders. For the Hazing Policies and Resources items, I wanted to understand student perceptions of hazing policies and resources that had been published in scholarly literature. Campo et al. (2005) cited policy change, educational efforts, and institutional support for hazing victims as past examples of changes designed to curb or eliminate hazing. The items I designed for the Hazing Policies and Resources scale asked about the effectiveness of institutional policies at preventing hazing in fraternities and other organizations, the ability of staff and administrators to stop hazing, the ability of staff and administrators to address major hazing incidents, and institutional approaches to enforcing hazing policies.

**Attitude towards Hazing.** Individuals possess a variety of beliefs and attitudes surrounding hazing. The survey instrument sought to measure the extent to which respondents recognize hazing. Additionally, the survey examined how students rationalize hazing and what
they perceive to be the reasons for and effects of hazing. Based on research that examines students’ rationalizations for persisting in organizations that haze them (Campo et al., 2005; Keating et al., 2005; Massey & Massey, 2017; Montague et al., 2008; Véliz-Calderón & Allan, 2017), I developed questions to determine how respondents rationalize hazing. This survey uses Roosevelt’s (2018) scale to assess students’ ratings of the utility of hazing. Additionally, the survey asks respondents the extent to which they consider the nine outcome behaviors identified by Roosevelt (2018) to be severe hazing.

### Hazing Experiences as New Members

The variable “severe hazing behaviors experienced as new members” measured the number of hazing behaviors that members encountered during their new member processes. Without explicitly referring to the behaviors as hazing, the survey asked students to report the frequency at which they experienced each behavior during their new member period, ranging from “never” to “more than 10 times.” Lee (1993) recommended asking about the frequency of sensitive incidents rather than asking whether or not they occurred. This scale included 17 behaviors with varying levels of severity.

### Pilot Study

In June 2021, I conducted a pilot study of the survey. Current collegiate members, recent alumni, and fraternity/sorority professionals took the survey and offered suggestions for improvement. Participants in the pilot study suggested additional hazing activities to address and identified areas of the survey that needed clarification.

### Data Collection

The survey was developed and distributed through Qualtrics. Administration launched in September 2021 and was scheduled to end in October 2021. However, the survey administration
remained open through March 4, 2022. While the original plan was to leave the survey open for four weeks, participant recruitment presented several challenges. Specifically, I could not obtain a full list of IFC fraternity members’ names and e-mail addresses until February 2022. I contacted the IFC Advisor in July 2021, and the IFC Advisor shared a list containing the e-mail addresses of the 16 fraternity chapter presidents and the IFC president. I contacted each president on the list and requested to visit a chapter meeting early in the fall 2021 semester to promote the study. From my 17 e-mails, I received responses from five chapter presidents and the IFC president; four chapter presidents and the IFC president agreed to let me come speak, one chapter president declined my request, and 11 chapter presidents did not respond. In September and October, I attended one chapter meeting and one IFC meeting over Zoom and visited two chapters in person. Only two of the three chapters I visited participated in the survey. None of the IFC representatives completed the survey or appeared to share information about the study with their chapters, as I received no responses from other fraternities within two weeks of my visit.

After the FSL Office could not provide a list of IFC fraternity members’ email addresses, I contacted the Dean of Students and the Senior Student Affairs Officer to ask for assistance with obtaining the list or promoting my study. The Dean of Students responded that they would not be able to provide a list to me but would be willing to promote my study. I provided a digital graphic, QR code, and link to the survey. Two weeks before the survey closed, the Dean of Students shared my request with the FSL Director, who agreed to promote the study. The FSL Director contacted the chapter presidents to encourage them to complete the survey and have a chance to win the chapter-wide incentive. However, the FSL Director’s outreach yielded no
additional responses. The FSL Office did not have a way to message all HWF members at SU at once, and at the time, the FSL Office did not have sufficient staff to handle the request.

In December 2021, I attended the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors (AFA) Annual Meeting in Dallas, TX. I used the conference app, Whova, to seek connections with staff members of fraternities with chapters on SU’s campus. I attempted to schedule meetings with representatives of each fraternity, and I prepared letters with my business card and information about the study. Connections from this conference yielded no responses initially, and outreach following the conference was unsuccessful.

However, one suggestion I received during a meeting with a fraternity staff member at AFA was to check fraternities’ social media accounts. At that time in the academic year, organizations were announcing their executive officers for the next year, which would offer names of students I could contact and ask to share information about the study with their members. I looked at Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts and pulled names from posts dating back to fall 2019. In addition to announcing their officers, some fraternities spotlighted a “Brother of the Month” or listed their members who made the Dean’s List or President’s List the previous semester. I added each of these names to a spreadsheet. Further, I looked at who commented on the Instagram posts and saw that many members had their first and last name, fraternity affiliation, and anticipated graduation year in the Instagram profiles (bios), so I was able to identify other members. Through searching the student newspaper by fraternity chapter names, I found several additional names of HWF members. Finally, I visited chapter websites to see if they listed chapter officers or any other collegiate members. After looking up the names in the SU directory, I had 317 e-mail addresses of students who were still enrolled at SU. In late
December 2021, I sent survey e-mails through Qualtrics with the subject line “Fraternity Culture Study - Chance to win $50,” which yielded 15 additional survey responses. Additionally, four students expressed interest in participating in the qualitative phase. Once I recognized that Qualtrics e-mails are routed to the “Other” folder in Outlook, I removed the students who responded to the Qualtrics e-mail and repeated the outreach directly from my university e-mail using the mail merge feature in Microsoft Word. This follow-up yielded 20 additional survey responses, and three students expressed interest in participating in the qualitative phase of the study.

In February 2022, I received a complete list of HWF members from the Registrar’s Office. Throughout February, I sent weekly reminders to students who had not completed the survey. After closing data collection on March 4, 2022, I cleaned the survey data. I started with 492 cases but removed 15 cases where people did not consent, 141 cases where participants answered less than 10% of the questions, and 66 cases where participants did not answer beyond the demographic items. The final dataset contained 270 cases.

**Description of Sample**

The survey sample included 270 current HWF members at SU. Using individual students as the unit of analysis allows researchers to examine the influence of the college environment on individuals’ behaviors (Pascarella, 1985). As shown in Table 3.1, all participants identified as male, and most (85.2%, n = 219) reported “heterosexual or straight” as their sexual orientation. The respondents ranged from 18 to 24 years old. While various races are represented among the HWFs at SU, most members identify as White (88.1%, n = 238) and non-Hispanic (87.8%, n = 237). Two-thirds (66.7%, n = 180) of the survey respondents were in-state students; the sample
includes students from rural areas (5.9%, n = 16), small cities or towns (32.2% n = 87), suburbs near a large city (43.3%, n = 117), and large cities (18.5%, n = 50). Additionally, the survey respondents represented a mix of freshmen (21.1% n = 57), sophomores (25.2%, n = 68), juniors (27.8%, n = 75), and seniors (25.9%, n = 70). Politically, the survey respondents largely identified as “conservative” (45.9%, n = 124) or “very conservative” (10.7%, n = 29), though about a third identified as “neither liberal nor conservative” (34.1%, n = 92).

The sample included students from each of the colleges within the university. The largest colleges were Business (31.9%, n = 86), Engineering (22.2%, n = 60), and Humanities and Social Sciences (13.3%, n = 36). More than half of the members in the sample (60.8%, n = 164) aspire to earn a graduate degree, and most members (85.5%, n = 231) report that most of their grades at SU have been a “B” or higher. Further, almost all the survey respondents (98.1%, n = 265) are enrolled at SU full-time (12 or more credit hours).

Most members (72.2%, n = 195) reported that both of their parents graduated from college, though 21.2% (n = 39) said one parent graduated from college, and 6.3% (n = 17) said neither parent graduated from college. Survey respondents were asked to estimate their parents’ annual income, and approximately two-thirds (65.6%, n = 177) of members reported a family income of $100,000 or more. Notably, 50 students (18.5%) reported family incomes of $250,000 or more, and 50 students (18.5%) left the family income question blank or answered that they did not know their family income. Although 83.6% of students (n = 225) reported that they are not financially independent, over half of students (58.5%, n = 158) have at least one job. Among students who work, about three-fourths (74.7%, n = 118) work 20 hours a week or less.
Table 3.1. Demographic Characteristics of the Survey Sample \((n = 270)\)

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>%</th>
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<td>19</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>10.7</td>
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</table>

The sample included HWF members who had just joined their fraternity (fall 2021) and members who had been involved for nine or more semesters. Survey respondents indicated that networking (52.6%, n = 142) and meeting fraternity members once they arrived at SU (51.9%, n = 140) were the biggest influences on their decisions to join a fraternity. Additionally, most (69.6%) members reported that another family member joined a fraternity or sorority before they did, with the father being the most frequent response (41.9%, n = 113). Generally, members joined in the fall semester (92.3%, n = 240), and the sample included a range of pledge/new member class sizes and total chapter sizes. Most members (75.6%, n = 204) had never considered leaving the fraternity/sorority community at SU. About half (47.4%, n = 128) reported that they had held a leadership position in their chapters, and about a tenth (9.3%, n = 25) indicated that they had been involved with the Interfraternity Council (IFC) at SU.
Table 3.2. Fraternity Experiences of the Survey Sample (n = 270)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What influenced your decision to join a fraternity? (select all that apply)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>52.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting fraternity members once I arrived at SU</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>51.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting fraternity members before I went to college</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>31.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends from my high school joined a fraternity</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic support</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philanthropy opportunities</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community service opportunities</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester Joined Their Fraternity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2017</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2018</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2019</td>
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<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2019</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2020</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2020</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2021</td>
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<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2021</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pledge/New Member Class Size</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-19</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
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<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 or more</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISSING</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Chapter Size</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-50</td>
<td>32</td>
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<td>51-75</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-100</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101-125</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>24.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126-150</td>
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<td>151-175</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>176-200</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.6</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>$n$</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than 200</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did any other members of your family join a sorority or fraternity before you? (select all that apply)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, father</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>41.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, mother</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>68.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, grandparent</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, sister</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, brother</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, other</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Including the current semester, how many semesters have you been active in your fraternity?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>15.9</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 or more</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISSING</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever considered leaving the fraternity/sorority community at SU?</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>75.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you currently considering leaving the fraternity/sorority community at SU?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISSING</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>75.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you held any leadership positions in your chapter?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>47.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>52.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you served as an executive officer (e.g., President, Vice President, Treasurer) for your chapter?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISSING</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>52.6</td>
</tr>
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</table>

(table cont’d)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you been involved with the Interfraternity Council at SU?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>90.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you held any position(s) with the Interfraternity Council at SU?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISSING</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>90.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Data Analysis**

After collecting the survey data, I used Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28 to check for any data entry errors and address missing data issues. The questions were missing between 0.4 and 17.0% of the data. I conducted Little’s Missing Completely at Random (MCAR) test and determined that the data were MCAR: \( \chi^2 = 4750.142, df = 4766, p = .562 \).

For missing data, I used the multiple imputation feature in SPSS. Next, I explored the data to gain a preliminary understanding of the survey responses, beginning with descriptive analyses of the demographic questions (to get an idea of who completed the survey) and the significant variables. I also assessed the reliability of the scales in the survey (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

Once I prepared the dataset, I used exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and path analysis to explore the relationship among the culture and hazing scales in the survey. I used EFA to reveal the structure of the constructs in the survey items and CFA to confirm that the results of this survey adequately measured chapter culture in this population. Finally, I revised the hypothesized model and used path analysis to explore the relationships between chapter culture and hazing in HWFs.
Analyzing the survey responses helped me determine which results required further exploration in the study’s qualitative phase. I paid particular attention to any unclear, surprising, or unexpected results that needed clarification (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Additionally, I looked at any outliers or extreme results, as they could offer insight into the characteristics of students who reported experiencing more types of hazing as new members (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

**Credibility and Dependability**

To check for reliability (the consistency and stability of scores over time), I computed Cronbach’s Alpha for each scale (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This coefficient examines the interrelatedness of items designed to measure the same construct and partitions the variance into true and error (Netemeyer et al., 2003). Cronbach’s Alpha values range from 0 to 1, with higher values being more favorable but 0.70 being considered adequate (Netemeyer et al., 2003).

Additionally, I took multiple steps to ensure the validity of the survey results. The content of the survey is based heavily in scholarly literature. Cobern and Adams (2020) explained that “Because the effective wording of survey items is so critical to validity it only makes sense for researchers to learn from published research when writing new items, and to use existing items of known validity when possible” (p. 413). For example, several scales (Teamwork and Collaboration, Climate and Morale, Belonging and Commitment) have been used in previous studies about organizational culture and commitment. Noting that surveys that are too long may threaten validity, I carefully considered which scales and survey items to include to avoid including any questions that would not help answer the study’s research questions (Cobern & Adams, 2020).
Qualitative Phase

Much of the published scholarly research about hazing has relied upon quantitative surveys. While survey instruments provide valuable insight into student experiences, they do not offer the detailed descriptions or depth of understanding gained from qualitative methods. To understand organizational culture on a deeper level, Schein (2017) recommended interviewing members to get a sense of the shared assumptions in the organization. In a recent qualitative study of hazing in college, Alexander and Opsal (2020) explained,

Qualitative methods such as semi-structured interviews are particularly useful for researchers who study deviant behavior that is stigmatized such as hazing because researchers have a greater opportunity to develop rapport with participants throughout the interview process and to gain a deeper understanding of social behavior through this rapport and trust. (p. 6)

Additionally, Williams and Heikes (1993) noted that qualitative interviews allow researchers to empathize with their participants and understand their situations and points of view. Whereas a survey forces response choices onto participants, an interview allows participants to clarify their answers or “use diplomacy to diffuse potentially offensive or controversial ideas” (Williams & Heikes, 1993, p. 286). Conducting individual interviews with HWF members increased my understanding of how individual characteristics and chapter culture contribute to HWF members’ experiences with hazing.

I began developing the semi-structured interview protocol in September 2021. After conducting preliminary quantitative data analysis and identifying areas that warranted deeper study, I finalized the interview protocol. Schein (2017) noted that researchers must promote
honesty in their participants to accurately understand what is occurring within organizations to which the researcher is an outsider. He explained, “you must find a method that encourages the insiders to ‘tell it like it is’ rather than trying to impress you, hide data, or blow off steam” (Schein, 2017, p. 258). Past research has described the importance of building rapport with study participants and leading up to sensitive topics by asking non-threatening questions before broaching a sensitive topic such as hazing (Alexander & Opsal, 2020; Lee, 1993). For example, Alexander and Opsal (2020) spoke with students about their organization’s goals and the activities members participate in together. After getting acquainted with the interviewees, the researchers then approached the topic of hazing. To align with the research questions of this study, I focused my rapport-building questions on individual student backgrounds and the chapter's culture. The final protocol included questions about participants’ backgrounds, new member experience, chapter, and chapter culture. Additionally, I asked participants about the FSL system, campus, campus culture, and hazing.

During this phase, I did not reference specific hazing prevention policies or definitions of hazing that SU uses. Instead, I asked questions that allowed participants to respond based on their own understanding of hazing and hazing prevention policies. Alexander and Opsal (2020) noted that they chose not to cite institutional policies and official definitions when they conducted qualitative interviews with college students. They felt that refraining from presenting more formal messaging would help students speak more freely about hazing and share more reliable responses about their experiences. Thus, I asked, “How would you describe the hazing culture at [SU] (on campus broadly, and specifically within the Greek system)?” to gather information about participants’ experiences with and perceptions of hazing at SU. Similarly, an
interview question about hazing prevention policies was, “To what extent do you think [SU]’s hazing prevention policies and programs have been effective?” By framing this question this way, participants could discuss their salient experiences surrounding hazing prevention at SU rather than coloring their responses with language from a specific institutional policy.

**Phenomenological Approach**

For the qualitative phase, I used a phenomenological approach. Specifically, I used Heidegger’s hermeneutic phenomenology, which describes phenomena as fully engaged in the world rather than bracketed from it (Vagle, 2018). Phenomenological researchers seek to understand concepts in new ways; in this study, I wanted to understand the interrelationship between chapter culture, institutional culture, and hazing in HWFs.

In phenomenological studies, what researchers know changes through analysis as they receive new information and revise their understanding of specific phenomena (Peoples, 2021). During data analysis, researchers use Heidegger’s hermeneutic circle, in which they break down large amounts of information, synthesize the information, and look at the reconstructed whole to generate new understanding (Peoples, 2021). Additionally, as data collection progresses, researchers can continually compare and contrast different participants’ experiences of the phenomena (Peoples, 2021). The phenomenological approach allowed me to focus on students’ experiences in their HWFs.

**Participants**

Studies using the explanatory sequential mixed methods design use qualitative data to gain a more detailed understanding of their quantitative results. Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) stated that individuals who participated in the quantitative phase are best suited to provide
qualitative data; this sampling design is known as nested samples (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). At the end of the survey, I included a link to a separate form that allowed students to opt-in to interviews in the second phase of the study. However, sampling is especially challenging in studies where the topic under investigation is highly sensitive, as participants may feel more inclined to conceal their behaviors or activities (Lee, 1993).

Following a preliminary analysis of the first wave of survey responses in fall 2021, I finalized the interview protocol for the qualitative phase of the study and began contacting students to schedule interviews. Approximately 10 percent of students completing the survey filled out the form to express interest in participating in an interview, so I contacted each interested student by phone, email, or text message. Only about half of the students expressing interest responded to this outreach. Thus, the sample was a volunteer sample \((n = 17)\). Volunteer sampling is a form of convenience sampling where participants opt-in, often due to an incentive for participation (Nardi, 2018). Convenience sampling is a nonprobability sampling strategy, meaning that findings from this sample may not be generalized to the entire population (Nardi, 2018). The open-ended, semi-structured interviews explored the experiences of 17 students from 10 HWFs. Although I intended to include students from a variety of backgrounds in the qualitative phase, the low response rate led me to use convenience sampling as my sampling strategy. Thus, I was unable to be selective about the participants’ backgrounds.

Several participants mentioned that they knew people in other fraternities who might be willing to complete an interview. I asked those participants to share the survey link and my contact information with those people, but I did not observe an increase in survey responses or interviews. Thus, snowball sampling strategies, wherein participants share study information
with people they know who share the characteristics of interest (Nardi, 2018), were not effective for this study.

In the quantitative phase, I suspected that high-achieving students would be overrepresented in my sample. Most participants I interviewed had held at least one leadership position in their chapter, and several participants that had not served in a formal position had been recognized in other ways, such as “Brother of the Month” awards or leading Bible studies within the chapter. Thus, the interviews did not offer as much insight into the experiences of a typical chapter member.

**Participant Profiles**

The 17 participants in this phase represented 10 of the 16 HWFs that were active at SU during my data collection. The sample included in-state ($n = 12$) and out-of-state ($n = 5$) students, as well as students from all classifications, including one fifth-year senior. Participants were members of small ($n = 2$), medium ($n = 11$), and large ($n = 4$) fraternities, and they enrolled at SU and joined their chapters between fall 2017 and fall 2021. All but one participant joined their HWFs in the fall semester, and most participated in the formal recruitment process.

**Alan**

Alan is an in-state student in his senior year. After going through formal recruitment in his freshman year and deciding not to join any fraternity, he accepted an early bid in the fall of his sophomore year to a medium-sized fraternity where several of his friends were members. Although several of his friends were already in his fraternity, Alan stated that he grew close to many people he would not have met without joining his fraternity. At the time of our interview, he was working between 25 to 30 hours per week at an off-campus job, and he described his
involvement in his fraternity as minimal, which he stated is “pretty typical for seniors in most fraternities.”

**Billy**

Billy is an in-state student in his junior year. He joined his large fraternity in the fall of his sophomore year when he changed majors and felt he would have more time to devote to a fraternity. Several of Billy’s friends at SU were already involved in FSLOs, but he went through formal recruitment to see each fraternity before deciding which organization to join. He spoke about how his chapter does well facilitating bonding among new members and added, “I’ve never gotten that close with a group of people that large in such a short amount of time.” He also described how his chapter has a strong culture of members looking out for each other and keeping each other safe.

**Carlos**

Carlos is an in-state student in his junior year. He chose to attend SU so he could branch out and meet new people, and he joined his medium-sized fraternity in the fall of his freshman year. Carlos saw fraternity membership as a vehicle for networking, making new friends, participating in philanthropy projects, and serving as a leader on campus. He has held executive leadership positions in his chapter and in IFC. Carlos aspires to attend medical school and stated that the culture of his fraternity emphasizes a balance between academics and fraternity obligations. He was also proud to report that his fraternity does not haze its new members.

**Corbin Bleu**

Corbin Bleu is an in-state student who initially did not intend to join a fraternity but changed his mind after meeting other members who were orientation leaders and involved in
other campus organizations. After joining his fraternity at a smaller in-state university, he transferred to SU in the fall of his sophomore year. Corbin described his experience in the SU chapter as very different from his initiating chapter, though he held several leadership positions in the SU chapter. After a year and a half in the SU chapter, Corbin left the organization, but he remains aware of many events in the FSL system because of friends who are still in HWFs.

**David**

David is an out-of-state student who is a member of a medium-sized chapter. Several peers from his high school also attend SU, and they all joined the same fraternity. David joined his fraternity in the fall of his freshman year and has held several leadership positions in his chapter. He was initially attracted to the social and networking opportunities of FSL; he described his chapter’s social calendar as a motivating factor to keep members involved with the fraternity. In addition to offering social opportunities, David also shared that his fraternity has afforded him academic support through fraternity brothers in his major.

**Derek Corona**

Derek Corona is an in-state student who is a member of a small fraternity. After high school, he entered the workforce and took classes at a local community college. Derek completed a General Transfer Degree before enrolling at SU when he was 21. Before joining his social fraternity, Derek was a member of a professional fraternity. He decided to join a social fraternity for additional friendships and social connections on campus. Although Derek works full-time, he has held a leadership position in his chapter. He shared that the smaller size of his chapter helps keep members on the same page and allows them to address issues quickly.
Hunter is a sophomore and in-state student who joined a medium-sized fraternity in the fall of his freshman year. Both of his parents, as well as several of his cousins, are members of FSLOs. He was most interested in the social aspects of fraternity life when he joined, but he has embraced leadership opportunities and has held several officer positions in his chapter. Although it is not typical in his chapter for younger members to have executive leadership roles, Hunter explained, “I’m naturally good at academics, so they thought they could trust me.”

Jack Daniels is an in-state student in his fourth year at SU. He joined a medium-sized fraternity in the fall of his sophomore year. Jack transferred from another in-state university he described as a commuter school that was “not the party atmosphere or college experience [he] was looking for.” Jack felt that SU would provide a more traditional college experience, and he wanted to join a fraternity that could provide friendships and social experiences. Although Jack’s father joined the same chapter when he was at SU, Jack went through the formal recruitment process to see each fraternity and find the best fit for him.

Jeremy is an out-of-state freshman who joined his small fraternity in the fall of his freshman year. He applied to several schools in SU’s athletics conference because he “wanted a fun football school” and wanted to branch out from his west coast upbringing. As a former athlete, Jeremy felt that joining a fraternity was the “next best thing” to being on a sports team. Moreover, he viewed fraternity life as a way to be part of something and find an “instant
community” in a place where he had no family and friends. Jeremy also noted that fraternities provide academic support, social opportunities, and networking for jobs.

Johnny Rocket

Johnny Rocket is a junior and an in-state student who joined his fraternity in the fall of his freshman year. In addition to a cousin and an aunt who are FSLO members, both of Johnny’s parents are FSLO members, and his mother joined her sorority at SU. Johnny was most interested in joining a fraternity because he wanted to meet like-minded people and thought a fraternity would help make SU seem less overwhelming. Johnny described himself as reclusive during his freshman year and stated that he did not grow close to other fraternity members until he became more social. Looking back, he wished he had made a stronger effort to get to know his brothers earlier.

Lloyd

Lloyd is an in-state student who chose to attend SU due to his family’s roots at SU. Both of his parents and several siblings graduated from SU, and he grew up coming to football games. He joined his medium-sized fraternity in the fall of his freshman year when his fraternity was in the process of being reinstated. Lloyd joined a fraternity because he hoped to be part of a brotherhood and meet new people. Additionally, he believed a fraternity would provide some structure through events and tailgates. He has held several leadership positions in his chapter.

Logan

Logan is a senior from out-of-state and is a member of a medium-sized fraternity. Both of his parents joined FSLOs in college, and he stated that his family was his main influence in joining a fraternity. Logan was initiated into his fraternity in the fall of his sophomore year and
was in one of the first new member classes when his fraternity returned to SU after a disciplinary suspension. Logan joined a different fraternity after going through formal recruitment in the fall of his freshman year but left when he realized that the culture of that chapter was not a good fit for him. Since his initiation, Logan has been a big brother and has held several leadership positions in his chapter.

**Michael Scarn**

Michael Scarn is a junior in-state student who joined his medium-sized fraternity in the fall of his freshman year. His parents and several other family members are in FSLOs, and their positive experiences with FSL made him want to join a fraternity. Several of Michael’s friends also went to SU, but he was interested in having multiple friend groups and felt that fraternity membership would provide new connections. Although he was a legacy to one of the other fraternities on campus, Michael felt that his fraternity was a better fit for him. He has held several leadership positions in his chapter and currently lives in his fraternity house.

**Nick**

Nick is an in-state student who enrolled at SU and joined his fraternity in fall 2020. He chose to attend SU largely due to its affordability with the state’s merit-based scholarship program. His father also attended SU and is a member of the same fraternity. By joining a fraternity, Nick hoped to meet new people and make friends outside of his high school friend group. He was most interested in the social aspect of fraternity life, such as parties and events. Coming to college in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, Nick noted that fraternity membership was one of a few ways he could make connections and participate in social activities on campus.
**Robert**

Robert is an out-of-state student, but both of his parents and two of his siblings attended SU. After forgetting to register for recruitment during his freshman year, Robert went through formal recruitment and joined his large fraternity in the fall of his sophomore year. Robert’s father is a member of a different fraternity at SU, and Robert cited his father’s enduring friendships with his fraternity brothers as a reason for his interest in fraternity life. During his interview, he shared that he initially wanted to join his father’s fraternity, explaining, “My biggest goal in life is to be my dad, and so I just so badly wanted that for myself.” However, he felt that his fraternity was a better fit for him.

**Stephen**

Stephen is an out-of-state student in his first year at SU. He went through formal recruitment and joined his medium-sized fraternity in the fall of his freshman year. One of Stephen’s brothers joined a fraternity at another school before him. Stephen stated that his main reasons for joining his fraternity were making connections and developing a support system at SU. He explained, “When you first come here, especially from out of state, it's something that's really comforting, to have just a group of people that will be able to watch your back and give you any advice you need.” Stephen currently holds two leadership positions in his fraternity and wants to continue serving in officer roles.

**William**

William is a fifth-year senior and a member of a large fraternity. He joined his fraternity in the fall of his freshman year. Both of his parents attended SU, and his father is a member of the same fraternity. William grew up going to football games and tailgates with his family and
his dad’s fraternity brothers. When he went to SU, he thought joining a fraternity would help him meet new people and make the campus feel smaller, but he also looked forward to academic support and social opportunities. As a fifth-year student, he was the only interview participant who was enrolled at SU when Sam Clark died.

Table 3.3. Qualitative Phase Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Class Standing</th>
<th>Fraternity Size</th>
<th>Semester Joined</th>
<th>Residency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alan</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Fall 2019</td>
<td>In-state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billy</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Fall 2020</td>
<td>In-state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlos</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Fall 2019</td>
<td>In-state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corbin Bleu</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Fall 2018 (Fall 2019 at SU)</td>
<td>In-state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Fall 2019</td>
<td>Out-of-state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derek Corona</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Spring 2020</td>
<td>In-state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter</td>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Fall 2020</td>
<td>In-state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack Daniels</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Fall 2019</td>
<td>In-state</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Note: Small = Under 100 members, Medium = 101-150 members, Large = 151+ Members)

(table cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Class Standing</th>
<th>Fraternity Size</th>
<th>Semester Joined</th>
<th>Residency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jeremy</td>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Fall 2021</td>
<td>Out-of-state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnny Rocket</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Fall 2019</td>
<td>In-state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llloyd</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Fall 2018</td>
<td>In-state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logan</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Fall 2019</td>
<td>Out-of-state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Scarn</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Fall 2019</td>
<td>In-state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nick</td>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Fall 2020</td>
<td>In-state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Fall 2020</td>
<td>Out-of-state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen</td>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Fall 2021</td>
<td>Out-of-state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>5th year</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Fall 2017</td>
<td>In-state</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Collection

I recruited participants for the interviews from October 2021 through February 2022. I received IRB approval to not use the word “hazing” in my consent language, though I included a note about sensitive topics and potential legal complications. As interview participants had all seen the survey before scheduling the interview, they expected that hazing would be a significant topic in the interview. Each participant consented to have the interviews recorded; recording each interview provided a verbatim record of this phase of the study that I could refer to during the analysis stage. For interviews on Microsoft Teams, I used the built-in recording feature to record the audio and video of the interview. Additionally, I used the Otter.ai app on my cell phone as a backup in case of technology failures. For the in-person interviews, I used Otter.ai on my iPad and the voice memo feature on my cell phone to record. The interviews lasted between 27 and 91 minutes. Recognizing that the interview participants devoted time and effort to informing my research (Lee, 1993), they each received a $25 cash incentive in appreciation for their contributions to the study. Although completing multiple interviews would have increased opportunities to build trust and gather more information from the participants (Lee, 1993), I chose to do a single interview to reduce the demands on the student participants.

Utilizing semi-structured interviews allowed me to engage in dialogue with participants and pose additional questions that helped solidify my understanding of participants’ experiences while also maintaining enough structure to directly compare participants’ responses (Husband, 2020). For example, when participants used a term that was unfamiliar to me, I could ask what they meant by that term. Because I utilized a phenomenological approach and sought to understand the specific experiences of the participants, I also asked them to provide examples to
support their responses to the interview questions (Peoples, 2021). Additionally, I nudged participants to clarify their statements or provide additional information by asking questions such as, “Can you tell me more about that?” These questions aided me in gaining additional context about participants’ experiences (Lee, 1993).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and my personal travel schedule, I conducted most interviews on Microsoft Teams. When in-person interviewing was possible, I allowed participants to meet in-person or online, and several participants chose to do their interviews in person in a private office on SU’s campus. Lefkowich (2018) acknowledged that researchers might opt to conduct interviews in “convenient academic settings” (p. 3) but challenged researchers to examine why they might prefer these settings to spaces where participants might be more comfortable. Moreover, selecting a university space may cause participants to feel less safe than they might feel elsewhere, which could have a negative impact on the quality of data obtained from the interview (Fine, 1987; Twitchell, 2006). Thus, I left the decision of where and how to interview up to the participants when possible. I aimed to cultivate trust between the participants and me by offering “privacy, confidentiality, and a non-condemnatory attitude” (p. 98) to the interviewees (Lee, 1993). Although I did not require participants to utilize the video component of Microsoft Teams, most participants turned their cameras on for the interview and appeared to be in their homes. However, one participant completed the interview from the student union, and one did not turn his camera on. Overall, participants seemed to be in places that were comfortable for them and free of distractions, such as other people walking by, entering the room, or otherwise overhearing the interview.

Data Analysis
Following each interview, I uploaded the audio recordings into transcription software called Otter.ai. Interviews on Microsoft Teams automatically saved the video of the interview and a transcript of the conversation. To ensure the accuracy of the transcripts, I listened to each interview and corrected any errors made by the software. I also cleaned the transcripts for clarity and to maintain the dignity of the participants; for example, I removed instances of “like,” “umm,” and “you know” that did not contribute to the meaning of the participants’ statements. These changes made the transcripts easier to read (Oliver et al., 2005).

I read through the transcripts to obtain a general sense of the data and wrote notes about my initial thoughts. I also began developing codes and a codebook; previous literature guided some preliminary codes to anticipate (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Then, I proceeded to the data analysis. I used NVivo version 12 to assist with coding and creating a more detailed series of codes. In the first round of coding, I identified basic topics that the participants described. I used values coding for the second round of coding, which is appropriate for studies that “explore cultural values and belief systems, identity, intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences, and actions” (Saldaña, 2016, p. 132). According to Saldaña (2016), values refer to the importance individuals attribute to themselves, other people, ideas, or things, attitudes refer to the way people feel about themselves, others, ideas, or things, and beliefs are “part of a system that includes our values and attitudes as well as personal knowledge, experiences, opinions, prejudices, morals, and other interpretative perceptions of the social world” (p. 132). Some phenomenological researchers discourage using software to code data in phenomenological studies because the software may detract from the participants’ experiences as presented in the transcripts (Peoples, 2021). As I grouped the codes into related themes or categories (Creswell &
Plano Clark, 2018), I revisited the transcripts to confirm that each quotation and theme related to participants’ experiences in their HWF (Peoples, 2021). I present the codes and themes in Appendix L.

Based on the identified themes, I summarized the findings of the qualitative phase of the study. I paid careful attention to how the themes and codes from the qualitative phase offer insight into the data collected during the quantitative phase (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). As I interpreted the results, I also considered how my findings answer my qualitative research questions (“How do undergraduate members of HWFs describe the culture of their chapters and institutions?” and “How do undergraduate members of HWFs describe the prevalence of hazing in their chapters and within their institutions?”) (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). I also related the findings to previous scholarship and theory and provided a personal assessment of the qualitative findings based on my knowledge and experience (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Once I wrote up the findings, I returned my drafts to the participants to confirm understanding and check validity; at this stage, I also gave participants the option to exclude any information for any reason (Mero-Jaffe, 2011). This option gave participants control over how their experiences were presented in the study. Finally, to validate the data collected from interviews, I used the institution’s fraternity and sorority scorecard, news articles, websites, and social media posts to triangulate the findings (Schein, 2017). Further, I referred to my personal notes from data collection as part of triangulation.

**Researcher Positionality**

In scholarly research, positionality situates researchers based on the subject of the study, the participants in the study, and the context and process of the researcher (Holmes, 2020).
Chiseri-Strater (1996) noted that positionality includes fixed or culturally ascribed traits of researchers (e.g., race, gender, and nationality) and subjective-contextual factors that develop through an individual’s life experiences. Particularly for novice researchers, positionality will evolve over time (Holmes, 2020). In Heidegger’s hermeneutic phenomenology, researchers may incorporate their pre-understanding of a phenomenon into their work (Peoples, 2021). Characteristics such as race, gender, and experience may contribute to researcher biases; rather than attempting to suspend biases, researchers following Heidegger’s framework consider how their lenses influence the interpretation of the phenomenon (Peoples, 2021).

Part of using the hermeneutic circle includes being explicit about personal biases or judgments (Peoples, 2021). Thus, I decided to disclose my personal background in this dissertation. I am a member of an NPC sorority and an advocate for the fraternal movement. I joined a sorority at a small, private institution in the Southeastern United States. While the institution in this study is also situated in the Southeastern United States, it is located in an urban area and has a much larger student population and FSL community than my undergraduate institution. Since graduating from my university, I have been involved with alumnae Panhellenic groups in my local area for a decade. I have also served as a small group facilitator at national leadership institutes for FSLO members, and I have been a facilitator at one HWF’s officer training academy. Additionally, I served as the FSLO advisor at a small college and am a member of the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors. During the interviews, I tried to balance my previous knowledge about FSLOs broadly with my relative ignorance about HWFs at SU. I wanted the participants to trust me as an insider to FSLOs, but I also needed them to help me understand the specific environment at SU (Schein, 2017). Thus, I was careful not to
mention any known stereotypes about the HWFs but instead allowed participants to speak about their experiences as HWF members.

Although I have never experienced severe hazing, I recognize the threat that hazing poses to students, FSLOs, and higher education institutions. While I am aware that FSLOs—and HWFs particularly—exhibit especially concerning hazing behaviors, I also believe that culture change can help reverse the perilous trajectory that hazing culture perpetuates. My personal advocacy for the FSL movement was a strength as I built trust with study participants and explored their fraternal experiences, particularly sensitive issues such as hazing.

Throughout the data analysis, I reflected on my positionality and how it might be impacting my work. Mero-Jaffe (2011) identified the researcher, interviewer, transcriber, interviewee, equipment, and place of transcription as factors that may influence the quality of a transcript. As the researcher, interviewer, and transcriber, I strived to generate accurate transcripts and note changes in tone, delays in responses, and other non-verbal aspects of the interview in my data. Additionally, I considered how my attitudes toward the topic, my assumptions about the data, my background, and my participants’ backgrounds might influence the transcription and analysis process (Davidson, 2009).

Throughout the study, I was acutely aware of my femininity. Gurney (1985) noted that there are some advantages of being a young female graduate student conducting research in male-dominated settings, but Lee (1993) commented that “the social characteristics of the interviewers themselves might have a biasing effect on results” (p. 99). I considered how being a woman, a sorority member, and 10-15 years older than my participants influenced the data I collected in this study. As part of rapport building early in the interview, I told participants that I
am a sorority member and shared that I had worked professionally in FSL. However, I did not share my educational background with participants unless the topic arose organically, and I never disclosed my age. Regardless of the format (online or in-person), I exercised care in selecting modest outfits to distinguish myself as a researcher and set a professional tone for the interviews (Lefkowich, 2018). Interestingly, several participants assumed that I attended SU, and others made comments that suggested that they thought I was an undergraduate student more recently than was the case. Although the interview protocol did not address the chapter’s treatment of women, several participants volunteered that their chapter was proud of their relationships with sororities and other women; while hookup culture (Stinson et al., 2014) and sexual aggression (Treat et al., 2021) have been documented pitfalls of fraternity culture, no participants mentioned these behaviors within their chapters.

Besides being a woman, I shared many characteristics with most of my interview participants. As a White, heterosexual, able-bodied, and educated person, I benefited from certain unearned privileges that might have been an advantage in this study (Lefkowich, 2018). Although I could sense that a few participants were guarded about what they disclosed to me, I generally felt that my interview style helped participants feel comfortable, and they believed that I would keep their information confidential. I remained mindful that the participants placed significant trust in me as they shared their experiences during the interviews.

**Trustworthiness**

In qualitative research, reliability is typically a minor concern because the researcher is providing a subjective interpretation of the data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). For studies that
have multiple coders, it is crucial to establish reliability among coders. As this is a single-investigator study, however, I did not need to calculate interrater reliability.

Once the transcripts were reviewed and coded, I drafted the findings of the study and sent them to the participants for member checking. Member checking involves returning interview transcripts or analyzed data to participants, enabling participants to confirm meaning or correct errors and reassess their responses (Birt et al., 2016; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This stage is important for ensuring that participants feel comfortable and properly represented in the data since they have no control over how the data are interpreted (Lee, 1993; Schein, 2017). One member checking strategy is having the participant review the transcript to confirm or disconfirm the researcher’s meaning (Birt et al., 2016). Another method of member checking is to conduct a follow-up interview to confirm or modify interview content and discuss the themes identified from the qualitative research (Doyle, 2007). Some research participants may become bogged down in details or grammatical errors in a verbatim transcript (Carlson, 2010). Following Carlson’s (2010) recommendation, I compiled direct quotations and other relevant pieces of my findings to have participants review. I offered to meet with participants on Microsoft Teams or in person, or I could send them a Word document for them to review and return. This approach was appropriate for member checking with college students, as this study is not a primary concern, and I was doing member checking in the weeks before final exams. Further, Carlson (2010) commented that the trustworthiness of a study is not synonymous with transcription accuracy; researchers must remember that their goal is to “show that their data were ethically and mindfully collected, analyzed, and reported” (Carlson, 2010, p. 1110).
In addition to member checking the transcripts, I utilized triangulation and committed to report disconfirming evidence to ensure the validity of the interviews. Triangulation involves comparing data from several sources (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). In this study, newspaper articles, social media accounts, and campus reports provided additional insight into the culture of HWFs at the institution. Reporting disconfirming evidence means reporting information that offers a perspective contrary to established evidence; Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) explained, “A report of disconfirming evidence in fact confirms the accuracy of the data analysis because in real life we expect the evidence for themes to diverge and include more than just positive information” (p. 217). For example, many of the students’ experiences described in this study disconfirm outsider perceptions that severe hazing is rampant in all fraternities.

Integration of the Quantitative and Qualitative Data

Mixed methods researchers derive additional insight and value from their study by integrating the quantitative and qualitative strands of the study; Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) stated, “the presence of meaningful integration distinguishes mixed methods from other methodologies that do not highlight the mixing of databases” (p. 220). In explanatory sequential designs, the integration phase allows researchers to explain statistical results based on the deeper understanding of individuals’ personal experiences (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Additionally, researchers use the integration phase to determine how the stories told from the quantitative and qualitative portions of the study are congruent (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). To aid in the integration, I constructed joint displays, which allow for direct comparison of results by presenting the qualitative and quantitative results in a single table or figure (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).
Last, I considered how the findings of the integrated phases answer my mixed methods research question (“What are the characteristics and cultural traits of HWF members and chapters that engage in severe hazing?”). While the survey identified student attitudes and demographic traits, the interviews provided richer descriptions of the chapter culture in HWFs. Similarly, the semi-structured interviews about HWF members’ experiences in their fraternities allowed me to gain a more nuanced understanding of the hazing behaviors and culture in HWFs at a single institution.

**Credibility and Dependability**

There are several threats to validity in mixed methods studies that I needed to consider. First, not sufficiently identifying significant quantitative results to explain in the qualitative phase threatens the study's validity (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). As I analyzed the data, I remained mindful of various possible explanations for significant and nonsignificant predictors. Second, ignoring surprising or contradictory results when designing the qualitative phase of the study will affect the study's validity (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). To address this threat, I developed interview questions that probed into unexpected or contradictory quantitative results. Finally, failing to connect the qualitative follow-up phase with initial quantitative results created a validity issue (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). My sampling strategy of recruiting interview participants from survey respondents helped ensure that I received the best explanation of the phenomena uncovered in this study.

**Human Participants Ethical Precaution**

This study followed the ethical guidelines outlined by Louisiana State University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). Based on recommendations by Creswell and Plano Clark
(2018), I presented the plans for both phases of the study in my initial IRB materials, but I noted that the plans for the qualitative phase would evolve from the findings of the quantitative phase. I communicated with the IRB and followed modification processes as necessary throughout the study.

In both phases of the study, I informed participants about how I would guarantee their anonymity in the study and the confidentiality of their data. I stored all data (e.g., survey responses and interview recordings) on a password-protected computer that always stayed in a locked office or home or in my possession. To protect the HWFs, I only refer to the chapters by size (small, medium, and large) to reduce the chance of identifying a specific organization. I assigned a pseudonym to all interview participants and maintained a key that connected the pseudonyms to each participant's true identity, but the pseudonym key was kept in a separate password-protected file. Additionally, at the recommendation of the IRB, I obtained a Certificate of Confidentiality from the National Institutes of Health (NIH); these certificates “protect the privacy of research participants by prohibiting disclosure of identifiable, sensitive research information to anyone not connected to the research except when the participant consents or in a few other specific situations” (NIH, n.d.).

During the quantitative phase, participants reviewed the study’s purpose and indicated their consent before continuing to the survey instrument. Participants could choose not to participate or could exit the survey at any time before completing the instrument. The consent language and recruitment e-mails for the survey also directed students to the IRB, my major professor, or me if they had questions or concerns.
The qualitative phase of the study required additional ethical considerations to protect the participants. Husband (2020) cautioned researchers utilizing semi-structured interviews that through the dialogic process of these interviews, they may elicit deeper responses than anticipated from their participants. Considering the sensitive nature of some of the interview topics (e.g., hazing), I had the added responsibility to ensure that participants were aware of potentially triggering questions. I maintained a list of campus-based support services in case participants needed them.

Before each interview, the participants reviewed and signed a consent form with information about the semi-structured interviews and the sensitive nature of some of the topics. The consent forms were stored in a locked office separate from the study data. When participants interviewed in person, they reviewed and signed a paper consent form. For participants interviewing over video software (Microsoft Teams), I e-mailed the consent form and asked them to review, sign, and return it via e-mail before the interview. Before beginning the semi-structured interviews, I addressed any questions that participants had before I began recording. Several participants had additional questions about how I would maintain their confidentiality when I reported the findings of the study. I shared that in addition to not reporting the names or fraternity affiliations of individual participants, I had obtained a Certificate of Confidentiality from the National Institutes of Health, which would prevent anyone—including SU or law enforcement—from seizing my data and using it for any purpose other than my study. Because I did not want participants to feel that I was asking them to share information about their organization beyond their level of comfort (Schein, 2017), I also informed each participant
that they could decline to answer a question, end the interview early, ask me to delete the
recording immediately after transcribing the interview, or withdraw from the study at any time.

Although the participants reported below all chose to remain in the study, I am aware of
my ethical responsibilities as a researcher to protect their identities. Lee (1993) noted, “The
variety of information produced, particularly by qualitative research, often means that identities
can be deduced from descriptions of people’s roles, their relations to others, and even, simply,
from the overall ‘texture’ of the data” (p. 186). Because of this possibility, Lee (1993)
recommended that when determining what to report, researchers should consider potential
harmful uses of the data and carefully evaluate what they share. Thus, when determining what to
include in my findings, I considered the potential risks of each statement if someone discovered
the participants’ identities. Although I worked to ensure that outsiders could not deduce
participants’ identities from what I reported, in some cases, I omitted information to protect
individuals and their fraternities from identification or harm.

In addition to using pseudonyms for individuals, I have opted not to assign pseudonyms
for fraternity chapters. Instead, I grouped the fraternities by membership into small (under 100
members), medium (100-150 members), and large chapters to provide an additional layer of
protection for my participants and prevent incidental details reported in the study from leading to
deductive disclosure of members’ or chapters’ identities (Lee, 1993). Further, during member
checking, I shared a draft of my findings with each participant. In addition to having them
confirm the accuracy of my interpretations, I allowed them to scrub any details or statements that
might lead to disclosing their identity.
CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to understand how organizational culture, such as chapter culture and institutional culture, are related to hazing within historically White fraternity (HWF) chapters. As a study employing an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, the first (quantitative) phase included a survey with items about HWF members’ backgrounds, fraternity characteristics, perception of organizational culture in their chapters and institution, views about aspects of hazing, and attitudes about institutional policies and resources to prevent hazing. Survey respondents could opt-in to the second (qualitative) phase, which utilized semi-structured interviews to explain phenomena revealed from the analysis of the survey data. Finally, I integrated the findings from both phases to understand the characteristics and experiences of HWF members and chapters at SU. To guide the study, I established the following research questions:

1. Based on the current sample, how well do the three existing chapter culture scales (teamwork and collaboration, climate and morale, belonging and commitment) measure HWF members’ perspectives on chapter culture?

2. What is the underlying structure of the newly developed survey items that measure institutional culture and HWF members’ attitudes about hazing?

3. How do chapter culture, institutional culture, and hazing experienced as new members contribute to HWF members’ attitudes about hazing?

4. How do undergraduate members of HWFs describe the culture of their chapters and institutions?
5. How do undergraduate members of HWFs describe the prevalence of hazing in their chapters and within their institutions?

6. How do chapter culture and institutional culture relate to hazing in HWF chapters?

**Quantitative Phase**

**Analyses of Previously Validated Culture Scales: Reliability Test and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)**

**Reliability Test**

The survey included three previously validated scales that measured aspects of chapter culture within HWFs. All scales demonstrated sufficient internal reliability within the sample, with the values of Cronbach’s α greater than or equal to .70 (Netemeyer et al., 2003). The Teamwork and Collaboration scale (Glaser et al., 1987, α = .801) contained four items, and the Belonging and Commitment scale contained ten items (Meyer et al., 1993, α = .787). I retained the original five items from the Climate and Morale scale by Glaser et al. (1987) but added three items about chapter acceptance of three areas of diversity: race, religion, and sexual orientation. The revised Climate and Morale scale yielded high reliability (α = .912).

**Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

I used confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to confirm the structure of existing scales. I included the “Teamwork and Collaboration” scale (4 items) and “Climate and Morale” scales (8 items) from the OCS (Glaser et al., 1987) and the “Belonging and Commitment” scale (10 items), which combined items from the TCM of Commitment (Meyer et al., 1993).
Table 4.1. Reliability and Items of Final Organizational Culture Scales (n = 270)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Items</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teamwork and Collaboration (4 items)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of my chapter function as a team.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of my chapter constructively confront problems.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter has a productive working relationship with SU.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter has a productive working relationship with its inter/national headquarters.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Climate and Morale (8 items)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter motivates me to put forth my best efforts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of my chapter are satisfied with the current culture.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter respects its members.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter is accepting of different races.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter is accepting of different religious identities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter is accepting of different sexual orientations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is an atmosphere of trust in my chapter.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter motivates people to be efficient and productive.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Belonging and Commitment (10 items)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy discussing my chapter with people outside it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel like ‘part of the family’ in my chapter.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter has a great deal of personal meaning for me.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel a strong sense of belonging to my chapter.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I had not already put so much of myself into my chapter, I might consider leaving.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would be too hard for me to leave my chapter right now, even if I wanted to.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much in my life would be disrupted if I wanted to leave my chapter now.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that a member must always be loyal to his chapter.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of the major reasons I stay in my chapter is that I believe loyalty is important and therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to remain.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one’s chapter.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teamwork and Collaboration.** The “Teamwork and Collaboration” scale contained four items. For the item “Members of my chapter function as a team,” most HWF members at SU strongly agreed (36.3%, n = 98) or agreed (54.8%, n = 148) that their chapter functions as a
team. Similarly, most HWF members strongly agreed (33.7%, \(n = 91\)) or agreed (49.6%, \(n = 134\)) that their chapter constructively confronts conflict.

Survey respondents also rated the perceived productivity of their relationship with SU and their fraternity’s inter/national headquarters. Members were more likely to “strongly agree” that their chapter has a productive working relationship with its inter/national headquarters than with SU, though overall agreement rates were around 90%. With respect to the inter/national headquarters, members agreed (36.7%, \(n = 99\)) and strongly agreed (53.0%, \(n = 142\)) that the relationship was productive. For the survey item about the chapter’s working relationship with SU, 47.0% of members \((n = 127)\) agreed, and 42.6% \((n = 115)\) strongly agreed that their chapter has a productive relationship with SU.

**Climate and Morale.** The “Climate and Morale” scale asked members about their chapter climate, including how the chapter motivates and respects members. Survey respondents rated their chapter morale highly, with 45.9% \((n = 124)\) agreeing and 40.0% \((n = 108)\) strongly agreeing that their chapter motivates them to put forth their best efforts. Additionally, nearly 90% of members agreed (43.0%, \(n = 116)\) or strongly agreed (46.3%, \(n = 125\)) that there is an atmosphere of trust in their chapters. This scale also included items about chapter climate. Of the three types of diversity examined in the survey, members were most likely to agree that their chapter is accepting of different religious identities; over half of members (56.7%, \(n = 153\)) strongly agreed, and about a third (32.3%, \(n = 87\)). On the survey, respondents could enter their religious identity in a blank textbox. While most respondents indicated that they identify with some form of Christianity, several reported that they were agnostic, atheist, Buddhist, Jewish, and questioning. Survey respondents indicated similar levels of agreement about their chapter’s
acceptance of different racial identities. About a third of members agreed (32.6%, \( n = 88 \)), and 56.3% \( (n = 152) \) strongly agreed. Sexual orientation was the type of diversity about which members were least likely to agree. When asked to rate their level of agreement with the statement, “My chapter is accepting of different sexual orientations,” 33.7% of members \( (n = 91) \) strongly agreed, and 30% agreed \( (n = 81) \).

**Belonging and Commitment.** The final chapter culture scale explored members’ sense of belonging and feelings of commitment in their chapter. Overall, members largely felt a sense of belonging and pride in their chapter. For example, 74.8% \( (n = 202) \) of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they enjoy discussing their chapter with people outside it. Most members \( (88.1%, n = 238) \) strongly agreed or agreed that they feel like part of the family in their chapters, and 85.6% \( (n = 232) \) strongly agreed or agreed that their chapter has a great deal of personal meaning for them.

However, about a quarter of survey respondents \( (24.4%, n = 66) \) reported that they had considered leaving the fraternity/sorority community at SU. Further, more than a third of members strongly agreed or agreed that too much in their life would be disrupted if they decided they wanted to leave their chapter \( (36.3%, n = 99) \), and it would be too hard for them to leave their chapter right now, even if they wanted to \( (39.3%, n = 106) \).

**Model Fit.** The original model included all of the items from each chapter culture scale. However, it did not fit the data well: \( \chi^2 \) of 1128.688 \((df = 206, \ p = .000, \ n = 270)\), RMSEA = .129, SRMR = .105, CFI = .762, and TLI = .733, respectively.
To improve the model fit, I explored the modification indices. R suggested adding covariances across the last three items in the “Belonging and Commitment” scale: “I believe that a member must always be loyal to his chapter,” “One of the major reasons I stay in my chapter is that I believe loyalty is important and therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to remain,” and “I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one’s chapter.” Due to the items’ emphasis on loyalty, I only retained the “I believe that a member must always be loyal to his chapter” item for subsequent analyses, leaving eight items in the “Belonging and Commitment” scale. Additionally, I added two covariances that were recommended in the modification indices. First, I added a covariance between two items in the Belonging and Commitment scale because of their similar emphasis on leaving the chapter: “Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my chapter now” and “It would be too hard for me to leave my chapter now, even if I wanted to.” For the same reason, I added a covariance between “It would be too
hard for me to leave my chapter now, even if I wanted to” and “I believe that a member must always be loyal to his chapter.”

Finally, I accepted two modification indices for the remaining chapter culture scales. First, I added a covariance between the items in the Teamwork and Collaboration scale that asked about productive relationships with SU and their fraternity’s inter/national headquarters, as chapters that have productive relationships with one group that provides oversight would likely have productive relationships with other groups providing oversight. Then, I added a covariance between “My chapter is accepting of different races” and “My chapter is accepting of different religious identities,” as acceptance of one group suggests acceptance of the other. After this change, the model fit well, $\chi^2$ of 443.022 ($df = 163$, $p = .000$, $n = 270$), RMSEA = .080, SRMR = .061, CFI = .922, and TLI = .909, respectively.

Figure 4.2. Final CFA Model (n = 270)
Table 4.2. Final CFA Results (n = 270)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Std. Estimate</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Belonging and Commitment (α = .717)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy discussing my chapter with people outside it.</td>
<td>0.588</td>
<td>0.588***</td>
<td>0.056</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel like ‘part of the family’ in my chapter.</td>
<td>0.784</td>
<td>0.784***</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter has a great deal of personal meaning for me.</td>
<td>0.719</td>
<td>0.719***</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel a strong sense of belonging to my chapter.</td>
<td>0.776</td>
<td>0.776***</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I had not already put so much of myself into my chapter, I might consider leaving.</td>
<td>-0.254</td>
<td>-0.254**</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would be too hard for me to leave my chapter right now, even if I wanted to.</td>
<td>0.111</td>
<td>0.111</td>
<td>0.085</td>
<td>.196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my chapter now.</td>
<td>0.218</td>
<td>0.218**</td>
<td>0.080</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that a member must always be loyal to his chapter.</td>
<td>0.423</td>
<td>0.423***</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teamwork and Collaboration (α = .801)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of my chapter function as a team.</td>
<td>0.394</td>
<td>0.566***</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of my chapter constructively confront problems.</td>
<td>0.503</td>
<td>0.722***</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter has a productive working relationship with SU.</td>
<td>0.321</td>
<td>0.461***</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter has a productive working relationship with its inter/national headquarters.</td>
<td>0.270</td>
<td>0.388***</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Climate and Morale (α = .912)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter motivates me to put forth my best efforts.</td>
<td>0.731</td>
<td>0.731***</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of my chapter are satisfied with the current culture.</td>
<td>0.490</td>
<td>0.490***</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter respects its members.</td>
<td>0.621</td>
<td>0.621***</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter is accepting of different races.</td>
<td>0.651</td>
<td>0.651***</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter is accepting of different religious identities.</td>
<td>0.616</td>
<td>0.616***</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter is accepting of different sexual orientations.</td>
<td>0.710</td>
<td>0.710***</td>
<td>0.065</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is an atmosphere of trust in my chapter.</td>
<td>0.667</td>
<td>0.667***</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter motivates people to be efficient and productive.</td>
<td>0.709</td>
<td>0.709***</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***p < .001, **p < .01, p < .05, *p < .10
Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) of Newly Developed Scales

After analyzing the previously validated scales, I conducted exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to explore the relationships among the variables from the scales I developed for the survey. The purpose of EFA is to examine how survey items related to institutional culture (perceptions of who is looking out for the chapter’s best interests and views about hazing policies and resources at SU) and attitudes toward hazing were interconnected.

I used SPSS 28 to conduct the principal component analysis with varimax rotation. The analysis revealed a KMO measure of sampling adequacy of .800 and a significant Bartlett’s test of sphericity ($p < .001$). The results yielded five components with eigenvalues greater than 1, and factor loadings ranged from .693 to .932. A loading of .60 indicates moderate saliency with the component, whereas a loading of .80 is “a very well-defined value” (Guadagnoli & Velicer, 1988). Components containing four or more variables with loadings of .60 or higher may be interpreted regardless of the sample size (Guadagnoli & Velicer, 1988). The lowest factor loading in Table 4.3 is 0.693, “The following groups are looking out for my chapter’s best interests: Other fraternities at SU.”

The first component, “Attitudes Toward Hazing,” included all five items from the Hazing Attitudes survey scale, and responses ranged from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). All items had factor loadings above 0.75. The component also had high levels of internal reliability ($\alpha = .930$).

The next two components related to students’ perceptions of the institution. The second component, “Hazing Policies and Resources,” included four items from the Hazing Policies and Resources section of the survey. As with the other hazing scales in the survey, responses ranged
from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). For these items, respondents rated their level of agreement that the staff and administrators at SU, as well as their policies against hazing, are effective at preventing hazing. From the descriptive analysis, study participants had mixed views about SU’s hazing policies and resources. Half of the members agreed that SU’s policies against hazing help prevent hazing in fraternities (50.0%, \( n = 135 \)), but only 41.5% (\( n = 112 \)) of members felt that these policies helped prevent hazing in other organizations. Considering institutional agents, over half felt that the staff and administrators at SU are prepared to address major hazing incidents (55.2%, \( n = 149 \)) and provide effective resources for stopping hazing (51.5%, \( n = 139 \)). All factor loadings were above 0.85 for this scale, and the reliability measure was high (\( \alpha = .905 \)).

The final two questions from the Hazing Policies and Resources scale loaded onto a separate scale, which I named “Institutional Treatment of Fraternities.” These items formed the third component of EFA. These two items related to students’ perceptions of the institution’s inclination to target fraternities and police their activities rather than prevent hazing. Based on the descriptive analysis, members felt that SU targets fraternity behaviors rather than equally monitoring and enforcing policies. On the survey, 75.9% of members (\( n = 205 \)) strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, “When it comes to hazing policy enforcement, SU targets fraternities more than other organizations.” Further, 61.5% of members (\( n = 166 \)) strongly agreed or agreed that SU is more concerned with policing fraternity activities than preventing hazing. The factor loadings were 0.862 and 0.907, with reliability above .75 (\( \alpha = .771 \)).

Finally, the fourth and fifth components came from the “Best Interests” scales, which asked HWF members to rate their level of agreement about groups that have the chapter’s best
interests in mind. The Best Interests scale asked about chapter alumni, chapter advisors, other fraternities at SU, the IFC at SU, the SU Greek Life Office, and other SU administrators. Based on the descriptive summary, survey respondents were more likely to agree that internal organizational stakeholders (alumni of their chapter, chapter advisors, and their inter/national headquarters) were looking out for their chapter’s best interests than groups within the institution (other fraternities, the IFC, the Greek Life Office, and other SU administrators). Specifically, chapter advisors (95.6%, \( n = 258 \)) were ranked the highest, followed by alumni (84.8% \( n = 229 \)), and their inter/national headquarters (81.5%, \( n = 220 \)).

The fourth component, “Best Interests – Organizational,” contains three items about the extent to which members agree that alumni of the chapter, chapter advisors, and the inter/national headquarters are looking out for the chapter’s best interests. All factor loadings exceeded 0.70, and the reliability was above .75 (\( \alpha = .789 \)). The remaining four items formed the fifth component, which is related to groups external to the chapter and fraternity loaded together: other fraternities at SU, the IFC, the Greek Life Office, and other SU administrators. From the descriptive analysis, respondents demonstrated less confidence that other groups within SU were looking out for their best interests. The higher in the administrative structure a group was, the less likely survey respondents were to perceive that they were looking out for their chapter’s best interests. For example, about half (49.6%, \( n = 134 \)) of members strongly agreed or agreed that the Interfraternity Council (IFC), a council with representatives from each HWF chapter, is looking out for their best interests. Concerning administrators, only 44.8% (\( n = 121 \)) strongly agreed or agreed that the Greek Life Office at SU was looking out for their chapter’s best interests, and the rates were lower for other SU administrators (33.7%, \( n = 92 \)). All factor
loadings exceeded 0.65, and the reliability was above .85 (α = .859). Notably, the item about other fraternities at SU had the only factor loading less than .75.

Table 4.3. EFA Factor Loadings (n = 270)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitudes Toward Hazing (α = .930)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazing is unacceptable under any circumstance (reverse scored)</td>
<td>0.779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazing is acceptable as long as nobody gets hurt.</td>
<td>0.932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazing is acceptable as long as there is a purpose behind the behavior.</td>
<td>0.925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazing is a rite of passage into an organization.</td>
<td>0.906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazing helps organizations see who will be loyal members.</td>
<td>0.847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Views of Hazing Policies and Resources (α = .905)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SU’s policies against hazing help prevent hazing in fraternities at SU.</td>
<td>0.871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SU’s policies against hazing help prevent hazing in other organizations and teams at SU.</td>
<td>0.822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SU staff and administrators provide effective resources for stopping hazing.</td>
<td>0.877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SU staff and administrators are prepared to address major hazing incidents.</td>
<td>0.860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional Treatment of Fraternities (α = .771)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When it comes to hazing policy enforcement, SU targets fraternities more than other organizations.</td>
<td>0.907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SU is more concerned with policing fraternity activities than preventing hazing</td>
<td>0.862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Best Interests – Organization (α = .789)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The following groups are looking out for my chapter’s best interests:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni of our chapter</td>
<td>0.875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our chapter advisors</td>
<td>0.816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our inter/national headquarters</td>
<td>0.790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Best Interests – Institution (α = .859)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The following groups are looking out for my chapter’s best interests:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other fraternities at SU</td>
<td>0.693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Interfraternity Council (IFC) at SU</td>
<td>0.827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Greek Life Office at SU</td>
<td>0.861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other SU administrators</td>
<td>0.838</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Path Analysis**

Following the EFA and CFA, I revised the hypothetical conceptual model and developed a path model to explore how chapter culture, institutional culture, chapter size, and hazing experienced as new members contribute to HWF members’ attitudes about hazing. To measure
chapter size, I used the total number of members in each chapter in increments of 25 (1 = 1 to 25 members...9 = More than 200 members). The SU FSL Office provided the chapter sizes based on their records. The outcome variable in the original model was an endogenous variable, “Severe Hazing Experienced as New Members.” However, the survey items about organizational culture related to members’ perceptions of their chapter; Schein (2017) noted that members of an organization might not gain full access to the culture until they lose their newcomer status. Thus, I felt it was appropriate to alter the model to examine how hazing influences perceptions of chapter culture.

Additionally, I adjusted the model to include all hazing severity items, not only the severe hazing behaviors. In the revised model, the outcome variable was an average of survey respondents’ answers to the five items in the “Attitudes Toward Hazing” scale. These items asked respondents to rate their level of agreement with various statements about hazing. The majority of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that hazing is acceptable as long as nobody gets hurt (59.6%, n = 161) or there is a purpose behind the behavior (62.2%, n = 168), which suggests that some members may recognize that they can achieve their intended purposes without engaging in hazing. Similarly, members disagreed or strongly disagreed that hazing is a rite of passage into an organization (60.4%, n = 163) and helps organizations see who will be loyal members (64.4%, n = 174). The original model proposed that hazing experiences as new members directly affected members’ attitudes toward hazing. Additionally, the model proposed that organizational culture (belonging and commitment, climate and morale, and teamwork and collaboration), their beliefs about who was looking out for their chapter’s best interests (within their organization and institution), and their views on hazing policies and resources at SU were
mediators between hazing experienced as new members and respondents’ attitudes toward hazing.

![Hypothesized Path Model (n = 270)](image)

Figure 4.3. Hypothesized Path Model (n = 270)

After running the hypothesized model, I deleted paths that were not significant. Notably, the path between “Best Interests – Institution” and “Attitudes Toward Hazing” was not statistically significant \( (p = 0.139) \). Although several paths between the other scales and “Best Interests – Institution” were statistically significant, I chose to remove “Best Interests – Institution” from the model, as these paths did not help answer Research Question 3 (“How do
chapter culture, institutional culture, and hazing experienced as new members contribute to HWF members’ attitudes about hazing?”)

Next, I ran the updated model and revised paths based on their statistical significance. Most paths were significant at the $p < .01$ level. I added covariances among “Teamwork and Collaboration,” “Climate and Morale,” and “Belonging and Commitment” because these concepts all measure aspects of organizational culture, and the added covariances are supported by modification indices.

After adding the modification indices, the path between “Teamwork and Collaboration” and “Hazing Policies and Resources” was no longer statistically significant ($p = .159$). The “Teamwork and Collaboration” scale asked respondents to rate the productivity of the chapter’s relationships with stakeholders (SU and the inter/national headquarters). High levels of teamwork and collaboration do not necessarily determine a member’s view of policies and resources to address hazing, so I removed that path from the model. This model fit the data well based on the cut-off criteria (West et al., 2012): $\chi^2$ of 5.858 ($df = 6$, $p = .439$, $n = 270$), RMSEA = < .001, SRMR = .023, CFI = 1.000, and TLI = 1.001, respectively. The final path model is shown in Figure 4.4.

The model examined how individuals’ hazing experiences, chapter organizational culture, and institutional culture impact HWF members’ attitudes about hazing. Interestingly, various aspects of organizational culture impacted students’ attitudes differently. “Belonging and Commitment” had a significant positive relationship with “Attitudes Toward Hazing” ($\beta = .232$), suggesting that as members feel a stronger sense of belonging within and commitment to their chapter, they are more likely to agree that there are situations when hazing is acceptable.
However, the relationship between “Attitudes Toward Hazing” and “Teamwork and Collaboration” was negative ($\beta = -0.253$). That is, members who rate teamwork and collaboration in their chapter highly are less likely to report attitudes that are supportive of hazing. Finally, “Climate and Morale” did not have a significant direct relationship with “Attitudes Toward Hazing.” However, the relationship was mediated by “Views on Hazing Policies and Resources,” which had a significant negative relationship with “Attitudes Toward Hazing” ($\beta = -0.152$). That is, members who had favorable opinions of policies and institutional support at SU were significantly less likely to agree that hazing is sometimes acceptable. From the descriptive analysis, most members reported completing online training through SU (77.4%,
Survey respondents also indicated that they had participated in hazing prevention programs led by a chapter officer (47.4%, \( n = 128 \)), programs led by SU’s Interfraternity Council (41.5%, \( n = 112 \)), and programs led by the SU Greek Life Office (40.4%, \( n = 109 \)).

Next, the model proposed that organizational culture would impact respondents’ views of hazing policies and resources at SU. The only statistically significant path was between “Hazing Policies and Resources” and “Climate and Morale” (\( \beta = .393 \)). The magnitude of this positive relationship indicates that when members rate the climate of their chapter highly, they are also likely to perceive hazing policies and resources within the institution positively.

Further, analysis of the final model revealed a statistically significant negative relationship between “Level of Hazing Experienced as New Members” and “Teamwork and Collaboration” (\( \beta = -0.047 \)), “Climate and Morale” (\( \beta = -0.095 \)), and “Belonging and Commitment” (\( \beta = -0.056 \)). That is, respondents who experienced more types of hazing as new members demonstrated lower levels of agreement about the three measured aspects of organizational culture within their chapters. All relationships were statistically significant.

“Chapter Size” had a statistically significant but weak positive relationship with “Teamwork and Collaboration” (\( \beta = .098 \)) and “Climate and Morale” (\( \beta = .053 \)). The path between “Chapter Size” and “Belonging and Commitment” was not significant, suggesting that members feel a sense of belonging and are committed to their chapters regardless of membership size. However, as chapter size increases, members are more likely to rate teamwork, collaboration, climate, and morale in their chapter highly.
Additionally, “Chapter Size” and “Level of Hazing Experienced as New Members” had significant relationships with “Attitudes Toward Hazing.” “Chapter Size” had a significant positive relationship with “Attitudes Toward Hazing” ($\beta = 0.152$); members of larger chapters were more likely to respond favorably about hazing. “Level of Hazing Experienced as New Members” also had a significant positive relationship with “Attitudes Toward Hazing” ($\beta = 0.127$); as the number of reported hazing behaviors experienced during the new member period increased, members’ agreement that hazing can be acceptable or helpful for organizations also increased.

Table 4.4. Final Path Model Results (n=270)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Std. Estimate</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork and Collaboration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Hazing Experienced as New Members</td>
<td>-0.047</td>
<td>-0.047**</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Size</td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td>0.098***</td>
<td>0.020</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate and Morale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Hazing Experienced as New Members</td>
<td>-0.095</td>
<td>-0.095***</td>
<td>0.016</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Size</td>
<td>0.053</td>
<td>0.053*</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>.014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belonging and Commitment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Hazing Experienced as New Members</td>
<td>-0.056</td>
<td>-0.056***</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Views on Hazing Policies and Resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate and Morale</td>
<td>0.393</td>
<td>0.393***</td>
<td>0.087</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes Toward Hazing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Hazing Experienced as New Members</td>
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<td>0.127***</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter Size</td>
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<td>0.100</td>
<td>0.034</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork and Collaboration</td>
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<td>-0.253*</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belonging and Commitment</td>
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<td>0.232*</td>
<td>0.094</td>
<td>.014</td>
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<td>Views on Hazing Policies and Resources</td>
<td>-0.152</td>
<td>-0.152**</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***$p<.001$, **$p<.01$, *$p<.05$, +$p<.10$
Additional Analyses on Definition and Prevalence of Hazing

In addition to the path analysis, I further explored how survey respondents conceptualized hazing, hazing severity and how they described the prevalence of hazing at SU. Findings help generate knowledge about participants’ understanding of hazing and thus contribute to answering the research questions.

Defining Hazing and Hazing Severity

First, I explored how survey respondents conceptualized hazing. Following the approach of Roosevelt (2018), I conducted principal components analysis on the 17 hazing activities in the survey; respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement that each activity is hazing. I used SPSS 28 to conduct the principal component analysis with varimax rotation. The analysis revealed a KMO measure of sampling adequacy of .943 and a significant Bartlett’s test of sphericity (p < .001).

I used the rotated component matrix to calculate the absolute distance between the cross-loadings of the seventeen behaviors. Roosevelt (2018) used an absolute distance of .25 as a cutoff for separate components. Nine items with factor loadings of .700 or higher and absolute distances between crossloadings greater than 0.250 loaded together into one component labeled “Most Severe Hazing.” Similarly, five items with factor loadings of .700 or higher and absolute distances between crossloadings greater than 0.250 loaded together into a component labeled “Least Severe Hazing.” The remaining three hazing behaviors had no loadings greater than .700, and the absolute distances between the crossloadings ranged from 0.026 to 0.213.

Members widely agreed that severe behaviors such as striking someone with an object, performing sexual acts, requiring someone to be nude, having new members steal an item,
forcing drug or alcohol use, and humiliating members are hazing. They did not agree that having new members perform tasks such as driving people around, participating in a scavenger hunt, or cleaning the fraternity house were hazing, although those requirements for membership met institutional and legal definitions of hazing.

Figure 4.5. Loadings of Most Severe and Least Severe Hazing Behaviors

**Prevalence of Hazing**

The survey directly asked members to rate their level of agreement that their chapter hazes its new members, and most (90.4%, n = 244) responded that they strongly disagree or disagree. However, members’ perceptions of other organizations were much different. About
half of the survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that other fraternities at SU (49.3%) and other teams or organizations at SU (51.1%) haze their new members.

Survey respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement that fraternities and other organizations haze their new members because they want to uphold traditions, create strong members, create group bonding, or create a better fraternity/organization. For the statements about why fraternities haze their new members, about a third of respondents (29.7% to 39.7%) neither agreed nor disagreed. The rate of “neither agree nor disagree” responses was higher (38.5% to 42.9%) in the items about other clubs and organizations, suggesting that HWF members are less certain why other student organizations haze their members. About half of the respondents (49.6%, n = 134) strongly agreed or agreed that fraternities haze their members because they want to create group bonding, which aligns with the previously discussed attitudes toward hazing that prioritized bonding among members.

**Qualitative Phase**

The qualitative phase in the explanatory sequential design helps explain the quantitative findings. During the second phase of the study, I interviewed 17 HWF members using a semi-structured protocol. Research questions 4 and 5 guided my analysis in this phase. Further, I focused on qualitative data that would help explain the findings from the quantitative phase. After coding the interviews using values coding, I identified 41 codes and five themes that participants used to describe the culture of their chapter and the institution, as well as beliefs about hazing and hazing prevention efforts. The five themes were: Collaborative Cultures Enhance Members’ Experiences, Understanding HWFs in Broader Cultures, “The Perception is
That They’re Out to Get Us,” Hazing Policies and Programs Are Not Always Effective, and Hazing is Not Nearly What It Used to Be"

Themes

Theme 1: Collaborative Cultures Enhance Members’ Experiences

During the interviews, participants discussed aspects of chapter culture from the survey, including teamwork and collaboration, climate and morale, and belonging and commitment. Although each HWF has its unique culture, all interview participants described their chapter as collaborative and noted the value that HWF membership has brought to their college experiences.

Teamwork and Collaboration. Schein (2017) observed that “the longer an organization has existed, the more the thoughts and emotions of the members come to be alike” (p. 9). Many interview participants were members of chapters that started or restarted in the past five years, but all participants shared that their chapter functions well as a team regardless of chapter age. A recurring example of chapter culture and functioning as a team was how chapter members worked together to resolve issues. Members recognized that conflict and disagreement are natural parts of organizational membership, but their chapters address issues as they arise. Jeremy stated,

If somebody has a problem with somebody, he could bring it up and other people facilitate it and make sure nothing's wrong. Or if somebody says something that happened, we always get to the bottom of it. There's no covering anything up. There's none of that. Everybody knows the rules, and when they're in that position they have to deal with it.

Participants emphasized the importance of directly addressing conflict and reaching a resolution internally rather than allowing problems to grow or involving people outside of the fraternity.
Other members described how their HWFs offered opportunities to voice their opinions about chapter matters, even when those opinions were dissenting or unpopular. Generally, chapters preferred to resolve conflicts internally and not involve outside parties in fraternity matters. David explained, “There will be disagreements…but it's handled behind the curtains, I guess. We'll always stick together, and if we have issues with one another, we settle that, you know, talk it out.” Several members from newer or newly reestablished HWFs talked about the process of figuring out chapter operations and establishing systems as they went. Some participants described growing pains in their chapter, especially as their membership increased quickly. Robert specifically mentioned that chapter meetings could get contentious, but when the group reached a consensus, the chapter stood behind the final decision.

Participants also described how their chapters supported members' future goals and personal interests. Nick explained that members of his chapter try to assist each other as much as possible and gave an example of how the chapter supported one brother who is pursuing a career in music as a DJ. Nick stated, “There's a lot of support behind him, and anyone who kind of promotes anything that they're trying to do gets a lot of support.” Other times, participants spoke about how their chapters encouraged them in surprising or unexpected ways. For instance, Robert started a Bible study in his chapter, and he shared that he was initially hesitant but found that members were respectful. He explained,

I was really cautious going in because I didn't think they'd be receptive, and a lot of people weren't. But honestly, I got a lot more respect. Not like “Good job,” but it was like people saying, “I'm not a man of faith, but I appreciate what you're doing,” which I didn’t think I’d get.
Participants who described instances of encouragement from their chapter brothers felt that this support positively affected their college and fraternity experiences.

**Climate and Morale.** In measuring climate and morale, I explored how HWF chapters at SU motivate their members to put forth their best efforts and be efficient and productive.

Members recognized that academics were an important part of why they were at SU, and interview participants discussed how their chapter motivated them to succeed in their courses. They spoke about academics in three ways: (1) their chapter does well academically, (2) their chapter has a good balance of social activities and academics, and (3) their chapter is trying to improve its academic performance. Some members noted that a lighter social calendar could positively impact academics. For example, Hunter spoke about his recently chartered fraternity and explained, “We don't do as much, and we're not as established…I still have fun. I still enjoy it. But it definitely is less, which is good and bad because I do better in school.” William also noted that his fraternity’s minimum grade point average (GPA) for initiation was a motivator in his chapter:

> If you're a pledge, you don't get initiated unless you have a 2.5 GPA, so three people in my pledge class didn't get initiated because they had under 2.5, which is not a super high bar, but it's something that, if you're just screwing around and not going to class and not doing your homework, you're not getting in. So I think that's really important.

At a minimum, the chapter’s academic standards can motivate members to focus on their academic pursuits. Without meeting basic scholastic requirements, members may lose access to fraternity membership and its benefits.

Interview participants spoke about their experiences as new members and what their chapter seeks to understand about new members before they are initiated. Participants shared
how early exposure and experiences with their fraternity helped them to see how different chapters treated their members. For example, Johnny Rocket explained,

I took an early bid to my fraternity, so I kind of knew about it going in. I knew they were a good group of guys, valued studying, no hazing. So I knew it was not going to be like the stereotypical Animal House-esque fraternity life.

Several members believed that given the short formal recruitment process, the new member process offers chapters an opportunity to get to know new members more closely before they become full members of the fraternity. Some participants also mentioned that they watch to see how new members engage in social settings before they are initiated. Individual members’ behaviors and actions can reflect on the fraternity, and members were concerned about preserving the chapter’s image and status. Thus, some HWFs viewed the new member process as a trial period to see how new members align with the chapter culture.

In describing the climate of their chapters, members also spoke about diversity. Recently, SU has promoted that it continues recruiting more diverse incoming classes each year. When considering the diversity of their chapters, participants generally felt that their chapters were becoming more accepting of groups other than heterosexual, White, Christian men. Jeremy identified racial diversity as one of his chapter’s strengths, stating, “There’s no discrimination in our fraternity…You don't see a lot of chapters with a lot of different colored people. It's usually just straight White.” Comparing their chapter to other fraternities, most members felt that their chapter was more diverse than other HWFs, though they also recognized that the composition of FSLOs depended heavily on who signed up to participate in recruitment. Some members expressed that the lack of acceptance and diversity among the HWFs reflected broader contexts such as the institutional culture at SU, Southern culture, and toxic masculinity.
Throughout the interviews, participants demonstrated awareness that their chapter and FSLOs overall had diversity issues to confront. While Nick indicated that his chapter accepts people from all over, he also realized that cultural biases have limited who joined HWFs at SU. When I asked about how his chapter might improve, he stated,

I would say a different form of diversity, whether it be racial, sexual identity, sexual preferences, all that kind of stuff. Because it is the South, there are a lot of biases and stuff towards that, that I think can affect some cool people missing out on some fraternities.

Michael Scarn felt that the campus had two different sides and that his chapter aligns with the campus culture of being thoughtful and considerate. He explained,

The campus, when I look at it, seems to have basically two sides: the people who are here for college and are nice and respectful to people and remember the Golden Rule, and then the racists, but that's about it. What are you going to get in the South though, right?

Most participants did not comment on religions when asked about diversity in their chapter, but Billy described his chapter as “extremely open” to different religious identities.

During interviews, several participants made their statements with the condition that other HWFs were the basis for comparison. For example, Nick stated,

I would say for a fraternity—and that's preferencing that with “for a fraternity”—I would say we're racially diverse. We've got a decent chunk of Hispanic people…some Arab people, like Middle Eastern. I think we only have one African American kid, but definitely, this is something that we enjoy: trying to make a diverse group every time we get a new pledge class.

Similarly, Stephen observed, “I would say we're decently open. Although, this question, though, is kind of tricky. I would say predominantly in a fraternity scene, it's definitely more of a White thing.” However, he named several members of his chapter who represented different racial identities.
Interview participants were less certain that their chapters are accepting of different sexual orientations. Billy stated, “I'd say that's the one thing that I would change about, I guess [my fraternity], is there's still a spicy amount of homophobia that gets tossed around.” Some participants expressed that they are open to members of various sexual orientations but are unsure whether their chapter members feel the same way or would be welcoming. Several members shared that having members who were open about their sexual identities had positively affected their chapter experiences. Michael Scarn commented,

We have four to five openly gay members in our fraternity, which I don’t know other fraternities can say, and that's definitely helped as far as the diversity goes. It's helped me recognize my own limitations of my thoughts and then expand that thought out so I can be more accepting of people, more understanding.

Similarly, Llloyd spoke about how learning that there was at least one gay member of his chapter led him to recognize that homophobic slurs were sometimes tossed around carelessly in his chapter. After one of his friends came out as gay, Llloyd stated that he began to reflect on how he spoke and added, “I notice it when someone says that word or when people kind of casually say, ‘Oh, that's gay,’ referring to something negatively just as a habit. And I’m guilty of it previously and actively try not to now.” Members who had direct experiences with diverse groups through their fraternity indicated that this exposure to diversity had changed them for the better. They described themselves and their chapters as more accepting due to their experiences and viewed this expansion of their worldview as a positive aspect of fraternity membership.

**Belonging and Commitment.** In describing their reasons for pursuing fraternity membership, many participants spoke about seeking a sense of belonging through new friendships and support networks. Members described their fraternities as welcoming
environments where they could branch out, make new friends, and find a support system. Jack Daniels explained,

The older guys would always encourage us to kind of go out to the bars [near campus] and meet, and they'd always say, “Make sure you text the guys.” They set up a group chat with us automatically, and they'd be like, “Yeah, never eat alone.”

Jack Daniels also emphasized that his chapter is an extremely close-knit group and shared that he had recently secured an internship through another fraternity brother. In addition to feeling a sense of belonging within their chapters, interview participants noted that joining a fraternity was an effective way to make the larger SU environment feel smaller and more manageable.

Participants also described their chapters as places where they had meaningful social experiences. Most interview participants named social experiences as a top (if not the primary) reason for joining an FSLO, and most felt that their chapters had met their expectations. Derek Corona joined a professional fraternity a year before he decided to pursue membership in a social fraternity. The professional fraternity did not offer many opportunities for members to engage with each other outside of their mutual professional interests, and Derek noted,

That's the one part that I didn't think was as important upfront. But I noticed as time went on, I wanted those friends that just had like lives, you know, just things to do: working on cars, or just whatever. Whatever type of hobbies that I'm into, I wanted to be in a situation where I could meet those types of people, other than school. I mean, everybody's here to do school. That's kind of what led me into my social fraternity.

The social experiences described in interviews ranged from small informal gatherings such as grilling out at a member’s house or the fraternity house to taking bus trips to athletic events, hosting formal and semiformal dances, and throwing large-scale, chapter-specific parties that chapters are known for by the campus community.
Members’ levels of commitment to their HWFs varied among members. Some interviewees discussed the benefits of a lifelong membership in an inter/national organization; several members whose fathers were also HWF members spoke about how their fathers’ continued relationships and engagement with the fraternity served as an example of the connections they could make through fraternity membership. However, others viewed the fraternity experience as something they would enjoy in college but not long after.

Several interview participants shared that they had considered leaving, but nobody cited the treatment of members as a reason for wanting to leave. The financial burden of fraternity membership had led some interview participants to contemplate quitting the fraternity; Nick explained, “The money for it sucks, but obviously the money has to go to fund all of the stuff we’re doing.” Other members shared that they thought about leaving their fraternity to free up their schedule to focus on school or other commitments. Stephen, a first-year student, said,

Sometimes when I'm doing endless amounts of schoolwork, I'm like, “Man, I really wish I wasn't in the fraternity right now.” But other than that, not really. It's like a thought maybe once or twice when I'm under high stress with exams, but not really, because then it's like, every time I go to the house, it's like a burden that's been lifted off of me, which is really nice. You feel at home a little bit, so it's really good.

Similarly, Llloyd mentioned that he thought about leaving his chapter during his senior year when he was starting to focus on life after college but ultimately decided he would like to remain in his chapter for the duration of his time at SU. Nick also stated that he would not want to miss out on events and opportunities that his fraternity offers, adding, “Really, outside of a fraternity, I don’t have those same opportunities to do the stuff we’re doing.” When asked if he had ever considered leaving his chapter, Michael Scarn replied, “Yes, all the time. In fact, one of the reasons why I'm still in [my fraternity] is because I live in the house, and it's so beneficial to live
in the house from a monetary standpoint.” It is important to note, however, that I did not have a way to intentionally recruit members who had left their chapter for any reason.

Although most participants were proud of their chapters, several participants recognized that there is sometimes a stigma behind fraternity membership. For example, Corbin Bleu mentioned that some fraternity members might choose not to emphasize that they are fraternity members when they meet new people or seek other opportunities on campus. Although he identified that SU and society are not always supportive of fraternity life, Robert shared that he wanted to participate in this study to share some of the positive sides of fraternity membership.

**Theme 2: Understanding HWFs in Broader Cultures**

In addition to their organizational culture, HWFs are part of the broader culture of the state, region, and nation. Although most participants stated that they did not feel supported by SU, they indicated that they felt that their chapter fits well with other FSLOs and the overall institutional culture of SU.

**Institutional Culture: Parties and Football Games.** During interviews, several participants recognized the connection between alcohol, partying, and fraternity life. They also recognized that SU has a party culture. David, an engineering major student, stated that SU previously had a reputation as a “party school” but believed that reputation had shifted. Other participants highlighted the parties as an attractive reason to attend SU. For example, Jack Daniels transferred to SU in his second year of college. His first institution did not have the culture he expected, or, “It’s not the party atmosphere or the college experience I was looking for.” After experiencing the social events at SU on the weekends, he decided to transfer. Some
participants named large-scale chapter parties as some of the most significant events during their time in their chapters.

Jeremy observed that because SU fraternities cannot have alcohol or host unregistered parties in their houses, he found that members were more “gentleman-like,” and the frequency of parties was less than he expected after visiting other similar institutions. However, he also shared that many members of his fraternity have the philosophy, “We do a lot of schoolwork during the week, and then come the weekend, we'll go hard.” Finding a balance between academic and social obligations was important for many participants in this study.

Participants cited social media and movies as the sources for their expectations of fraternity life. Comparing SU to his previous institution, Corbin Bleu noted that the culture of SU aligned more with the stereotypes of fraternity and college life that he had seen on social media and in movies. Other members mentioned the 1978 film Animal House but said their experiences were not on the same level as depicted in the film. For example, Michael Scarn said,

My dad showed me Animal House, and he goes, “If your college is experience is anything like this, you're doing it wrong.” (chuckles) And I was like, “OK, OK.” And then when I got here, I realized that it's like ten levels back from Animal House.

Generally, members felt that their chapter experiences were much tamer than the media portrays.

Participants also spoke about the importance of football in the institutional culture. Derek Corona, a first-generation college student, described how his familiarity with SU stemmed largely from what he knew because of SU’s football program.

Well, so I'm actually a first-generation college student, so it was kind of like the [state] school to go to, or at least that's what I grew up around. My family, they are obsessed with football. I don't really like football. So that was, I guess, the most familiar college that I'd heard of.
Later, he stated, “You know, I’m not too big on football, but it kind of is what it is. We’re at SU. You kind of have to know football.” Local students spoke about attending SU football games and tailgates when they were in high school. Similarly, some students whose family members attended SU had grown up engaging with football at SU. For example, Lloyd recalled coming to SU football games as a child with his parents, who were both SU alumni. Similarly, William spoke about attending tailgates at SU with his father’s fraternity.

When asked about significant events in the FSL system at SU, most members stated that allowing fraternities to host tailgates on the green space in the center of campus was one of the most significant moments. Stephen described the green space as “a really good central place to get everybody involved with SU life.” After Sam Clark’s death, fraternity tailgates were relegated to the fraternity houses, which were farther from the stadium, other tailgates, and other game-day activities. The physical separation of the fraternity tailgates from other gameday activities contributed to members’ feelings that SU does not like or support the HWFs.

Participants described football tailgates as a way to get members and guests excited about supporting the SU football team. Stephen explained, “Obviously, we have fun, play loud music, get really hyped up for a football game.” However, these events also require significant effort and collaboration among chapter members. Several participants stated that setting up tailgates was an expectation for new members, though current SU policies require that members from each class be present at the setups. Billy described tailgate setup and preparation as one way for members to bond with each other. In some cases, participating in tailgates is an incentive to maintain high academic standards. Derek Corona shared that in his chapter, members who are not meeting the chapter’s GPA requirements are not eligible to participate in tailgates.
**State Culture: Southern Cuisine and Alcohol.** As of fall 2021, about 70% of SU’s enrollees were in-state students. As a result, much of the SU culture reflects the state's culture. Like many states in the Southeastern United States, the state where SU is situated has a reputation for delicious cuisine. Derek Corona spoke about how one of his chapter’s strengths is that his fraternity cooks “really good food.” Several participants shared that getting together to cook out was one way their chapter members bonded. Derek Corona stated that his upbringing has aligned with his fraternity experience. “I grew up grilling a lot outside, and almost every function we have, we always grill a lot of food.” Food was a central part of the chapter culture, along with football games and social events.

The state also has a reputation for lenient alcohol laws, which has impacted the institutional and organizational culture of individual chapters. However, Sam Clark’s death due to alcohol hazing has made members mindful of the consequences of alcohol use in the fraternity context. Hunter explained the tension between his fraternity culture and the state culture by saying,

There's a strong “no forced drinking” sentiment. Being from [state], drinking is a part of all of our culture when we get here. So yeah, it's weird. It feels like there should be no pledges drinking at any function, because it could be taken the wrong way, but that's just because of the possible consequences. But there's not really a problem of letting them drink on their own.

Several participants described their chapter’s hesitation about new members and alcohol consumption, and some mentioned having new members serve as designated drivers. While these behaviors promoted safer HWF chapters, the differential treatment of new members was concerning.
Southern Culture: Resisting Diversity. When discussing their chapter’s openness to diversity, several study participants indicated that their chapter was influenced by the culture of the Southern United States. Especially considering sexual orientations and gender identities, interviewees felt that the South lags behind other areas of the United States. Speaking about the openness of the FSLO system, Jeremy (an out-of-state student) said, “I definitely feel like there is a place for everyone, but it's hard to find that place for certain people…coming down South, people are a lot less tolerant on sexual orientations and that kind of stuff.” He added that based on comments he has heard other people make, he could not imagine that any fraternity would invite an openly gay or transgender person to join their chapter. Similarly, Logan spoke about the expectations of heterosexuality and masculinity in the South and in fraternity culture.

Like if a member would be a homosexual, he would not share that to the chapter, right? Because in the fraternity culture, that's not something that's widely accepted. That is, it is a tough thing in society to kind of face that. Number one we're in the South. Number two, it's just a bunch of dudes who are supposed to like girls. I mean, at the end of the day, that's how they picture it. And that's problematic, right? And that's not the way it should be, but that is the culture… when I do say that they're supposed to like girls, it's…(pause) How do I put this? I'm sorry, but it's expected. It's just like it's almost weird if you're trying to spew an image of brotherhood and this and that, that people in their fragile masculinity are uncomfortable with people who like the same sex. Participants attributed members’ attitudes about diversity to what they had been exposed to growing up and before coming to college. Most viewed the HWF chapter as an environment that reinforced rather than challenged these viewpoints.

Representing the American Culture. In some cases, participants identified how the institution's culture could also be perceived as the nation's culture. For example, Robert shared a story about one of his fraternity brothers who was an international student; his family “wanted him to have the ‘American’ experience, and they thought that he was going to get that at SU because of the partying and the football,” which Robert and his fraternity brothers thought “was
just so funny.” Derek Corona noted that he had recognized how international students tend to gravitate toward chapters whose cultures reflect their perceptions about life in the United States.

I think that kind of starts with their idea of United States coming in. I had this one friend…he was from, I think it was Italy, and he had this idea of the United States being this crazy place where you can do whatever you want. And then joining a Greek organization where you can do whatever you want, and just go crazy. And I think that’s kind of where that kind of happened. So pretty much wherever they're from, if they just get exposed to whatever that makes them think, you know, the United States is whatever, I think that’s kind of what leads them into whatever fraternity they decide to join.

Especially among international students, this perception of HWFs as American institutions influenced students’ decision of which fraternity to join. The HWF provides a vehicle for members to socialize and experience the national culture in addition to the chapter and institutional cultures.

Theme 3: “The Perception is They’re Out to Get Us”

Organizational Culture Theory recognizes that “every culture is nested in some larger culture and can do only what the larger culture affords, tolerates, or supports” (Schein, 2017, p. 181). In this study, the HWFs were situated within the broader context of SU. During the interviews, members frequently discussed the challenges and frustrations of operating within the institution’s parameters. The 2017 death of Sam Clark precipitated what participants perceived to be a significant culture shift in HWFs at SU. Although William was the only participant who was involved in an HWF in fall 2017, participants who enrolled at SU and joined fraternities in subsequent years generally recognized that many of the rules and regulations in place at SU resulted from the previous tragedy.

Views of SU Administrators. Other than a few participants who had worked directly with Greek Life Office staff members through IFC or student worker jobs, most had not
frequently interacted with SU administrators. However, some members described how they felt that the administration was unsupportive of HWFs. For example, Michael Scarn commented,

I just feel like they’re not in our corner. I think that the only time they talked to us is in a negative sense or something that we have to do, and I think they could just boost relations with us and honestly offer some advice of how to go about all of our fraternal activities because we probably just guess, and then they are like, “Nope, wrong answer, try again.”

Likewise, the strict regulations affected how members felt supported by the institution. Nick explained, “It kind of feels like they’re waiting for us to do something to slip up so they have an excuse to get rid of us instead of just you know, treating things as they come.” Overall, participants felt that SU administrators were more concerned with holding HWFs accountable for violations rather than educating the chapters about how to follow institutional policies.

Since 2017, the institution and state have reformed their hazing policies, and participants perceived that SU has been quick to investigate any reports of hazing, regardless of severity. David described the institution’s attitude as, “No nonsense. You know, if they hear anything fishy going on, they have no hesitation to start investigating.” Corbin Bleu echoed the sentiment, stating, “Hazing is so strict. Like, if you even blink wrong, they'll start an investigation.” As a result of the frequent investigations, HWF members felt that SU had overstepped in its regulation of HWFs.

The numerous investigations and perceived over-regulation were a source of frustration for the participants and their chapters. Members from one HWF recounted that SU disciplined their chapter when there was a beer can in the yard of the fraternity house. Michael Scarn stated, “It just seems like they're just overbearing and making sure we're following all of our rules without necessarily helping us.” Nick had similar feelings; he explained, “I think just the strictness overall, it kind of feels like [they’re] waiting for us to do something to slip up so they
have an excuse to get rid of us instead of just treating things as they come.” Further, Billy felt that students would find a way to engage in the activities they want to do, which could lead to chapters engaging in more risky behaviors. He stated,

It just seems like there's just a disconnect in what the fraternities want and what the school wants, and I think the school doesn't really give a damn about the fraternities or care if they're having a good time. And look, a group of boys are gonna have fun no matter what. They're gonna figure out how to have parties, how to have a good time, regardless of what measures are in place, but they're making it very difficult and having to do more risky things, more underground stuff. Stuff that should just be transparent that, “We're having a party.” This is a normal thing that fraternities do. They have parties.

Further, participants expressed that the institution treated HWFs differently from other campus groups; William explained, “I don't feel like SU handles the fraternities the same as they do other organizations.” Several participants cited instances where FSLOs received unequal rules and treatment compared to other organizations. Speaking about his time as an IFC leader, Carlos shared,

I know a lot of people have complaints that all of these rules and regulations on events or chapter meetings or different things that Greek organizations try to do only applies to them and aren't applied to other organizations. I've seen that, and it's true for tailgating specifically…we literally had our own separate set of rules that we had to follow. Whereas I'm always a proponent of playing it safe and having regulations for a reason, I didn't have an answer to explain to them why we were the only ones that were having to follow certain guidelines and other organizations weren't, and so I think that's just one of those pieces of evidence that they hyperfocus on Greek life.

In fall 2021, SU began allowing FSLOs to host tailgates in the center of campus rather than in their houses. Participants viewed the lifting of these differential regulations as a significant moment for FSLOs at SU.

Similarly, members were frustrated that hazing in other organizations seemed to be taken more lightly than in fraternities. During our interview, William shared a news story about an all-female athletic group that was found in violation of institutional policies and state hazing laws
but had only been required to complete a hazing prevention training course. The charges were dismissed after the members of the team completed the course. Paraphrasing the article, William explained,

The DA [District Attorney] said it was the most fair way to handle it. They're not naming the girls who were the ones hazing because the charges were dismissed. If you replaced “[Team Name]” with some SU fraternity, they're getting kicked off campus.

William wondered aloud if the group received more relaxed consequences because they were women, because they were associated with athletics, or because they were not fraternity members. Later in the interview, he concluded,

If SU says they have no tolerance for hazing on campus, well, I just don't think that's true. I think it's no fraternity hazing. These are the [Team Name] and you know, I'm sure there's hazing on sports teams and the band and most organizations. So I feel like there's like an unfair target put on fraternities—and this is not just at SU, this is every school.

This disparate treatment of a women’s athletic team contributed to members questioning the institution’s application of policies across different groups.

Many participants did not believe that SU supports fraternity life beyond allowing FSLOs to have a presence on campus. Carlos, who previously served as an IFC leader, developed closer relationships with the staff members and administrators and stated,

I have received nothing but unconditional support from them. They’d tell me when an idea was not a good one, when it was a good one, and they helped me out wherever I've asked, so my relationship with the Greek Life Office has been great. But like I said, not everyone has that same opinion up them because not everyone has respect for the people that are in charge of getting chapters in trouble and setting rules.

Similarly, Alan said,

I don't know what they’ve really done or not done for us, but I think they're just trying to keep everybody safe. I don't think they're against fraternities or anything, they're just kind of trying to buckle down on the ones that are putting people in danger.
Most participants had limited interactions with institutional agents, which impacted their perceptions of SU administration.

Other participants had more complex feelings about SU’s support of FSLOs. When I asked Billy how he felt that SU does or does not support fraternities on campus, he initially responded, “I mean, I guess they do by having rush exist and letting us be there. I don't know. They don't really do anything actively to support our existence. They kind of just leave us alone, I guess.” However, as he reflected on SU’s increasingly strict policies, he added, “There's definitely a strong distaste for fraternities, I think, among the SU Greek employees.” However, members who had few or no interactions with the FSL staff or other administrators at SU did not feel supported by the institution. When asked how he felt SU did or did not support fraternities on campus, Johnny Rocket responded, “I would say we feel like there's a target on our backs. The perception is they're out to get us.” This feeling of being monitored by the administration contributed to members’ feelings that SU does not support HWFs.

Interview participants also described frustrating administrative processes, including paperwork and documentation that they perceived as excessive. For example, Stephen recounted some of the steps involved with hosting a registered event and explained,

The statement that SU hates fraternities, I think it’s a pretty real thing, mainly because they watch us like hawks. But if you're going watch us, it's like, watch us in our right standards instead of prohibiting us from doing everything. To register things, it's just aimless amounts of paperwork, and you have to talk to seven different people, and then you have to get in contact with SU PD. It’s all of these things, and it should be easier for fraternities because then we can involve the campus more.

Participants indicated that SU created excessive steps and obstacles to planning and executing social events.
Other participants believed SU was only supportive when there was a benefit for the institution or a chance to bring positive publicity to the university. For example, multiple participants highlighted service work their chapters had done in the state following a natural disaster in fall 2021. Several participants also recalled that one HWF received positive recognition when some of their alumni paid off the mortgage on their chef’s house. Hunter explained,

I think they do support fraternities whenever they do something good, but they're very quick to turn their back…I don't think the Greek Office would tell on the chapter, but if another media source got word and then put it out, [SU would] be really quick to flip.

Participants also spoke about their chapters’ achievements and contributions that they felt the university did not adequately recognize. They were quick to highlight contributions to the campus and community that seemed to have gone undetected. Members of HWFs quickly mobilized around the state to assist with cleanup efforts and bring supplies to affected communities. William stated,

From the administrators and Greek Life Office and now the state law, it doesn’t seem like anyone’s pro-fraternity in the administration of SU that’s like, “Oh, we understand the value they bring and how that attracts kids to our school and philanthropy events they do and they raise money and go do Habitat for Humanity.” We do that every year. We build a house. We’ve raised between $5,000 and $10,000 for [a school in town]…We go do clean-up days over there. And so there are a lot of things that don’t get reported in the news.

William also believed that past administrators at SU had alienated a significant portion of their alumni donors through their lack of support for FSLOs. He felt that other institutions in SU’s athletic conference recognized the value of FSLOs and believed “Greek Life is a huge important part to our school, and we're going to do what we need to do to make sure that they're successful and having a good time and safe and that sort of thing.” However, participants felt that SU did
not sufficiently appreciate the role of HWFs in the campus community or make efforts to support HWFs.

Several participants conceded that some fraternities had previously brought liability and negative publicity to the university. Jeremy specifically stated,

I think that SU supports fraternities, like the idea of having them, but I feel like they make it hard for fraternities to do stuff to promote themselves. Such as, we have to do exchanges at bars. We can't just have a group of girls over at the house; it would be considered a party... I think it's a liability thing, and I think when it comes down to it, it's like they don't want to be liable. They don't want to get sued... which I mean, if I was in their position, I'd probably do the same, but because I'm in the opposite position, I'm going to selfishly say, “That's bullshit.”

Similarly, William noted, “The only thing that's in the news is alcohol and hazing and partying and fights and whatever, but there's tons of value that [fraternities] bring to SU that I just don't think is understood or valued or even considered.” However, current members were quick to separate themselves from previous generations of fraternity members, and some perceived that severe hazing was a result of a few bad members than a product of organizational culture. Jack Daniels stated,

They don't support us at all... I just feel like they really want us off. I mean, I kind of get it, you know. [fraternities] kind of got a bad rap. Kids have died because of some stupid things, but it’s not everybody. Can’t let a few bad apples spoil the bunch.

Other participants recognized these past issues and believed that HWF membership carried a stigma. For example, Corbin Bleu mentioned that some fraternity members might not emphasize that they are fraternity members when they meet new people or seek other opportunities on campus.

Some participants acknowledged that SU has a duty to keep students safe, and regulating fraternity activities is one way to fulfill that responsibility. In his interview, William specifically
mentioned Texas Rho, an organization that was previously affiliated with a national fraternity at the University of Texas but currently does not have recognition from the organization or the university. Recognizing the problems that can arise from organizations that lack accountability structures from inter/national fraternities or higher education institutions, he stated,

They got kicked off, but they’re all extremely wealthy, and they’re having huge issues with sexual assault, but there’s nobody to punish them because they’re not an official organization…they’re just their own thing, which is even more dangerous that there’s zero oversight with that. Yeah, they’ve had huge issues with them having parties and roofy-ing girls and really way worse hazing than anywhere else. And yeah, that’s the kind of stuff that happens…you need to have some accountability to the school and to your national organization.

Similarly, several participants recognized a need for accountability among individual HWF chapters at SU. Five HWF chapters at SU have been suspended or lost institutional recognition since 2017, and the incidents that led to these suspensions have generated negative publicity for SU and all FSLOs. Speaking about one fraternity closing, Logan said,

When it came out that they had done so much damage to that kid, his physical health, right, they brutally hurt him, beat the crap out of him, that was a blow to the Greek Life community. It sucks that we’re all tied together in the system because we all have to hold each other accountable, but that’s so hard to do because all it takes is one incident for all of us to be just hit hard by PR, you know? PR and/or administration, right? I mean, it’s a tough pill to swallow when something goes wrong, especially with another fraternity and it’s not and yours.

Most interview participants did not mention collaboration or informal accountability structures between HWF chapters at SU. Instead, members merely seemed to hope that other HWF chapters would not engage in behavior egregious enough to threaten the continuation of FSLOs at SU.
Despite the perceived lack of support from the institution, HWF members reported having had positive, meaningful experiences in their chapters. At the conclusion of our interview, Robert shared,

I would just like to say I did this [interview] because I want to shed positive light on my experience with the fraternity because it has been a positive experience where I didn’t think it was going to be. And so I mean like I said, SU is not so supportive of fraternity, and the world is not so supportive of fraternity, but just like anything else, it's got its benefits, and it's built on a good ideal, but it's kind of been perverted.

With the exception of Corbin Bleu, all interview participants had chosen to remain in their HWFs. Further, each participant spoke about positive experiences and skills gained through their HWF.

**Views of Other Groups and Stakeholders.** Although the IFC enforces institutional policies, HWF members in this study recognized the role that IFC plays as an intermediary between chapters and SU. Participants who had not served on IFC admitted that their experience with IFC is primarily limited to formal recruitment, but Billy stated, “IFC is like the cushion between the wrath of SU and us, so IFC is great.” However, Lloyd and Carlos both recognized that IFC is often unpopular because it has to enforce institutional policies.

Further, Billy suspected that his chapter’s relationship with IFC would be beneficial if SU began removing FSLOs from campus; he explained,

If fraternities start getting kicked off, we might be one of the last because I think we’re on pretty good terms with the IFC and stuff because we talk to them a lot about what we’re allowed to do, what we’re not allowed to do, things like that. However, other participants did not address how a positive relationship with the IFC could benefit their chapter.

Survey respondents had mixed perceptions about other fraternities at SU.
In interviews, some participants described friction or fighting with other fraternities. However, Robert explained that those members tended to grow out of those behaviors.

I don't know, I just think one of the worst things about fraternities is how like...Because you're in [one fraternity], I'm [in another fraternity], we can't be friends. And I do think that only is something when you're like a freshman/sophomore that's like more—you know, when you go to bars and stuff like that, fights break out because of that stupid stuff. But what I've seen is like as you get older, obviously you know people in other fraternities and stuff, and you can be friends because you're people, you're just in a different group.

Similarly, David shared, “We used to not get along with a lot of other fraternities, but now we've kind of patched that up. And it's back to normal, you know, just nothing. We'll see other people out, and it's no problem.” Competition between fraternities seemed to subside as members progressed through their college years.

**Theme 4: Hazing Policies and Programs Are Not Always Effective**

Members had mixed opinions about the effectiveness of SU’s hazing prevention policies and programs. Some participants believed that hazing prevention programs have been effective at curbing hazing. Acknowledging that SU requires 100% participation in some hazing prevention programs, Alan felt that the institution had used its programs to emphasize the importance of hazing prevention to students. Members felt that these programs clearly delineate what hazing is and the consequences of violating hazing policies and laws. He explained, “Even if people only catch the very important things, it's enough to kind of steer them away because they know the punishment or penalty for [hazing].” However, other participants viewed these programs as chores or inconveniences that most people do not take seriously. For example, Derek Corona stated that SU should “be more effective in how they educate because just a Zoom
meeting sometimes doesn't do it.” Similarly, Stephen described SU’s hazing prevention programs as,

> Honestly, not very effective. It's not a required mandatory thing. We have these meetings, and you can just keep your camera off and not participate, easily just do other homework while these programs are going on, or they force you to do these hour-long clicking through programs and reading and testing, and it's just doesn’t work effectively.

Moreover, several members noted that the answers to the questions in the university-mandated online module were posted on a website, so cheating was prominent. Interview participants were generally not keen on the required online hazing prevention module and viewed it as a chore. When asked about the effectiveness of hazing prevention policies and programs at SU, Carlos answered,

> The main one that comes to mind is the hazing module that pretty much every student has to do. I think the Greek Life Office or just Greek Life or administrators like to think that they're kind of doing the job when they require everyone to send in a hazing certificate that you've done that program, but I don't think that that does anything.

While requiring an annual educational program about hazing demonstrated institutional concern about preventing hazing, interview participants did not feel that current programs change students’ minds about hazing.

> Some participants suggested that different delivery of programs would help, such as presenting the information at in-person programs or bringing guest speakers such as family members of hazing victims. In interviews, members indicated that in-person programming offered by SU had not taken place since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, Johnny Rocket believed members would be more receptive to hazing prevention training from their chapters or inter/national headquarters than SU. Survey responses indicated that HWF members at SU were more likely to agree that their chapter advisors and inter/national headquarters are
looking out for their best interests than SU staff and administrators, so members might take messaging from these groups more seriously. Other participants felt that making an example of other fraternities could help curb hazing. Derek Corona asserted,

> SU can try and educate as much as they can on hazing, but really, in my opinion, what prevents hazing around SU’s campus is just hearing that [in] one fraternity, a couple guys went to jail over whatever. And I feel like that just completely shuts it down. I feel like that's really the most effective tool that LSU has done in the past is take a fraternity and say, “Yeah, you know, you're [suspended]…and everybody gets kicked out of the fraternity.” After that happens, and after a story gets told about that happening, I feel like people take it seriously at that point. But, of course, with the younger guys, they don't really have those stories yet.

According to the study participants, legal consequences for hazing were more likely to change hazing behaviors than institutional policies and programs.

> Some members felt that engaging in hazing is reflective of one’s character and personality. Thus, several interview participants were skeptical about the programs’ effectiveness in changing behavior. For example, Nick observed,

> I would say a lot of it just comes down to what kind of person you are. Like, if you're the type of person that just wants to humiliate somebody or do whatever to somebody because someone did it to you, you're going to do it. I don't think the hazing stuff is going to stop it. It really just comes down to character.

Several members emphasized the importance of seeking out members with morals and standards that align with the chapter’s values to reduce the likelihood of initiating students who want to haze their members.

**Theme 5: Hazing is “Not Nearly What It Used to Be”**

**Decreases in Hazing Following Sam Clark’s Death.** While many aspects of HWF chapter culture are internal, the patterns within the chapters that hazed their members have been disrupted and altered in recent years. Schein (2017) stated that culture is a “pattern or system of
beliefs, values, and behavioral norms that come to be taken for granted as basic assumptions and eventually drop out of awareness” (p. 8). Members attributed the shift in hazing to the larger institutional environment at SU following the death of Sam Clark. However, the reputation of severe hazing at SU has been difficult to eliminate. Carlos explained,

Not everyone believes me when I say this because they also have the preconceived notions of, you know, Sam Clark era of hazing. I was never hazed, I never felt uncomfortable. I knew that if I ever did that, I would just wave, walk out the door, and never come back.

Jeremy shared that an older fraternity member spoke about Sam Clark's death and told his new member class, “That's not going to happen to you. Read the hazing stuff. Believe it. It's not going to happen. We're good.” However, not all HWF chapters have made the same commitment to eliminate severe hazing.

Robert noted that investigations and heavy enforcement of hazing policies by SU staff had crippled fraternity hazing, including behaviors that were not severe. He shared that his fraternity was investigated and found in violation of hazing, which led the fraternity to eliminate behaviors that members viewed as bonding but the university viewed as hazing. He explained,

I don't think the goal for me, at least, is ever to make someone miserable. It's more to like make someone have to do something that's maybe not fun, but you have to do it with someone that you’re doing it with, and that brings you close to that person.

Older participants recalled portions of their new member experience that would meet current institutional definitions of hazing but were permissible in their eyes. Speaking about previous years, one senior recalled,

Yeah, pledges were setting up, cleaning the tables, picking up chairs, setting up for chapter, any kind of setup for anything, party, whatever. But I think it was a great deal because you set up all this stuff, all the parties, all the tailgates, all whatever for a year, and then your next three years, you just show up to everything, and it's…I see why it's called hazing, but most people that I've talked to about it are like, “Yeah, I think it's like a
pretty good deal. You hang out with your pledge brothers, and you set up a tailgate, and you pick up a tailgate, and then you don't set up or pick up ever again.”

For some participants, the convenience of not having to complete these tasks once they were initiated made the differential treatment as new members worthwhile.

Several participants indicated that hazing still exists at SU, though it is less severe than it previously was; William bluntly stated that bonding among fraternity members is “not nearly what it used to be” because SU has become so restrictive. Some participants expressed that they felt that older, more established fraternities were more likely to haze their new members and get away with it; Billy explained, “In my eyes, hazing is never going to stop. It’s not a fixable problem. As long as there are fraternities, there will be hazing, I think. It’s so deeply ingrained in some of these chapters.” However, chapters that were recently established or reestablished were aware of how much work is involved with becoming a recognized chapter, and members do not want to risk losing that recognition. Moreover, the participants tended to feel that hazing is more severe in organizations other than their own. Members tended to acknowledge hazing behaviors in other HWFs while discounting their chapter’s behaviors.

Some participants felt that SU should approach hazing by focusing on severe hazing. For example, Logan suggested,

No matter what the university does, the training that they put in, the education that they make fraternities go through, it's always going to be there, it's just the severity of the hazing that is a problem, right? And what I mean by that is, you are going to have hazing. Like [Sam Clark], that won't happen, right? Like we are at a point where if that does happen, we're getting snipped, right? Greek Life is on such a thin line, and everybody knows that we're getting cut if another [Sam Clark] level event happens. So what that means is that fraternities will do minor hazing to get over that…So I mean, hazing is always going to be a thing. It's just the severity of the hazing that people understand they can't do. They're always going to work between the lines.
Similarly, Billy thought that “hazing would naturally get less severe” if the institution did not label all behaviors targeted toward new members as hazing. For example, rather than trying to eliminate any type of hazing, Billy suggested that SU could continue to restrict forced or coercive behaviors but “encourage and facilitate safer and more mild hazing practices” by establishing safeguards to prevent accidents and setting up an institutional helpline to contact if accidents occur.

Several interview participants joined a fraternity that members of Sam Clark’s pledge class restarted. These participants mentioned the influence of people who knew Sam Clark on the overall chapter culture. Speaking about this effect, one member explained,

On numerous occasions they have given us all a rundown of things that they were subjected to, things that happened, and they were comfortable with sharing…so as a result of seeing the worst of it, they were pretty much very committed to not having a repeat of that or anything new.

As most of those members have graduated or are approaching graduation, participants also discussed their apprehensions about the future culture of their chapter. A member noted that the influence of those members had been vital to establishing a chapter culture that is unsupportive of hazing. However, introducing new traditions can initiate a pattern of hazing within HWF chapters.

Participants also cited the legal consequences of hazing as a deterrent for hazing at SU. In the years following the death of Sam Clark, the state laws have been updated to include more severe consequences for hazing perpetrators. Additionally, chapter leaders are held accountable if their chapters are found responsible for hazing. As a result, some members have resisted pursuing leadership positions in their chapters. For example, Robert has aspirations to become a dentist, and he stated, “I know I have a future to look forward to, and I don't want to be tied to
something if we get accused of some stupid allegation.” Although Robert generally trusted his chapter brothers, he added, “You have 120 guys, you might have one bad apple who does something wrong and screws it for everyone. But I would say that I don’t think that’s going to happen. But I don't want to jeopardize it.” William and Lloyd mentioned similar issues for leaders in their chapters.

Alan reported that his chapter treats new members “really well,” explaining, “Compared to other [fraternities] from what I’ve heard at least, I think we’re doing a really good job of not pushing too far into stuff that's not cool or messed up or whatever.” After probing about the behaviors his chapter tries to avoid, Alan elaborated about hazing, stating,

I’m sure they all say this, but I actually genuinely say that in [medium fraternity] we do not haze, which is really cool, especially getting as big as we have. It's a really chill pledgeship and really just fun in my opinion.

Recognizing that members could have fun and bond with each other without hazing contributed to a chapter culture that was positive and meaningful without harming members.

**Defining and Identifying Hazing.** The variation in definitions of hazing was evident in the qualitative phase of the study. In interviews, members delineated hazing behaviors as severe and inconvenient. For example, Hunter commented, “I know the alcohol hazing and the physical hazing, that could really hurt people.” Several interview participants shared examples of “bonding experiences” that met institutional and legal definitions of hazing but were perceived as harmless. Notably, members were less likely to identify activities that they personally experienced as hazing. For example, members spoke about giving rides to active members, setting up tailgates, or cleaning the fraternity house during their new member periods, but they did not view these as hazing.
Members also recognized how some behaviors they perceived as harmless could escalate into more severe hazing. When I asked Billy when he thought the institution should be involved or concerned, he responded, “I'd say pretty much anything that could cause serious harm or death, which that's a very vague line because drinking can do that.” Other members also recognized that the line between severe and inconvenient hazing could be blurry. As an example, Corbin Bleu spoke about the activities that new members engage in to demonstrate their commitment to the fraternity. Discussing the various definitions of hazing, he stated,

I know the technical term is forcing someone to do something that they don't want to do, but it's really hard to determine whether someone wants to do something or not or if they think it's too far, because there is this thought process of proving yourself.

The choice between avoiding harm and proving oneself to gain entry into an organization creates a dilemma for many hazing victims.

Multiple interview participants explained that creating a bond among the new members was the most important part of their chapter’s new member process, but they recognized that there are ways to facilitate bonding without hazing. Alan described his new member experience as “fun” and mentioned several activities that his fraternity did when he was a new member, including playing laser tag and paintball, taking bus trips to professional sporting events, and hanging out together on campus. While Nick recognized the importance and purpose of creating a bond among members, he stated,

Pledgeship is important because it builds that bond. It's kind of like joining a new sports team or like when you join the military, you do all the stuff you have to do as a pledge, and it brings you and your brothers together. It’s fun. It doesn't have to necessarily be miserable.
Robert noted a difference in bonding across new member classes in his fraternity after his chapter was disciplined by the university and had to eliminate some of their new member activities that were considered hazing. He shared,

> It's things that are inconvenient, but they're pretty hilarious when you look back at them, and we couldn't do any of that this year. I guess I get all the hazing precautions when it comes to the safety of an individual, but I don't think this year's pledge class and the pledge class above ours are nearly as close as we are because they didn't have to do some of those little stupid things that we had to do.

Although several participants recognized that HWFs could find ways to facilitate bonding in the chapter without hazing, they also felt that SU’s definition of hazing severely limited the activities they could do.

Robert also observed that the most recent new member class seemed to be spending more time going out drinking together since they had fewer requirements from the chapter. However, several interview participants expressed that their treatment was just part of becoming an initiated member of their organization. For example, Billy observed that HWFs that initiated their new members quickly appeared to have more cliques and less unity among the chapter members; speaking about the new member experience in his chapter, he explained, “You're gonna go through pledgeship, you're gonna take your licks, you're gonna get through it, and then you're an active member. You know, it's just a rite of passage.” Similarly, Logan mentioned that his new member class had to set up tailgates and clean the fraternity house after events, but he did not have a problem with performing those duties. He explained, “We were doing menial tasks that they wanted us to do, right? So, I mean, yes, that was not fun, but it's a part of the process. I mean, you do your due time, you know?” Recalling that he had to set up events during his new member experience, William specifically reflected, “I think it was a great deal because
you set up all this stuff, all the parties, all the tailgates, all whatever for a year, and then your next three years, you just show up to everything.” Overall, interview participants indicated that the differential treatment only lasted until their chapter recruited its next group of new members. Additionally, they indicated that the benefits of becoming an active member were worth enduring whatever their HWF chapter required.

**Prevalence of Hazing.** Survey respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement about whether their fraternity, other fraternities at SU, and other teams and organizations at SU besides fraternities haze their members. In both the survey and interviews, members perceived that other fraternities engaged in more or worse hazing than their chapter. Whereas only 2.6% (n = 7) of members strongly agreed or agreed that their fraternity hazes their new members, about half strongly agreed or agreed that other fraternities (47.8%, n = 129) and other organizations (48.1%, n = 130) haze their new members. Speaking about other fraternities, Nick commented,

> Yeah, there are definitely ones out there that still [haze], but it's not any of the ones that my friends are still involved in, so technically, the stuff I have heard is like word-of-mouth stuff. But it is pretty regularly accepted word of mouth.

As discussed previously, members were less likely to identify behaviors they personally experienced as hazing. Further, participants’ definitions of hazing generally did not include some behaviors that SU or the state law would treat as hazing.

Like Nick, Logan had heard about other fraternities hazing but had not directly witnessed the behaviors. He shared, “I've heard of some Greek organizations hazing. It's more hearsay, but I'm sure people do it. Hazing broadly, I've heard of non-Greek organizations hazing, but the emphasis is on Greek hazing.” Johnny Rocket said that most on-campus organizations probably do not haze, though he acknowledged the possibility of hazing in sports teams or the band,
stating, “I don’t know if that's just an internal belief, but I feel like they'd be more likely to have rites of passages and trials like that for underclassmen.” Thus, HWF members felt it was unfair to blame all hazing on FSLOs.

Considering the prevalence of hazing today, members felt that hazing had significantly decreased. When asked how he would describe the current hazing culture at SU, Nick responded,

I would say vastly improved from a lot of the controversies from when I was in high school and looking at Greek Life because I really didn't experience hazing. My roommate in [another fraternity] didn't experience hazing…obviously, there's that whole vow of secrecy thing that a lot of people have, but a lot of people are pretty upfront with what's happened when they know that you've also pledged. I really haven't heard anything to do with real hazing.

William, who shared several hazing experiences during his new member period, stated, “The bonding is not nearly what it used to be. It's a lot more restrictive.” Some participants attributed the decrease in hazing to the increased regulation of chapters and investigation of hazing reports, though other participants felt that the institutional oversight had simply driven chapters to be more secretive with their hazing and take the behaviors “underground.” Discussing the current hazing culture at SU, Billy explained,

It hasn't died out necessarily, it's just gone underground, and it's gotten more dangerous for that. They’re upping the punishments for hazing, and things like that, so it doesn't make people do it less, it just makes them hide it, which ends up with situations like the [closed HWF] thing where people are terrified to get them help because they know they'll get into a ton of trouble if they do and get kicked off. What they're doing with just sort of ham-fistedly upping the punishment for hazing, they're not fixing the problem. They're just making it more dangerous in a lot of cases.

Several participants also noted that current HWF members were less likely to brag about hazing experiences than they were in the past. Whereas many HWF members might have previously shared stories about hazing in their fraternities, participants felt that the possibility and consequences of a hazing investigation had quieted any boasting about enduring hazing.
**Cycle of Hazing.** Following Sam Clark’s death, several members of his new member class joined efforts to restart a previously closed chapter. Several interview participants spoke about the legacy of these members and how their experiences contributed to a chapter culture that was unsupportive of hazing. Speaking about the members who restarted his chapter, one member explained,

Their impact was definitely felt and has been as now those people are graduating, and it's almost a completely new roster of people in the fraternity. That's when I start to worry. Traditions kind of break down, each class tops the other one, and that's how things like [hazing] kind of pervade or persist.

He described his fraternity as “above average” for not tolerating hazing or mistreating members, an aspect of his chapter that made him proud. However, he also recognized the potential for hazing to escalate over time. He remarked,

Going forward, I could understand and see how this class wants to do more. And that's just the general pattern that occurs: you have to outdo whatever was done to you, and that escalates things, and you lose…the values that were instilled in us by those guys that we had from the other fraternity.

Participants knew that stopping the escalation of hazing practices was important for preserving a chapter culture that is unsupportive of hazing, but they were unsure how to disrupt the cycle.

Although members had varying views about the effectiveness of SU’s hazing prevention policies and programs, several participants effectively described the cycle of hazing, including how relatively harmless activities escalate into severe hazing. Noting parallels with other types of violence, Nick explained, “It creates a cycle where it's, ‘Well, I got hazed, so you have to get hazed,’ and then often it gets worse. It's like, ‘Oh, well, they did this to me, so I'm gonna do this to you.’” Similarly, Michael Scarn discussed how the new members in his chapter were not
hazed but have expressed curiosity about differentiating treatment of new and initiated members. He said,

The new members kind of have a distorted view, and they're like, “Oh, but like what if we make them wear dress shirts to chapter? Just to chapter?” But you see that starts a slippery slope. Even though SU says that's OK to do like—I don’t know, I guess it's different because I'm older, and I'm just trying to preserve my chapter in the long term after I'm gone—but I know how those things can snowball. That's how they start. Nobody starts with, “We're gonna have those pledges walk on nails.” Nobody walks in the room and starts with that. It's more like, “Yeah, we're going to have this guy hold a grape for the whole day, and he's going to love it.” You know?

Participants who said their chapters do not haze noted that in addition to preventing hazing behaviors from the beginning of their membership, they needed to educate younger members about the dangers and risks associated with hazing.

**Mixed Methods Integration**

In an explanatory sequential design, the researcher revisits data from both phases findings to see how they corroborate each other (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Johnson et al., 2007). In the mixed methods integration phase, I considered how the quantitative and qualitative data worked together to generate new knowledge (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018). I focused on integrating previously-reported findings to answer Research Question 6. I emphasized how chapter cultures (i.e., teamwork and collaboration, climate and morale, and belonging and commitment) and institutional cultures (i.e., best interests, hazing policies and resources, institutional treatment of fraternities) related to hazing in HWF chapters.

**Chapter Culture**

**Teamwork and Collaboration**

The “Teamwork and Collaboration” scale included four items that asked members to rate their level of agreement about whether their chapter functions as a team, confronts conflict
constructively, and has productive working relationships with their headquarters and SU. In the model, there was a negative relationship between “Teamwork and Collaboration” and “Attitudes Toward Hazing,” (\(\beta = -0.253\)), which demonstrates that members who perceive their chapter to work well as a team are less likely to be supportive of hazing new members. Thus, facilitating teamwork and collaboration in HWFs may be one way to change the culture of hazing.

**Climate and Morale**

The “Climate and Morale” scale included eight items that asked members to consider how their chapter motivates them, treats members, and embraces diversity. In the model, “Climate and Morale” did not have a direct relationship with “Attitudes Toward Hazing.” Instead, the relationship was mediated by “Hazing Policies and Resources.” There was a positive relationship between “Climate and Morale” and “Hazing Policies and Resources” (\(\beta = .393\)), which suggests that when members perceive their chapter to be accepting, respectful, and trustworthy, they also believe the institution’s hazing policies and resources are effective.

The negative relationship between “Hazing Policies and Resources” and “Attitudes Toward Hazing” (\(\beta = -0.152\)) indicates that members who perceive the institution’s hazing policies and resources to be effective are less likely to agree that there are times when hazing is acceptable or purposeful. Cultivating attitudes that are unsupportive of hazing may shift the culture of HWFs that haze their members and reduce members’ perception that hazing is acceptable under some circumstances.

**Belonging and Commitment**

The final “Belonging and Commitment” scale contained eight items that asked members to rate how connected they feel to their HWF chapters, whether they intend to leave the chapter,
and their perspectives on loyalty. The relationship between “Belonging and Commitment” and “Attitudes Toward Hazing” was positive ($\beta = .232$), suggesting that members who feel a stronger sense of belonging within and commitment to their chapter are more inclined to agree that there are situations when hazing is acceptable. “Belonging and Commitment” was the only cultural scale that had a positive association with “Attitudes Toward Hazing.” The relationship suggests that one reason hazing may persist is that members believe hazing facilitates belonging and commitment to the chapter.

**Institutional Culture**

**Best Interests**

Survey respondents and interview participants recognized outside groups’ role in supporting their chapters and cultivating safe, healthy environments. However, members were more likely to agree that their organizational groups and stakeholders (alumni, advisors, and headquarters staff) are looking out for their best interests than institutional stakeholders (IFC, the Greek Life Office, and other SU administrators). Interview participants described SU as strict and overbearing, but they also noted that stricter policies and more frequent investigations made some chapters too afraid to haze their new members, thereby shifting the hazing culture at SU.

**Hazing Policies and Resources**

Among three institutional culture variables, “Hazing Policies and Resources” was the only scale included in the final path analysis model. When considering the hazing prevention policies at SU, participants were not confident that the institutional policies were effective at preventing hazing in fraternities and other organizations at SU. Several interview participants indicated that a desire to haze others depends heavily on the individual and is not likely to
Table 4.5. Joint Display of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings (n=270) – Chapter Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Interview Quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teamwork and Collaboration</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of my chapter function as a team.</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>0.712</td>
<td>“I think a lot of people do notice that we are actually a pretty close-knit group. We like that because we really do have each other's backs no matter what.” (Jack Daniels)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of my chapter constructively confront problems.</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>0.866</td>
<td>“If somebody has a problem with somebody, he could bring it up and other people facilitate it and make sure nothing's wrong. Or if somebody says something that happened, we always get to the bottom of it.” (Jeremy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter has a productive working relationship with SU.</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>0.771</td>
<td>“We have a lot of support from our national fraternity. We have good relationships with them.” (Carlos)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter has a productive working relationship with its inter/national headquarters.</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>0.759</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Climate and Morale</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter motivates me to put forth my best efforts.</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>0.846</td>
<td>“If you're a pledge, you don't get initiated unless you have a 2.5 GPA, so three people in my pledge class didn't get initiated because they had under 2.5, which is not a super high bar, but it's something that, if you're just screwing around and not going to class and not doing your homework, you're not getting in.” (William)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter respects its members.</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>0.731</td>
<td>“I would say for a fraternity—and that's preferencing that with “for a fraternity”—I would say we're racially diverse.” (Nick)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter is accepting of different religious identities.</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>0.689</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter is accepting of different sexual orientations.</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>0.843</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter motivates people to be efficient and productive.</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>1.130</td>
<td>“If a member would be a homosexual, he would not share that to the chapter, right? Because in the fraternity culture, that's not something that's widely accepted.” (Logan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter is accepting of different sexual orientations.</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>0.836</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Item</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Interview Quotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel like 'part of the family' in my chapter</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>0.851</td>
<td>“Leaving the fraternity is a thought maybe once or twice when I'm under high stress with exams, but not really, because then it's like, every time I go to the house, it's like a burden that's been lifted off of me, which is really nice. You feel at home a little bit, so it's really good.” (Stephen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel a strong sense of belonging to my chapter.</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>0.845</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I had not already put so much of myself into my chapter, I might consider leaving.</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>1.262</td>
<td>“One of the reasons why I'm still in [my fraternity] is because I live in the house, and it's like so beneficial to live in the house in a monetary standpoint.” (Michael Scarn)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would be too hard for me to leave my chapter right now, even if I wanted to.</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>1.368</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that a member must always be loyal to his chapter.</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>1.052</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Survey items used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly agree (5)
change based solely on policies. This finding suggests that institutions seeking to shift the hazing culture must extend their efforts beyond policy implementation.

Compared to their views of various programs, study participants were more likely to agree that SU’s staff and administrators provide effective resources for stopping hazing and are prepared to address major hazing incidents. However, there was some doubt about the effectiveness of current programs and resources. Although some members felt that the hazing prevention programs and resources informed students of the definitions of hazing and the consequences of hazing violations, others perceived the programs as chores that were ineffective in changing the chapter or institutional culture around hazing.

**Institutional Treatment of Fraternities**

Most members agreed that SU treats HWFs differently from other groups and organizations on campus. Some felt that SU disproportionately targets fraternities more than other organizations, and others felt that SU cares less about hazing than policing fraternity activities. These attitudes led several of the HWF members in this study to resent or distrust SU’s motives in overseeing fraternities. As a result, members were not inclined to trust the institution, which may create challenges for shifting chapter and institutional hazing cultures.

**Organizational Culture and Hazing**

Most survey respondents (67.4%, n = 182) strongly disagreed or disagreed that SU’s campus culture promotes hazing. Moreover, interview participants did not indicate that hazing in student teams or organizations resulted from the campus culture. Instead, some participants identified hazing as a way that organizations help members bond with each other.
Table 4.6. Joint Display of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings (n=270) – Institutional Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Interview Quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Best Interests</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The following groups are looking out for my chapter’s best interests:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni of our chapter</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>0.877</td>
<td>“Our alumni have a really big presence in our chapter just because we got our charter back just now. Obviously, if you get your charter back, you don’t want to just lose it immediately.” (Stephen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our chapter advisors</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>0.669</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our inter/national headquarters</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>0.922</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other fraternities at SU</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>1.123</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Interfraternity Council (IFC) at SU</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>1.177</td>
<td>“We used to not get along with a lot of other fraternities, but now we’ve kind of patched that up.” (David)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Greek Life Office at SU</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>1.295</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other SU administrators</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>1.332</td>
<td>“I think that SU supports fraternities, like the idea of having them, but I feel like they make it hard for fraternities to do stuff to promote themselves.” (Jeremy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hazing Policies and Resources</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SU’s policies against hazing help prevent hazing in fraternities at SU</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>1.178</td>
<td>“The main [program] that comes to mind is the hazing module that pretty much every student has to do. I think the Greek Life Office or just Greek Life or administrators like to think that they’re kind of doing the job when they require everyone to send in a hazing certificate that you've done that program, but I don’t think that that does anything.” (Carlos)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SU’s policies against hazing help prevent hazing in other organizations and teams at SU</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>1.233</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SU staff and administrators provide effective resources for stopping hazing</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>1.111</td>
<td>“They've been somewhat effective at keeping a fear towards a fraternity and saying, ‘Yeah, if you get caught, you're gonna get kicked off.’ So I feel like that probably proves some effectiveness.” (Jack Daniels)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SU staff and administrators are prepared to address major hazing incidents</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>1.164</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(table cont’d)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Item</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Interview Quotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When it comes to hazing policy enforcement, SU targets fraternities more than other organizations.</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>0.936</td>
<td>“If SU says they have no tolerance for hazing on campus, well, I just don't think that's true. I think it's no fraternity hazing… I'm sure there's hazing on sports teams and the band and most organizations. So I feel like there's like an unfair target put on fraternities—and this is not just at SU, this is every school.” (William)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SU is more concerned with policing fraternity activities than preventing hazing.</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>1.035</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Survey items used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly agree (5)
Survey respondents and interview participants indicated that other fraternities, teams, and organizations at SU haze their new members, but their chapter does not. Overall, members were not confident that fraternities or other organizations haze their new members for any of the reasons listed on the survey. Interview participants acknowledged that one of the most important parts of the new member process in their HWF is allowing new members to bond with each other. While some members felt that hazing helps HWFs achieve this bonding, other participants described activities their chapter does to facilitate bonding without hazing. Thus, the chapter culture related to hazing varied across HWFs in this study.

**Summary**

In the quantitative phase, the survey responses provided insight into the demographic characteristics of HWF members at SU and their experiences in their fraternities. Further, the survey explored members’ perceptions of their chapter and institutional culture, attitudes toward hazing, beliefs about why student organizations haze, and views of various hazing prevention programs and policies. Responses were analyzed with EFA, CFA, and path analysis. CFA confirmed that the existing chapter culture scales (teamwork and collaboration, climate and morale, belonging and commitment) effectively measured HWF members’ perspectives of chapter culture. EFA determined that newly developed survey items loaded into five groups: views of hazing policies and resources, institutional treatment of fraternities, attitudes toward hazing, and two categories of stakeholders looking out for their chapter’s best interests (organizational and institutional). In all three CFA scales, two of the EFA scales (i.e., attitudes toward hazing, views of hazing policies and resources), the level of hazing experienced as new
Table 4.7. Joint Display of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings – Hazing (n=270)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Interview Quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitudes Toward Hazing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazing is unacceptable under any circumstance. (reverse-scored)</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>1.114</td>
<td>“We would mostly set up tailgates, take tailgates down, clean the house if there was a party or whatever. We were doing menial tasks that they wanted us to do, right?” (Logan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazing is acceptable as long as nobody gets hurt.</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>1.053</td>
<td>So, I mean, yes, that was not fun, but it’s a part of the process. I mean, you do your due time, you know?” (Logan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazing is acceptable as long as there is a purpose behind the behavior.</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>1.054</td>
<td>“There’s a strong no forced drinking sentiment…there’s no physical beating at [fraternity]. Those two things are very not acceptable. The worst thing that happens is you pick up someone’s food on your way to the house. That was it.” (Hunter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazing is a rite of passage into an organization.</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>1.048</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hazing at SU</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My chapter hazes its new members.</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>0.745</td>
<td>“As far as hazing, not everyone believes me when I say this because they also have the preconceived notions of you know, Sam Clark era of hazing. I was never hazed, I never felt uncomfortable.” (Carlos)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other fraternities at SU haze their members.</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>1.193</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other teams and organizations at SU (besides fraternities) haze their new members.</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>1.300</td>
<td>“Yeah, there are definitely ones out there that still [haze], but it's not any of the ones that my friends are still involved in, so technically, the stuff I have heard is like word of mouth stuff. But it is pretty regularly accepted word of mouth.” (Nick)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SU’s campus culture promotes hazing.</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>0.995</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fraternity Reasons for Hazing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraternities haze their new members because…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They want to uphold traditions.</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>1.076</td>
<td>“Pledgeship is important because it builds that bond. It's kind of like joining a new sports team or like when you join the military, you do all the stuff you have to do as a pledge, and it brings you and your brothers together.” (Nick)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They want to create stronger members.</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>1.056</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They want to create group bonding.</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>1.139</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They want to create a better fraternity.</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>1.102</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table cont’d)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Interview Quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other organizations haze their new members because...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Mean</strong> 3.31 <strong>SD 1.027</strong>  “I've had no experience with that so I can't really comment confidently, but from what I've heard, there are hazing rituals, things like that that exist in definitely probably sports teams. Probably the band, probably in most other organizations. I'm in the Pre-Medical Society. There's not hazing in that, and I would say most other on-campus organizations are like that. There are probably a few sports teams—which I don’t know if that's just an internal belief, but I feel like they'd be more likely to have rites of passages and trials like that for underclassmen.” (Johnny Rocket)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They want to uphold traditions.</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>1.026</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They want to create stronger members.</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.071</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They want to create group bonding.</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.071</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They want to create a better team/organization.</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>1.127</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Survey items used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly agree (5)
members, and chapter size were included in the subsequent path analysis model. Path analysis demonstrated that the level of hazing experienced as new members directly impacts the three measured areas of chapter culture negatively, whereas chapter size directly impacts teamwork and collaboration and climate and morale positively. Additionally, chapter culture, chapter size, and level of hazing experienced as new members all influenced members’ attitudes toward hazing. Teamwork and collaboration negatively impacted attitudes toward hazing, whereas belonging and commitment positively impacted hazing. Climate and morale positively impacted members’ views of hazing policies and resources, which in turn negatively impacted participants’ attitudes toward hazing.

Interviews in the qualitative phase of the study explored questions that arose from the analysis of the survey data and gathered additional details about the areas covered in the survey. After transcribing and coding the interviews, I identified five themes about HWF members’ experiences in their fraternities. These themes included views of their chapter culture, institutional culture, institutional support, hazing policies and programs, and hazing in their chapter and at SU. Participants described their chapters as collaborative environments and acknowledged that HWF membership enhanced their college experiences. They also recognized that their chapters participated in and were influenced by broader cultures at the institutional, state, and national levels. Most participants felt that hazing at SU had significantly decreased following policy changes that resulted from a student hazing death. Members who shared personal experiences with hazing viewed their behaviors as minor and indicated that the differential treatment they experienced as new members had helped them connect with other
members of their chapter. No participants described current hazing behaviors in their chapters, although they perceived that other HWFs and organizations at SU haze their members.

During the mixed methods integration phase, I combined the survey data with the interview findings to see how both datasets explained additional phenomena about chapter culture and hazing in HWFs. In most ways, the qualitative interviews confirmed and elaborated on the findings of the quantitative phase. For example, participants in both phases rated their chapters favorably. However, there were times when the qualitative findings challenged the survey results. For example, most interview participants felt that hazing policies and programs at SU were not effective, though survey respondents were neutral or unsure about the effectiveness of programs and policies. Overall, the level of hazing experienced as new members, chapter size, chapter culture, and institutional culture influenced members’ attitudes toward hazing. Members of larger chapters perceived their chapter culture positively, but members who experienced higher levels of hazing as new members viewed their chapters less favorably. Perceptions of the chapter and institutional culture significantly impacted members’ attitudes toward hazing. Teamwork and collaboration and views of hazing policies and resources negatively influenced member attitudes toward hazing, and climate and morale positively affected participants’ views of institutional hazing policies and resources. However, the level of hazing experienced as new members, chapter size, and belonging and commitment had a negative relationship with members’ attitudes.
CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

Hazing incidents occur in many types of groups and organizations, but in recent years, historically White fraternities (HWFs) have been the sites of severe hazing behaviors that lead to death or serious injury (Allan & Madden, 2012; Collman, 2019). As a result, hazing has been identified as a significant problem within FSLOs and HWFs, and observers have proposed that hazing is a product of cultural issues within the organizations (Camarillo, 2014; Parks & Parisi, 2019; Reedy, 2017). However, previous research has not deeply explored organizational culture and how culture contributes to hazing within HWFs. Thus, I conducted this study to specifically examine how organizational culture (chapter and institutional culture) is related to hazing in HWFs at one university.

In this chapter, I interpret the findings presented in Chapter Four, provide answers to the study’s research questions, and offer implications and recommendations for theory, practice, and future research:

1. Based on the current sample, how well do the three existing organizational culture scales (teamwork and collaboration, climate and morale, belonging and commitment) measure HWF members’ perspectives on chapter culture?

2. What is the underlying structure of the survey items that measure institutional culture and HWF members’ attitudes about hazing?

3. How do chapter culture, institutional culture, and hazing experienced as new members contribute to HWF members’ attitudes about hazing?
4. How do undergraduate members of HWFs describe the culture of their chapters and institutions?

5. How do undergraduate members of HWFs describe the prevalence of hazing in their chapters and within their institutions?

6. How does organizational culture (chapter culture and institutional culture) relate to hazing in HWF chapters?

**Discussion**

At the time of this study, there were 16 HWFs in the FSL community at SU. Each chapter ranges in size, time on campus, disciplinary history, reputation, and values. The 270 survey respondents in the quantitative phase reported their individual backgrounds and fraternity experiences as well as their attitudes and perceptions about their chapter’s culture, support from other groups, and hazing. In the qualitative phase, 17 participants expanded upon the survey results by describing their backgrounds and experiences in their chapter and at SU. Findings from both phases extended existing knowledge, and integrating both phases derived additional meaning from the study findings.

**Quantitative Findings**

**Descriptive Analysis Findings**

Applying descriptive analysis helped me understand the demographic characteristics of the study’s participants. The survey had a relatively low response rate (13.9%), but compared to the institution’s enrollment, White students were overrepresented in the sample (88% in HWFs compared to 67% of undergraduate students) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022). Additionally, the survey respondents reported being first-generation students at a much lower
rate than at SU (6.3% compared to about 40%). Two-thirds of the students in the sample reported in-state residency, compared to 72% at SU overall. All of the survey respondents were 24 or younger, but about 4% of undergraduate students at SU are 25 or older. When interpreting the findings of this study, it is important to consider the demographics and background characteristics of the sample.

**Factor Analysis Results**

Through exploratory factor analysis (EFA), I determined the underlying structure of survey items about institutional culture and hazing. I confirmed that existing scales sufficiently measured HWF members’ perceptions of their chapter culture through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Because previous research has not used these methods to study culture in HWFs, it was especially important to ensure that the measures applied to this study were appropriate for the study population.

In the EFA, the seven items about perceptions of who was looking out for the chapter’s best interests loaded into two distinct groups: organizational (alumni of the chapter, chapter advisors, and the inter/national headquarters) and institutional (other fraternities at SU, the interfraternity council [IFC] at SU, the FSL office at SU, and other SU administrators). Survey respondents were more likely to agree that groups within their fraternity were looking out for their chapter’s best interests compared to groups within SU. Qualitative data provided clues to explain why survey items loaded into distinct factors. In interviews, HWF members stated that they generally do not feel supported by external groups, staff, or administrators at SU. However, people tend to trust others who share common characteristics (Fosnacht & Calderone, 2020) and those of in-groups (Foddy et al., 2009). Recognizing the two distinct groups is critical for
informing organizational and institutional approaches to hazing prevention. It is possible that within the fraternity sub-environment, fraternity members view the university as an out-group and are less inclined to trust institutional agents or members of different fraternities.

Similarly, in the EFA, survey items about hazing policies and resources at SU loaded into two separate factors: one focused on the institutional treatment of fraternities (e.g., “When it comes to hazing policy enforcement, SU targets fraternities more than other organizations”) and another focused on the effectiveness of policies, staff, and administrators (e.g., “SU staff and administrators provide effective resources for stopping hazing”). While participants were inclined to agree about items related to the institutional treatment of fraternities, they were less certain about the effectiveness of policies, staff, and resources. In the qualitative phase, most participants stated that they had few or no interactions with the FSL Office or other SU administrators. It is possible that participants demonstrated higher levels of agreement about institutional treatment of fraternities because they are aware of how SU treats their chapters in the immediate environment but are less knowledgeable about how policies, staff, and administrators prevent or address hazing in the broader campus setting (Schein, 2017).

The CFA confirmed that the chapter culture scales were consistent with previous studies (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Glaser et al., 1987; Meyer et al., 1993). Adjusting the phrasing of the survey items and adding additional diversity items to the “Climate and Morale” scale did not affect the reliability of these scales. The CFA demonstrated a good model fit, thereby confirming the interrelationship of the chapter culture scales.
Path Analysis Findings

After confirming the survey scales, I developed a path model to explore the relationships among the scales confirmed in EFA and CFA. Due to the small sample size in the quantitative phase, I conducted path analysis of observed variables instead of structural equation modeling (SEM), which includes a measurement model for latent variables (Streiner, 2005). While path analysis is less powerful than SEM, it still allows for more complex and realistic models than multiple regression with one dependent variable (Streiner, 2005).

Due to sample restrictions, the model did not include additional individual or chapter characteristics. Nevertheless, chapter size was included as one factor that could influence organizational culture and members’ attitudes toward hazing. Chapter size did not have a significant relationship with “Belonging and Commitment” but had weak positive relationships with “Teamwork and Collaboration” and “Climate and Morale,” suggesting that members of larger chapters may perceive their chapter culture more favorably. Larger chapters may require additional layers of hierarchy to preserve the group’s culture (Schein, 2017) and may necessitate greater reliance on teamwork and collaboration. Similarly, establishing a climate that motivates members and is accepting of diversity may require a critical mass of members to preserve chapter climate and morale. Interestingly, chapter size was not significantly related to belonging and commitment, suggesting that members will feel at home and want to remain in their HWF regardless of size.

The modified model demonstrated that the level of hazing experienced during the new member period had a significantly negative yet weak impact on the three measured areas of organizational culture in this study: teamwork and collaboration, climate and morale, and
belonging and commitment. In other words, members who reported experiencing more hazing as new members were less likely to agree that their chapter has a positive culture. This finding is critical because it demonstrates that hazing directly and negatively impacts chapter culture. Quantifying this relationship may provide the evidence that will lead some HWF chapters to consider the implications of hazing during the new member period.

The three chapter culture scales all significantly affected members’ attitudes toward hazing. Survey respondents who rated items in the “Belonging and Commitment” scale highly were more likely to agree that there are times when hazing is acceptable. In chapters that have achieved a culture of belonging and commitment, members may believe that hazing is worth enduring or perpetuating because it cultivates feelings of belonging and commitment. However, members who responded with more favorable views of items in the “Teamwork and Collaboration” scale were less likely to agree that hazing is sometimes tolerable. It is possible that HWF chapters that have established a strong sense of teamwork and collaboration among their members recognize that hazing can be detrimental to group dynamics. Similarly, members who rated their chapter highly on “Climate and Morale” were more likely to have positive views of hazing policies and resources within the institution. In turn, members who viewed the hazing policies and resources favorably were less likely to agree with survey items about circumstances or conditions when hazing would be permissible. Understanding hazing policies and the implications of hazing raises awareness of the consequences of hazing, which can inform members’ attitudes toward hazing.

Finally, the model indicated that chapter size and levels of hazing experienced as new members would directly impact members’ attitudes about hazing. Chapter size had a significant
negative relationship with attitudes toward hazing, suggesting that members of smaller chapters are more likely to agree that hazing is acceptable under some circumstances. Hazing experienced as new members had positively impacted respondents’ attitudes toward hazing; members who experienced more hazing themselves were more likely to accept hazing. This result echoes the findings of Owen et al. (2008), who suggested that both hazing perpetrators and victims reported greater acceptance of hazing as they experienced more hazing behaviors. People who have achieved full membership in the group may be less likely to condemn hazing (DeSantis, 2007) because they believe the benefits of membership were worth the trials (Campo et al., 2005) or that enduring the trauma made them stronger (Kimmel, 2018).

**Qualitative Findings**

The qualitative phase of the study offered a deeper understanding of trends and phenomena observed from the quantitative data. I learned about participants’ backgrounds and experiences in their HWF chapters through individual interviews. Interview participants described their perceptions of and experiences within their chapter, at SU, and with hazing and hazing prevention programs.

**Theme 1: Collaborative Cultures Enhance Members’ Experiences**

Interview participants spoke at length about how the culture of their chapters had enhanced their fraternity and college experiences. Previous research has indicated that FSLOs offer members friendships, social connections, and a sense of belonging (Biddix, 2016; Hébert, 2006; Syrett, 2009). Members portrayed their chapters as welcoming environments and close-knit groups that offered friendships and networking during a critical time in their development. Speaking with the HWF members about their fraternity experiences allowed me to see how the
norms, attitudes, and shared assumptions of members in the HWF chapters at SU were a product of their chapter culture (Tierney, 1988). Participants shared that their chapter offered support for academic pursuits and future professional goals but also described times when their chapter brothers had supported their personal pursuits or efforts even when the interests were not shared. Although some participants viewed their fraternity as an experience only for college, others recognized the lifelong commitment and benefits of membership.

HWF members in this study also described learning leadership skills and developing mature interpersonal skills through their experiences in their chapters (Hébert, 2006). The decisions, actions, and communication within the chapter reflected the chapter’s organizational culture (Tierney, 1988). Participants felt that their chapters functioned well as a team and effectively collaborated to achieve organizational goals. Members spoke specifically about how their chapter resolves conflict and addresses issues internally; participants acknowledged that conflict is normal and expected but recognized the importance of presenting a united front to people and groups outside the chapter.

**Theme 2: Understanding HWFs in Broader Cultures**

Regardless of size, many forces shape the culture of an organization. Tierney (1988) noted that “institutions certainly are influenced by powerful, external factors such as demographic, economic, and political conditions” (p. 3) though internal forces are also significant in shaping organizational culture. Within the HWFs, member characteristics, teamwork and collaboration, climate and morale, and belonging and commitment all shaped the chapter culture. However, broader external cultures also influenced each HWF’s chapter culture.
The campus culture, and therefore the FSLO community culture, varies at different institutional types; a predominantly White institution (PWI) such as SU has a different culture from historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) or Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) (Barber et al., 2015). SU is a member of a Power 5 athletic conference, and sporting events are central to SU’s institutional culture. Study participants described football and tailgating as central aspects of their fraternity experience. Another institutional characteristic of SU is that it is the state’s land-grant institution. Land-grant universities have a mission to serve the people of their states (Gavazzi & Gee, 2018), and study participants described service efforts in the local community and beyond. Participating in these efforts dispels the perception that HWFs are isolated from the culture of their campus or local community. Although they participated in service frequently, participants felt that SU did not recognize their contributions to the community.

Previous literature has not explored the influence of state or national culture on members’ experiences in FSLOs. SU is a public institution that enrolls mostly in-state students, so it was not surprising that the chapter culture of the HWFs often reflected the state culture where SU is situated. Study participants highlighted how many of their chapter activities, such as cooking and eating together, were traditions they enjoyed growing up in the same state as SU. For in-state students, these aspects of culture may provide a feeling of being “home” within the larger institutional environment. Out-of-state and international students may appreciate HWFs as pathways to integrate into the state culture.

Finally, interview participants likened the different cultures of HWFs at SU to the diverse groups within the United States, and some members described how HWFs were perceived to be
microcosms of the national culture (Cuyjet & Brown, 2020). Existing literature has not explored the experiences of international students joining HWFs or FLSOs, and none of the study participants were international students. As some HWFs aspire to more diverse and representative membership, recruiting international students may be one way to increase participation in FSLOs at SU.

**Theme 3: “The Perception is They’re Out to Get Us”**

Student affairs practitioners and administrators are critical for ensuring a safe and healthy fraternity experience. Institutions devote resources such as time, energy, staffing, and space to support FSLOs (Biddix, 2016), but most interview participants perceived that their chapters receive limited or no support from SU. Other participants perceived that SU only supported fraternities when there were benefits for the institution, such as positive publicity. HWF members felt that SU rarely recognized or appreciated their chapters' contributions on campus and in the community. Because most interview participants had not interacted frequently with SU staff or administrators, I remained mindful that these perceptions were not based on direct experiences with institutional agents. Relationships with practitioners can enhance HWF members’ experiences in their chapter (Barber et al., 2015), but students and staff must be willing to cultivate those relationships.

As outsiders to the individual HWF chapters, practitioners may also identify cultural elements for chapters to address, particularly for disrupting patterns of privilege and oppression (Barber et al., 2015). As institutions implement new policies and procedures, they need an understanding of the institutional culture and the organizational culture of the sub-environments within the institution (Tierney, 1988). Institutions may not consider the culture of HWFs until
they face a crisis, but establishing collaborative relationships with organizations on campus can inform institutional strategies for culture change (Tierney, 1988).

Interview participants believed that SU administrators were primarily interested in monitoring or investigating HWF chapters rather than supporting the chapters, but these practitioners fill many roles that many students do not recognize. For example, through institutional policies and procedures, administrators influence the culture of FSLOs and all of SU (Barber et al., 2015). Findings from this study suggest that student involvement in policy development and other procedures might improve student perceptions of SU administration. Further, involving students in addressing institutional issues may help HWFs feel that they have a role in shaping their environments (Tierney, 1988).

Most participants identified the death of Sam Clark as the incident that spurred increased oversight of HWFs from SU, though they felt that SU had been excessive in its strictness and regulations. Participants from multiple chapters shared this sentiment, indicating that the perception occurs across HWFs at SU. At the same time, HWF members recognized that HWFs had brought liability and negative publicity to SU, contributing to the need for more accountability from HWFs to SU. Previous literature has not explored individual, chapter, or institutional responses to severe hazing incidents, so comparing participants’ experiences with other students or institutions was impossible.

Members also acknowledged SU’s duty to keep students safe and agreed that some institutional oversight is necessary for ensuring that HWFs do not endanger their members. However, study participants shared a desire for more trust and autonomy from SU. When institutions or inter/national headquarters revoke recognition of a chapter, members of the group
may continue to interact outside of the campus. FSLOs operating independently from an institution or organization would have less accountability and likely not change their dangerous cultures (Brown, 2020; Camera, 2017). However, members also felt that SU had overstepped in its regulation of HWFs.

**Theme 4: Hazing Policies and Programs Are Not Always Effective**

**Policies.** As hazing deaths and other severe hazing incidents have occurred across the United States, individual states have enacted felony hazing laws, and institutions have updated their hazing policies. However, it is not clear whether changes in laws have reduced collegiate hazing (Chamberlin, 2014). Further, the covert nature of hazing presents challenges in enforcing policies and laws. As Chamberlin (2014) noted, “there is rarely any evidence unless a student is hospitalized or killed” (p. 948), even in organizations with reputations for hazing their members.

Previous literature supported participants’ feelings about how institutional policies and programs alone will not end hazing. (Campo et al., 2005; Owen et al., 2008). Further, there is some doubt that felony hazing laws are effective. Citing previous research that college students are not inclined to change their behaviors with music pirating or underage drinking to conform to the law, Chamberlin (2014) indicated that hazing laws would not likely reduce hazing. After the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) banned pledging in the 1990s, member organizations noticed that hazing incidents and reports of hazing increased (Parks & Brown, 2005). However, Richardson (2014) observed that severe hazing incidents had decreased since the introduction of hazing felony laws. Thus, policies criminalizing hazing may simply lead organizations that haze their members to take their hazing “underground,” which will make it harder for institutions to intervene and less likely that students who need attention for hazing-related injuries will receive
attention quickly (Chamberlin, 2014). Some study participants felt that the consequences of hazing made HWFs less likely to haze, but others expressed doubt that hazing would ever end in HWFs at SU. Students may think they will be able to outmaneuver applicable policies and laws (Richardson, 2014), and underground hazing perpetrators may misjudge their ability to “safely” haze others (Swofford, 2020).

Previously, hazing laws have been critiqued as being vague (Chamberlin, 2014). However, study participants felt that the revised policies and laws following Sam Clark’s death included all organizational behaviors in their definitions of hazing. Participants mentioned that some activities they enjoyed as new members in their HWFs were no longer allowed because they were now considered hazing. Ensuring that members properly identify and conceptualize hazing is important but is not the only step in addressing hazing in HWFs.

Programs. In addition to policies and laws, higher education institutions must invest in education and dialogue for students, faculty, and staff (Richardson, 2014). Administrators recognize that laws will stop some hazing but not all; one Dean of Students remarked, “I don’t believe you can legislate out hazing” (Richardson, 2014, p. 60). Programs from the institution and inter/national headquarters can educate members about the risks of hazing. Further, Richardson (2014) proposed that felony laws have inspired organizations to increase the consequences for hazing. Educating members about the risks and consequences of hazing rather than merely telling them what they cannot do offers a fuller picture of the dangers and impacts of hazing behaviors.

Understanding organizational and institutional culture can inform institutions’ approaches to hazing prevention. While there may be several viable alternatives for programs, the cultural
knowledge of the intended audience can increase the impact of these programs (Tierney, 1988). HWF members are not likely to take programs seriously when they cannot identify how the programs relate to them or impact their chapters. Study participants indicated that people who desired to haze others would do so regardless of what hazing prevention programs state, which matched the views of some administrators in Richardson’s (2014) study.

Additionally, institutional condemnation of hazing is critical to hazing prevention programs. Multiple studies (DeSantis, 2007; Richardson, 2014) have demonstrated that institutional stakeholders who experienced hazing would be unlikely to condemn hazing behaviors. However, at SU, the administration has publicly indicated its condemnation of hazing practices. It is possible that a severe hazing incident or student death may propel administrators to denounce hazing regardless of their personal experiences, but administrators who have not faced such serious cases may not be pressed to speak out about hazing to the same degree.

**Theme 5: Hazing is “Not Nearly What It Used to Be”**

**Decreases in Hazing Following Sam Clark’s Death.** Changes to SU’s institutional approach to hazing prevention appeared to influence a culture shift within the HWFs at SU. Most interview participants agreed that through investigations and heavy enforcement of institutional policies, hazing at SU had decreased compared to past years, especially before 2017. However, some members suspected that hazing behaviors had simply gone “underground” or that HWF members were strictly instructed not to brag about or otherwise disclose their experiences with hazing. It is possible that the prevalence of hazing at SU was previously overestimated, as more people report hearing about hazing than directly experiencing it (Owen et al., 2008). Multiple
participants in this study admitted that they had heard about hazing but could not fully confirm its occurrence through personal experiences.

Several study participants lamented that SU defines “everything” as hazing since the death of Sam Clark. Older members expressed frustration that their chapters could no longer engage in behaviors that they perceived as harmless but meaningful for bonding because SU considered them to be hazing. Comparing their experiences from their new member period to more recent new member classes, they felt that SU’s limitations on chapter activities negatively impacted members’ fraternity experiences. Although I trusted participants’ observations that more recent new member classes experienced different levels of bonding without hazing, I did not have sufficient data to confirm these assertions. Notably, members of newly established or newly reestablished chapters seemed less focused on creating or maintaining traditions and instead were concerned about ensuring that their chapters did not lose recognition from SU. HWF members from several of the newer chapters identified positive team-building initiatives that could substitute for hazing behaviors (Campo et al., 2005), such as going out to dinner or playing flag football. It is possible that members in the older chapters viewed their hazing behaviors as traditions that separated their chapter from other HWFs, which made them more reluctant to let go of them.

Other HWF members believed that hazing would always exist at SU, regardless of policies or educational efforts. Considering the reluctance of some HWFs to discontinue their severe hazing behaviors even after a student's death, I believe this perception to be accurate. Several chapters stressed that their chapter does not haze its members, which I believed, but the commitment to preventing or eliminating hazing appeared to vary considerably among the HWFs.
at SU. Previous research suggested that focusing on eliminating severe hazing and promoting safer chapter cultures overall might be a more realistic approach to hazing prevention (DeSantis, 2007; Roosevelt, 2018). Some participants believed that if SU allowed some smaller-scale differential treatment of new members, HWFs would feel less pressure to hide their activities from SU, and the behaviors would not escalate in severity.

Cycle of Hazing. Study participants also recognized the cyclical nature of hazing. They recognized that groups begin with no hazing and eventually implement innocuous behaviors that increase in severity over time until a tragedy occurs or the institution becomes aware of the behaviors and intervenes with disciplinary action. The cycle of hazing was most salient in one HWF chapter that restarted at SU in 2018. Several of the founding members had been severely hazed in Sam Clark’s fraternity in the fall of 2017; as a result, they recognized the dangers of hazing and did not tolerate any hazing behaviors. While the chapter had held tightly to the vision of the fraternity and the members who restarted the chapter, members also acknowledged that it would be easy to implement traditions that could grow over the years and potentially become severe hazing. Study participants described efforts to impress the importance of not hazing upon their members to maintain a healthy chapter culture.

Hazing may begin innocuously as organizations seek to preserve the group's status and encourage member dependence (Keating et al., 2005). However, hazing has the potential to grow in frequency and severity. When members who were hazed look forward to inflicting the same treatment upon the next group of new members, the cycle of hazing persists (DeSantis, 2007). In this study, participants who reported being hazed as new members did not demonstrate a sense of
urgency to disrupt hazing in their HWF. However, members of chapters that do not haze were concerned about maintaining a chapter culture that does not enable hazing.

**Mixed Methods Findings**

**Chapter Culture**

To address hazing in HWFs, organizational and institutional agents must understand the culture of these organizations. Owen et al. (2008) called for future research to understand hazing in the context of social norms. The fraternity culture is often a microcosm of what members have learned from broader norms (Cuyjet & Brown, 2020), and the fraternity environment directly influences members’ moral judgment about hazing (McCreary et al., 2016). By integrating the quantitative and qualitative results, I sought to understand how organizational culture impacts hazing in HWFs.

As they reflected on their experiences in their chapters, the interview participants discussed how their chapters have confronted issues together and effectively worked as a team. Although rapid organizational growth can present cultural challenges (Schein, 2017), members generally felt that their chapter had effectively navigated obstacles that arose as their membership had grown in recent years. Most HWF members in the study reported mixed support from their organization and limited support from SU. However, they cited communication, trust, and teamwork as critical aspects of their chapter’s success (Schein, 2017).

Most HWF members rated the climate and morale within their chapter highly. They felt that their chapter motivates them to excel and is respectful toward others. However, HWF members have long been perceived to have a superficial understanding of diversity that leaves them unprepared to live in a multicultural society (Whipple & Sullivan, 1998). As SU has
become increasingly diverse in recent years, HWFs appear to lag behind institutional trends. While some research has indicated that FSLO members are less open-minded and more opposed to ethnic diversity on campus (Sidanius et al., 2004; Williams & Johnson, 2011), participants in this study indicated that their chapter is accepting of different races. Interview participants expressed a desire to increase racial and religious diversity in their HWFs, though they recognized that the perceived culture of FSLOs limits the diversity of students in the recruitment pool each year. In both phases of the study, members rated their chapters as less accepting of diverse sexual orientations. Additional diversity and inclusion training may be necessary to continue increasing diversity within HWFs. However, education alone will not meaningfully shift the climate within HWFs until most members can recognize the value of diversity in their chapters.

Within the larger SU environment, HWFs offer camaraderie and a sense of belonging to their members (Biddix, 2016; Syrett, 2009). While study participants reported that they enjoy discussing their chapter with others, many recognized that HWF membership carries a stigma on campus and in the community, as many people’s knowledge of HWFs is based on negative portrayals in the media. Multiple study participants discussed how their HWF provided them with a family or close-knit community within the larger SU environment. In this study, members’ retention is perceived as the primary indicator of the commitment to chapters. Although some participants had considered leaving their chapter at some point, they found that the community and social experiences afforded them through their HWFs were worth remaining in the chapter. Notably, interview participants indicated that their chapter’s treatment of them
was not a reason they considered leaving, suggesting that hazing might not be why members leave or stay in an organization.

**Institutional Culture**

In addition to chapter culture, institutional culture may affect hazing in HWFs (Allan et al., 2019). Through this study, I explored how SU’s culture impacted hazing in HWFs. Data from both phases of the study demonstrated that HWF members at SU have greater confidence that organizational stakeholders (chapter alumni, chapter advisors, and headquarters staff) are looking out for their chapter’s best interests. HWF members were less likely to agree that other groups within SU had their chapter’s best interests in mind. There are several possible reasons for these perceptions. For example, organizational stakeholders are specifically focused on the chapter, whereas SU must consider many facets of the institution. In these study’s findings, it is not possible to distinguish between members who feel that SU is against fraternities and members who recognize that the institution must balance many priorities.

Further, in both the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study, members reported that they do not feel supported by SU. Survey respondents perceived that SU targets fraternities more than other groups or organizations when enforcing hazing policies, and many agreed that SU cares more about policing fraternity activities than preventing hazing on campus. Interview participants expanded on these statements by describing how SU had implemented restrictions on fraternity activities that other groups and organizations did not have. Because of the history of severe hazing in HWFs at SU, I believe the participants were correct in perceiving that SU targets fraternities more than other organizations in its hazing prevention efforts. Additionally, disproportionate enforcement of hazing policies across organizational types does suggest that
fraternities are treated differently. However, I am not sure that SU is more concerned with monitoring fraternities than preventing hazing.

**Hazing**

In this study, most members disagreed that their chapter hazes its new members. In two phases, the survey first asked respondents about behaviors experienced as new members and later asked them to rate their level of agreement that each behavior was hazing. Generally, members were not likely to identify the behaviors they experienced as hazing, which aligns with previous research that found that fraternity members are less likely than other students to perceive potential harm from hazing (Campo et al., 2005). Interview participants indicated that any differential treatment they received as new members was harmless (e.g., giving older members rides, picking up food for new members, setting up tailgates, or cleaning the fraternity house). Students may not define behaviors as hazing if they are voluntary or low-risk (Campo et al., 2005; Massey & Massey, 2017; Roosevelt, 2018). However, some participants acknowledged that the line between harmless and harmful could be blurry at times, and they recognized the potential for these behaviors to escalate quickly. Although previous research has suggested that a clear definition of hazing would decrease illegal acts of hazing (Owen et al., 2008), the results of this study were mixed. While some members felt that hazing policies had provided clear guidelines for what HWFs could do, others were frustrated that “anything could be hazing.” In describing their personal definitions of hazing, several interview participants members frequently outlined behaviors as severe or inconvenient.

Depending on how they conceptualize hazing, members may not identify as hazing victims and may instead acknowledge the benefits of their treatment (Campo et al., 2005; Allan
& Madden, 2008). For example, previous research has shown that males believe that the relationships they build through their organization and hazing experiences make enduring the hazing worthwhile (Campo et al., 2005; Véliz-Calderón & Allan, 2017). In this study, participants recognized that some treatments they endured as new members violated SU’s hazing policies but contributed positively to their fraternity experience. Frequently, people who have been hazed describe their experiences using aliases such as “initiation,” “discipline,” “bonding,” “commitment,” “tradition,” or “building group unity” (Véliz-Calderón & Allan, 2017; Parks et al., 2015). The positive relationship between “Belonging and Commitment” and “Attitudes Toward Hazing” in the quantitative phase demonstrates the increased sense of belonging and commitment that members feel after conceptualizing hazing as activities for bonding or building group unity.

Further, many students rationalize that hazing is acceptable if there are positive results (Massey & Massey, 2017). In this study, HWF members described how hazing experiences influenced the culture of their chapters. For example, members described completing laborious tasks as a way for new members to function as a team and complete projects as a group. Further, working alongside other new members cultivated a sense of belonging and support within the fraternity. However, these activities can include the whole chapter instead of just new members and cultivate relationships throughout the HWF chapter.

When considering the hazing culture at SU, members typically felt that hazing is not a problem that has been solved or eliminated, but they believed hazing was significantly less prevalent at SU since the death of Sam Clark and the ensuing policy changes. Overall, members believed that hazing is worse in organizations other than their fraternity, which affirms findings
of other studies (Baier & Williams, 1983; Owen et al., 2008; Tollini & Wilson, 2010). Several interview participants mentioned rumors they heard about hazing in other HWFs at SU. Although they had not personally witnessed the hazing, members felt that the information they received by word of mouth was reliable. Most interview participants stated that they had not experienced severe hazing. It is possible that the chapters rumored to engage in the most egregious hazing behaviors were the same HWFs not represented in the qualitative sample.

In this study, over half of survey respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed that they expected to be hazed when they joined their fraternity, which conflicts with other findings from scholarly research. While some interview participants cited a common perception by the general population that hazing and fraternities go together, many felt that hazing is merely a negative stereotype of fraternity life (Tollini & Wilson, 2010). Often, students are exposed to hazing in high school or earlier, which creates a pattern and normalizes hazing (Biddix et al., 2014; Gershel et al., 2003; Hoover & Pollard, 1999). At the college level, matriculating students may expect to be hazed when they join a fraternity, team, or other student organization, but most interview participants spoke about how their fraternity assured them that their organization does not haze. I was encouraged to hear that many chapters are actively working to dispel the perception that hazing should be expected in fraternity life.

Addressing hazing requires a combination of policy change and enforcement as well as effective educational efforts (Campo et al., 2005), and study participants recognized SU’s efforts in both areas. Unlike other student organizations, however, HWFs have their own stakeholders (e.g., alumni, advisors, and headquarters staff) who can also be key players in addressing this critical issue. Survey responses indicated that members perceive that their inter/national
organization is more concerned with their chapter’s best interests than SU. Scholarly research has not explored the role of headquarters in ending the hazing culture, but the findings of this study suggest that organizational stakeholders may be an untapped resource.

**Implications for Theory**

This study adopted Pascarella’s (1985) General Model for Assessing Change and Organizational Culture Theory as theoretical frameworks. Combining these theories enabled the exploration of student backgrounds and HWF chapter cultures. Deciphering organizational culture has multiple purposes and many implications for theory. In academic research, investigators seek to depict culture in a way that other researchers and interested parties may use the information to develop theories or test hypotheses (Schein, 2017). In this study, the knowledge of culture is necessary for contextualizing each HWF and tailoring hazing prevention efforts on college campuses.

The backgrounds of individual members influence the culture of HWFs at SU. Pascarella (1985) proposed that student backgrounds directly affect the institutional environment, interactions with peers and institutional agents, and the quality of students’ efforts. Further, students experience different benefits even when participating in the same institution or environment (Pascarella, 1985). The population in this study was mostly White students, and many came from families with high incomes where one or both parents had graduated from college. Many of these students possess the social capital (Bourdieu, 1973) to navigate the college environment and seek fraternity membership as an opportunity to network and establish friendships.
Further, HWFs are subenvironments within the institution where members socialize, study, attend meetings, and serve the broader community. Pascarella (1985) proposed that subenvironments also influence student learning. Many HWF members spend much of their time outside class and work with other members of their chapter, so the HWF is a significant component of members’ full college experiences. As a result, HWF chapters are positioned to impact members’ attitudes and behaviors about many critical issues, such as hazing and culture.

Culture survives as veteran members depart from an organization (Schein, 2017). HWF members may participate in their collegiate chapters during their college years, but leadership positions typically rotate annually. Thus, the organizational culture of HWFs often serves as a steady base in organizations; members share and reinforce assumptions about the chapter that impact the operations of each HWF. While much of Schein’s (2017) Organizational Culture Theory is based on businesses or professional organizations, this study demonstrates how organizational culture is also critical for HWF chapters.

The organizational structure of HWFs also offers implications for theory. While HWFs have their own leadership structures, they also have oversight from and accountability to their institutions and their inter/national headquarters. Culture encompasses all that organizations have learned as they evolved (Schein, 2017), which was evident in this study as members described how their chapter had worked to maintain established patterns. Further, institutions and headquarters offer standards of conduct and other guidelines that provide stability for HWF chapters.

Finally, changing culture requires understanding the organization’s history and vision for the future. Schein (2017) observed that change leaders must have a detailed understanding of
their organizational culture and be able to identify the aspects of culture that have contributed to the organization’s success. As with the organizations described by Schein (2017), HWF leaders (and organizational and institutional stakeholders more broadly) seeking to disrupt hazing and shift the chapter culture must be willing to explore which behaviors have positively shaped the organization’s identity, reputation, and operations.

**Implications for Practice**

**Hazing Prevention Programs and Policies**

Scholarly research has repeatedly suggested that targeted efforts rather than a “one size fits all” approach will be necessary to end hazing (Allan & Kerschner, 2020; Allan et al., 2019; Owen et al., 2008; Véliz-Calderón & Allan, 2017). Findings from this study demonstrate that different HWF chapters have distinctive cultures and values that influence their behaviors and treatment of members. Some HWF chapters fully abide by institutional hazing policies, and others disregard part or all of the policies, which influences receptivity to hazing prevention efforts. Rather than placing fraternities into uniform categories, student affairs practitioners and administrators seeking to disrupt or address hazing must consider the cultural traits that make each chapter unique (Allan & Kerschner, 2020). Further, any culture assessments by institutional agents should be purposeful and focus on specific issues related to problems that practitioners are striving to solve (e.g., hazing culture) (Schein, 2017).

Defining hazing continues to present challenges for students, practitioners, and policymakers. Students act in ways that align with what they consider to be hazing rather than what a policy or law says. To increase understanding between students, practitioners, and policymakers, campuses and FSLO headquarters should consider updating their definitions and
hazing prevention policies to be consistent with students’ personal definitions of hazing (Feuer, 2019). Ensuring that groups understand that their behaviors are hazing and are subject to the ramifications of hazing is a critical step as student affairs practitioners and institutional administrators work to end these behaviors (Woody et al., 2020). Although some HWFs are dissuaded from engaging in hazing because they understand the consequences of violating hazing policies, others will need to be convinced that hazing is detrimental to members’ fraternity experiences. Thus, practitioners will need to implement programs that focus on shifting attitudes toward hazing rather than simply informing members about policies and consequences for violating those policies.

As campuses and headquarters strive to dismantle hazing, they will likely need a combination of policy and educational efforts (Campo et al., 2005). Institutions should consider involving students in developing interventions, programs, and policy changes that dismantle hazing, as this will give students ownership of the policies that impact them. Campus-based FSL professionals often balance many responsibilities, including communicating with alumni, inter/national headquarters, and institutional agents while also managing housing, assessment, and risk management efforts (NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, 2021). As a result, institutional hazing prevention efforts will require assistance beyond the FSL Office to prevent overburdening the specific FSL practitioners. Offering peer programming and support from other campus resources are possible strategies for alleviating some of the pressure on the FSL Office (Biddix, 2016). Students are also valuable as peer educators in bystander intervention efforts (Mallon et al., 2019). Further, DeSantis (2007) suggested leveraging chapter leaders in hazing prevention efforts.
Institutional Commitment to Hazing Prevention

Additionally, institutions must evaluate their strategies for sanctioning chapters and members that are responsible for hazing. Colleges and universities provide the larger culture that encompasses each HWF; thus, institutions must set the standard for the behaviors they will allow (Schein, 2017). Administrative hearings and processes have not been found to be effective in fundamentally shifting the hazing culture (Kimbrough, 2020), and this study indicates that overregulation of fraternity activities can lead fraternities to conceal their behaviors rather than stop them. Roosevelt (2018) suggested that institutions may use minor or less severe hazing incidents as educational opportunities rather than strictly treating them as conduct violations. Institutions obviously cannot tolerate or support severe hazing, but student affairs practitioners and administrators can support HWF chapters in identifying areas for improvement and developing strategies to make culture change.

Therefore, institutional leaders at all levels must commit to ending hazing and must approach organizations with the intent to help them (Kimbrough, 2020; Schein, 2017). Currently, many HWF members at SU do not view institutional agents as groups that are looking out for their chapter’s best interests. Before attempting to shift the chapters' culture, student affairs practitioners and administrators will have to demonstrate to HWFs that they value the chapters' contributions to the campus and community. Groups whose cultures and practices are firmly rooted in hazing may not be receptive to culture change, which will require institutions to intervene and remove recognition of these organizations (Schein, 2017). However, institutional leaders must also consider that unrecognized organizations may continue to operate, thereby impacting their students. For institutions to fully prioritize the safety and wellbeing of their...
students, practitioners cannot assume that revoking chapter recognition will end hazing among those HWF members.

**Partnerships with Fraternity Inter/national Headquarters**

The psychological and sociological motivations for hazing likely impact individual members’ attitudes and the chapter culture (Parks et al., 2015). However, revealing a chapter’s culture to outsiders may make the organization vulnerable (Schein, 2017). Thus, HWF members may not be forthcoming about their chapter cultures when working with people or groups outside their HWF. Findings from this study indicate that HWF members at SU generally believe that their inter/national organization is more likely to look out for their chapter’s best interests. Inter/national headquarters staff will also understand how hazing affects their specific organizations (Cromwell & Pualwan, 2020). Thus, headquarters staff should spearhead efforts to reform organizational cultures that are supportive of hazing.

However, each campus has a different culture that impacts individual HWF chapters. Headquarters staff will not understand the institutional culture to the same extent as institutional staff and administrators, so cultural assessment to disrupt hazing will eventually require partnerships between campuses and headquarters. To make these partnerships effective, campus FSL professionals and headquarters staff will need to commit to open communication in the interest of supporting students and HWF chapters.

**The Dynamics between Chapters and the Institution**

This study also shows the complexity of chapter and institutional dynamics. To be most effective, FSL practitioners must tailor their approaches to hazing prevention for each chapter and remind themselves of the various cultures that impact these organizations (Schein, 2017).
Even within FSLOs at the same institution, the history and composition of each chapter vary in ways that may impact members’ receptiveness to change and attitudes toward hazing. Further, student affairs practitioners and headquarters staff members must show the value and effectiveness of new practices if they hope that individual HWF chapters will accept cultural change (Schein, 2017).

Team dynamics, chapter climate, and members’ belonging and commitment are several areas that practitioners and administrators should consider as they develop and implement hazing prevention policies and programs. For hazing prevention efforts to be successful long-term, members within each HWF will need to understand how culture change benefits them. Further, student affairs practitioners should consider how their efforts will be perceived by the students they serve. When chapters and administrators have contentious relationships, generating support for cultural change will present additional challenges.

**Alternatives to Hazing**

One strategy for eliminating hazing in HWFs is teaching members that they can achieve their organizational goals and facilitate bonding among members without engaging in hazing. Students, student affairs practitioners, and administrators can all be part of the efforts to shift this culture. Through peer-to-peer efforts, students can build relationships and establish social norms in their chapters and communities that do not include hazing. As student affairs professionals plan hazing prevention programs, they can promote bonding through safer team-building activities. Administrators and policymakers can clearly define hazing and distinguish between safe and unsafe behaviors. Chapters with high levels of teamwork and collaboration will likely be the most receptive to refocusing their bonding activities. Although scholarly research has
shown that FSLOs engage in more hazing than many other student organizations, FSLOs are also more likely to participate in positive team-building initiatives (Campo et al., 2005).

Organizations undergoing significant culture change may have to endure a painful period of unlearning their behaviors, and the changes will not persist unless members recognize the benefits of the new approaches (Schein, 2017). Especially in the early phases of culture change, FSL and other student affairs practitioners must stay abreast of chapter activities and offer support to chapter leaders and advisors. Consistent assessment and evaluation of programs and policies will be necessary to keep organizations on the right track (Allan et al., 2019).

**Limitations**

This study offers new insights and implications for theory and practice but also has some limitations. As a large, land-grant university that embraces athletics and Southern culture, SU possesses geographic and cultural characteristics that distinguish it from many other institutions. Analyzing the organizational culture of HWFs at SU in-depth offers specific insight into one institution, but the findings of this study are not generalizable to institutions that do not share these characteristics.

The sample size was small and not diverse; despite incentives and multiple outreach attempts to HWF members, I only had 270 usable survey responses. While the intent of this study was to understand the experiences of a specific student population and not to generalize to all students at SU, the survey findings may not be generalizable even across HWFs at SU. Moreover, the prevalence of White students from families with high incomes, one or more parents with a college degree, and one or more family members who previously joined a
fraternity or sorority makes it difficult to understand the experiences of minoritized or first-generation students, as two examples.

Further, participant recruitment in the qualitative phase presented challenges. Due to limited interest and response from the survey respondents, I had to utilize volunteer sampling in the qualitative phase rather than purposive sampling. It is possible that members who experienced severe hazing are reluctant to participate in a study of this nature. Moreover, although 17 is an appropriate number of participants for a phenomenological study (Peoples, 2021), the participants represented only 10 of 16 HWFs at SU. Thus, my understanding of the organizational culture of six HWFs relied solely on the survey findings, which were also limited.

Although surveys allow researchers to gather information from many individuals, they might not be the most appropriate way to measure organizational culture. Schein (2017) noted that survey results only reflect the ideas or concepts the researcher determined were necessary to study. Thus, factors derived from survey instruments through statistical methods may not fully represent the constructs that comprise the cultural theory. Further, individual responses to survey items may not sufficiently measure an organization’s collective values and norms (Schein, 2017).

Additionally, humans tend to present information favorably; specifically, participants might downplay data they are defensive about or exaggerate data that makes them proud (Schein, 2017). The secretive nature of FSLOs limited what members shared with me and what was publicly available for triangulation purposes. Although I could triangulate some of the findings using news stories and institutional scorecards, there were many statements that I could not confirm as a non-member of the HWFs under study. When I had multiple participants from the
same study, I examined their transcripts and compared their presentations of their fraternity experiences.

Similarly, being a woman and non-member of the HWFs made it impossible for me to directly access the organizational culture. As a result, I could not assess the chapter culture of the HWFs through observation or engagement with the chapters. Schein (2017) argued that “real entry into and involvement with the organization beyond what questionnaires, surveys, or even individual interviews can provide” (p. 267) are critical for academic research and theory construction.

Finally, the explanatory sequential mixed methods approach allowed me to gather quantitative and qualitative data from the same population but also impacted the research. During the qualitative phase, I perceived that the survey content had influenced participants’ responses to interview questions. Schein (2017) cautioned that questions asked in culture assessments might lead employees to reflect on aspects of their company that they had not previously considered. While there were benefits to allowing interview participants to consider the constructs within the study, a limitation is that they also had a chance to curate their responses in a socially desirable way that would reflect positively on them and their chapters.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

Future research should continue to advance and clarify the findings of this study. This study focused on SU specifically due to its history of severe hazing incidents, but additional research about culture and hazing in HWFs would be beneficial for understanding the similarities and differences across HWFs on a larger scale. Additional research encompassing more campuses and institutional types would provide insight into fraternity life at many institutions. A
larger-scale study with more participants would afford opportunities for more complex statistical analysis such as structural equation modeling (SEM).

There would also be value in repeating this study within a single HWF to make comparisons across chapters and regions. Although each HWF has the same prescribed values, interpretations and manifestations of these values vary among chapters. However, studying an entire organization will present challenges for larger HWFs and may require significant support or adjustments to the research strategy to make the study manageable.

Researchers might also consider conducting case studies about a single chapter or community involved in a hazing incident. Rather than examining an entire community or organization, a case study could thoroughly explore the chapter culture of an HWF chapter or the details of one hazing event. This deeper analysis of a group or incident could help explain a specific environment or occurrence and inform future research on a broader population.

Subsequent studies should also continue to explore how chapter characteristics impact organizational culture and hazing behaviors. While the model in this study included chapter size, other chapter characteristics, such as the chapter's age or disciplinary history, may also be significant contributors to organizational culture. Further, specific characteristics of the new member period, such as the size of the new member class or the duration of the new member process, may influence chapter culture.

Similarly, future research exploring the impact of residential environments on organizational culture could inform how fraternity houses contribute to or detract from members’ experiences in their fraternities, including hazing. Interview participants frequently mentioned their house as a hub for socialization. Further, members described the houses as indicators of
chapter status. Although there is some scholarly research about members’ experiences in fraternity housing (Long, 2014; Seabrook, 2021), there is little scholarly research specifically focusing on fraternity housing and hazing.

Future studies might also explore additional aspects of culture. Tierney’s (1988) organizational culture framework included the environment, mission, socialization, information, strategy, and leadership of the organization, which may serve as starting points for subsequent studies. Moreover, a specific focus on leadership may extend knowledge about organizational culture in HWFs. Any HWF member could participate in this study, but leaders may possess richer knowledge of chapter operations and relationships with external groups.

Additional research about peer educators specifically within HWFs would also be beneficial for understanding the power of peers to change their chapter culture or dismantle hazing in their community (Biddix & Underwood, 2010). Research exploring the experiences of the peer educators would inform practice and provide opportunities for replication on other campuses. Moreover, studies focused on HWF members’ receptiveness to peer education would offer insight into the overall effectiveness of this strategy.

Futures studies wishing to undertake cultural analysis should explore qualitative methods that expose the researcher to group dynamics. While it is difficult for researchers to gain access to HWFs and directly observe or experience their culture, methods that involve multiple participants (e.g., focus groups) may yield a more meaningful understanding of chapter culture than individual accounts. Through these methods, researchers can explore an HWF’s underlying values and assumptions more thoroughly (Schein, 2017).
In future studies utilizing a mixed methods approach, researchers might consider applying an exploratory sequential approach, which begins with qualitative data collection and analysis. This study design enables researchers to develop their tools for the quantitative phase based on the views of the study participants (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018). Further, the findings of the qualitative phase would help researchers identify subgroups for comparison. Researchers using this strategy at a single institution may be able to focus on aspects of culture that are unique to that community.

**Summary**

Although hazing behaviors occur between members of a group, they are often influenced by underlying cultural traits based on individuals’ values, the chapter’s culture, and other broader cultures. Particularly when tragedies occur, however, the effects of hazing extend to multiple levels of a community, including individual members, campus organizations, and the institution. Through this study, I sought to understand how organizational culture, including chapter culture and institutional culture, is related to hazing within various HWF chapters at a single institution.

This study contributes to the existing literature by examining hazing experiences and culture on multiple levels. Findings from both phases confirm and advance much of the existing literature about hazing. For example, findings demonstrate that strict hazing policies and enforcement do not eliminate hazing in HWFs, even after a death occurs. Further, programmatic efforts directed at all student organization members may fail to meaningfully change members’ attitudes and behaviors to disrupt hazing. This study demonstrates that hazing and culture are deeply intertwined and suggests that approaching hazing prevention through culture change could be an effective strategy for HWFs and higher education institutions. However, institutions
must first cultivate positive relationships and a sense of trust with their HWF chapters. Partnerships with HWF inter/national headquarters may be a critical next step in tailoring hazing prevention efforts to the needs of specific chapters and campuses.

While study participants described significant increases in institutional oversight and policy enforcement since the death of Sam Clark, most participants also felt that the severity and prevalence of hazing at SU had decreased. The combined educational efforts and policy changes at SU have effectively curbed many severe hazing behaviors, but several participants perceived that the changes at SU had compromised the fraternity experience without solving the hazing problem. As institutions continue to strive for safer campuses and FSL communities, they must also strive to cultivate positive partnerships with their HWFs to generate buy-in from HWF members and promote a sustainable culture that dismantles hazing. Expanding educational efforts beyond the FSL office and involving students in program and policy development will be valuable in providing relevant and meaningful programs that lead to culture change.
APPENDIX A. INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

TO: Chen, Yu
LSUAM | President | Office of the President

FROM: Alex Cohen
Chair, Institutional Review Board

DATE: 09-Jun-2021

RE: IRBAM-21-0580

TITLE: The Influence of Organizational and Institutional Culture on Hazing in Historically White Fraternities: A Mixed Methods Study

SUBMISSION TYPE: Initial Application
Review Type: Expedited Review
Risk Factor: Minimal
Review Date: 09-Jun-2021
Status: Approved
Approval Date: 09-Jun-2021
Approval Expiration Date: 08-Jun-2022
Expedited Categories: XXXXXXXX

Requesting Waiver of Informed Consent: No
Re-review frequency: Annually
Number of subjects approved: 2000
LSU Proposal Number: 

By: Alex Cohen, Chairman

Continuing approval is CONDITIONAL on:
1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU's Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects*

2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.

3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.

4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.

5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants, including notification of new information that might affect consent.

6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.


8. SPECIAL NOTE: When emailing more than one recipient, make sure you use bcc. Approvals will automatically be closed by the IRB on the expiration date unless the PI requests a continuation.

* All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU's Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at http://www.lsue.edu/research

Louisiana State University  O 225-578-5833 F 225-578-5983
131 David Boyd Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803 http://www.lsue.edu/research
APPENDIX B: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD MODIFICATION APPROVAL (OCTOBER 2021)

TO: Yu Chen
LSUAM | President | Office of the President

FROM: Alex Cohen
Chairman, Institutional Review Board

DATE: 11-Oct-2021

RE: IRBAM-21-0580

TITLE: The Influence of Organizational and Institutional Culture on Hazing in Historically White Fraternities: A Mixed Methods Study

New Protocol/Amendment/Continuation: Amendment

Brief Amendment Description: Changing virtual interview platform to MS Teams. Also, specifying that in-person interviews will be audio recorded, while virtual interviews via MS Teams will be audio and video recorded.

Review Type: Expedited Review
Risk Factor: Minimal
Review Date: 08-Oct-2021
Status: Approved
Approval Date: 08-Oct-2021
Approval Expiration Date: 08-Jun-2022
Re-review frequency: (annual unless otherwise stated)
Number of subjects approved: 2000

By: Alex Cohen, Chairman

Continuing approval is CONDITIONAL on:
1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU’s Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects*
2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.
5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants, including notification of new information that might affect consent.
6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.
8. **SPECIAL NOTE:** When emailing more than one recipient, make sure you use bcc.

*All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU’s Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at

[http://www.lsu.edu/research](http://www.lsu.edu/research)
APPENDIX C: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD MODIFICATION APPROVAL (JANUARY 2022)

TO: Yu Chen  
LSUAM | President | Office of the President | CC00391

FROM: Alex Cohen  
Chairman, Institutional Review Board

DATE: 25-Jan-2022

RE: IRBAM-21-0580

TITLE: The Influence of Organizational and Institutional Culture on Hazing in Historically White Fraternities: A Mixed Methods Study

New Protocol/Amendment/Continuation: Amendment

1. Consent language – updated inclusion criteria to include former members of IFC fraternities, updated exclusion criteria to exclude individuals who have never been affiliated with an IFC fraternity

2. Survey – update consent language in the survey

3. COVID-19 Mitigation Strategies – changed video conferencing from Zoom to Microsoft Teams (This was previously updated in the consent language and survey, I just forgot to update the COVID-19 strategies document.)

Brief Amendment Description:

Review Type: Expedited Review

Risk Factor: Minimal

Review Date: 24-Jan-2022

Status: Approved

Approval Date: 24-Jan-2022
Approval Expiration Date: 08-Jun-2022  
Re-review frequency: (annual unless otherwise stated)  
Number of subjects approved: 2000

By: Alex Cohen, Chairman

Continuing approval is CONDITIONAL on:

1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU's Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects*
2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.
5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants, including notification of new information that might affect consent.
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8. SPECIAL NOTE: When emailing more than one recipient, make sure you use bcc.

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http://www.lsu.edu/research

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131 David Boyd Hall  
Baton Rouge, LA 70803

O 225-578-5833  F 225-578-5983  
http://www.lsu.edu/research
CERTIFICATE OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Number:  
CC-OD-21-2172

Issued To  
Louisiana State University

certifying research known as  
THE INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE ON HAZING IN HISTORICALLY WHITE FRATERNITIES: A MIXED METHODS STUDY

In accordance with the provisions of section 301(d) of the Public Health Service Act, 42 U.S.C. 241(d), this Certificate is issued to Louisiana State University to protect the privacy of subjects in the above named research study, which is collecting or using identifiable, sensitive information. Yu Chen will serve as principal investigator. If there is a discrepancy between the terms used in this Certificate and section 301(d), the statutory language will control.

Research data and biospecimens containing identifiable, sensitive information collected or used during this study are covered by the Certificate beginning on the later of the approval date of this Certificate or the commencement of the project, until the collection or use of identifiable, sensitive information concludes. Identifiable, sensitive information protected by the Certificate and all copies thereof are protected for perpetuity.
The recipient of this Certificate shall comply with all requirements of subsection 301(d) of the Public Health Service Act. This Certificate does not represent an endorsement of the research project by the Department of Health and Human Services.

08/24/2021
ANGELA Chambers

NIH Certificates of Confidentiality Coordinator
Office of Extramural Research
National Institutes of Health

Approval Date
APPENDIX E: REQUEST TO VISIT CHAPTER MEETING

Hello [Fraternity President Name],

My name is Kimberly Davis, and I am a PhD candidate in the Higher Education Administration program at LSU. I am doing my dissertation study on how organizational and institutional culture impact fraternity men's (specifically historically White fraternities) experiences with their fraternities.

My study has two parts, and the first is a survey about members' experiences. For the chapter with the highest percentage of participation, I am offering an incentive of a $1000 donation to a philanthropic organization of the chapter's choosing. The second part is an interview that survey respondents can opt into.

I'd like to come speak to [Fraternity Name] (virtually or in-person) to answer questions and encourage students to participate in the survey. I know that recruitment runs through August 24, so late August or early September would probably work best for me. However, I am flexible with whatever works best for you. I promise to keep my visit short and sweet.

I'm happy to give you more information but don't want to overwhelm you with the first e-mail. It would probably be helpful if we had time to talk (again, virtually or in person) briefly before the meeting as well.

Thanks for your help! Please let me know if you have questions or if you would like to schedule a date.
Dear [First Name],

My name is Kimberly Davis, and I am a PhD candidate in the Higher Education Administration program at LSU. I am doing my dissertation study on how organizational and institutional culture impact fraternity men’s (specifically historically White fraternities) experiences with their fraternities.

As part of my study, I am inviting you to share your experiences in an electronic survey. The survey will take 15-20 minutes to complete, and at the end of the survey, you can enter a drawing for one of five $50 gift cards.

If you have already taken the survey, please disregard this e-mail.

Follow this link to the Survey:
Take the Survey

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

If the above link does not work for you, the survey is accessible at www.tinyurl.com/HWFculture.

Your input is valuable, and I am happy to give you more information or answer any questions about the study. If you have questions, do not hesitate to reach out to me by e-mail (kdav232@lsu.edu) or phone/text (225-800-2566).

Thanks,
Kimberly Davis
APPENDIX G: SURVEY RECRUITMENT E-MAIL (FINAL REMINDER)

Dear [First Name],

Recently, you received an invitation to share your experiences in your fraternity in an electronic survey that is part of my dissertation study. The survey will be closing after March 4 (Friday) so this e-mail serves as a final reminder to complete the survey. It will take about 15-20 minutes to complete, and at the end of the survey, you can enter a drawing for one of five $50 gift cards.

If you previously started the survey, you may pick up where you left off by following the link below. If you have already taken the survey, please disregard this e-mail.

Follow this link to the Survey:
Take the Survey.

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

If the above link does not work for you, the survey is accessible at www.tinyurl.com/HWFculture.

Your input is valuable, and I am happy to give you more information or answer any questions about the study. If you have questions, do not hesitate to reach out to me by e-mail (kdav232@lsu.edu) or phone/text (225-800-2566).

Thanks,
Kimberly Davis
APPENDIX H. INTERVIEW SCHEDULING E-MAIL

Hello [First Name],

Thank you for expressing interest in doing an interview for my dissertation study. I would like to set up a time to meet for an interview this week or next. We can meet over Microsoft Teams or in person—whatever you prefer. If you can send me a few days and times that work for you, I will find a time that works for both of us.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks!

Kimberly Davis
Ph.D. Candidate, Higher Education Administration
Louisiana State University
kdav232@lsu.edu
She/Her/Hers
Achiever - Harmony - Learner - Input - Includer
APPENDIX I. MEMBER CHECKING E-MAIL

Good evening [First Name]

I hope you are having a good week and that the end of the semester isn’t too hectic for you. I’m reaching out because I have finished writing up my dissertation findings and wanted to ensure that anything I include about you or your fraternity (using a pseudonym for you and not using your fraternity’s name) is accurate. Additionally, I want to make sure nothing I say might make you identifiable. I can delete anything that you do not want to include for any reason.

There are a few ways we can do this. I can send you a Word document for you to review and send any additions/changes/deletions, or we can meet in person or on Teams and review and make any changes together. You also have the option to not do anything, and I’ll include what I have written up as is.

I recognize that this is a busy time of the year, but please let me know if you’d like a Word document to review. If you would like to meet, please schedule a 30-minute meeting in the next 2-3 weeks using my scheduling link (www.calendly.com/kdav232). If you need more time, please let me know; I will do my best to accommodate your schedule.

Thanks,

Kimberly Davis
Welcome and Consent

Welcome Info

Dear Student,

On behalf of the research team, we would like to extend our sincere thanks for your time in responding to the following questions.

This survey will take 10 to 20 minutes to complete. We encourage you to take the survey in private, as some questions are sensitive in nature.

Your responses will inform research that will guide policies and practice in fraternity and sorority life. Upon completion of the survey, you will have the option to enter into a drawing for one of five $50 gift cards. Your participation is critical to the project, and we thank you for your attention to the questions and for completing the survey.

Directions for filling out the survey:

The next page is the consent form. Please click the "Agree to participate" button to proceed to the survey.

The survey is divided into several sections. Scroll through each section to answer the questions. When reviewing questions, respond to each with what first comes to mind as the appropriate responses. Your responses will not be used to pursue disciplinary action against any individual or chapter.

Please click on NEXT at the bottom of each page to advance to the next page. If you need to leave the survey temporarily, simply close your web browser. You can come back to complete the survey through the same link within 7 days.

Please click on NEXT at the end of the survey to submit your answers. You will NOT be able to make any changes once you submit. All responses will become part of a larger data set, and responses are not identifiable to you as a student responder. The identification of your fraternity will not be published in the final study, and the responses to this survey will not be used against chapters or individual members.

Again, we thank you for your time and effort.
Consent Info

Non-Clinical Study Consent Form

1. **Study Title:** The Influence of Organizational and Institutional Culture on Historically White Fraternities: A Mixed Methods Study

2. The purpose of this research project is to gain a greater understanding of how organizational and institutional culture contribute to student experiences in historically White fraternities.

3. Investigators: Kimberly Davis (kdav232@lsu.edu) is a graduate student conducting this research for her dissertation, and she is available for questions about this study. She is conducting this research under the guidance of Dr. Yu “April” Chen (yuchen@lsu.edu).

4. Performance site: Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College

5. Number of subjects: 1700-2000 (depending on population of fraternity men in fall 2021)

6. Inclusion criteria:
   - Currently enrolled undergraduate student at Louisiana State University
   - Current member of a historically White fraternity (i.e., Interfraternity Council fraternity)
   - United States Citizen or Permanent Resident

To participate in this study, you must meet the requirements of both the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

7. Exclusion criteria:
   - Individuals under age 18
   - Individuals who are not currently affiliated with an IFC fraternity
   - Individuals who are not currently enrolled undergraduate students

8. Study Procedures: This study has two components. First, subjects will complete a 10-20 minute long online survey (on Qualtrics) about their experiences in IFC fraternities at LSU.
Second, researchers will recruit interview participants who are willing to share their experiences. A 45-60 minute individual interview will be conducted between the subjects and researchers. Interview content will include questions about their motivations to join a fraternity, their new member experiences, their chapter culture, and their university’s campus culture. The interview will be recorded (audio recorded if in person, audio and video recorded if on Microsoft Teams) and transcribed.

9. Benefits: At the conclusion of the survey, students will have the option to give their name and e-mail address to be entered into a drawing for one of five $50 gift cards. Interview participants will all receive a $25 cash reward as incentives.

10. Risks: The interview will include several potentially sensitive questions that may cause embarrassment or legal complications in some cases. Audio and video recordings will be retained for 18 months following the interview; however, the researcher will honor requests by individuals to delete their recordings sooner.

11. Right to refuse: Participants may choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of any benefit to which they might otherwise be entitled.

12. Privacy: Results of the study may be published, but no names or identifying information will be included in the publication. Subject identity will remain confidential unless disclosure is required by law. Additionally, the researchers have obtained a Certificate of Confidentiality from the National Institutes of Health to protect the privacy of research subjects by prohibiting disclosure of identifiable, sensitive research information to anyone not connected to the research except when the subject consents or in a few other specific situations.

13. Signatures: The study has been discussed with me and all my questions have been answered. I may direct additional questions regarding study specifics to the investigators. For injury or illness, call your physician, or the Student Health Center if you are an LSU student. If I have questions about subjects’ rights or other concerns, I can contact Alex Cohen, Institutional Review Board, (225) 578-8692, irb@lsu.edu, or www.lsu.edu/research. I agree to participate in the study described above and acknowledge the investigator’s obligation to provide me with a signed copy of this consent form.

Subject Signature: _______________________________ Date: __________________

The study subject has indicated to me that he/she is unable to read. I certify that I have read this consent form to the subject and explained that by completing the signature line above, the subject has agreed to participate.

Signature of Reader: ______________________________ Date: _______________
Consent Do you agree to participate?

- Agree to participate (1)
- Choose not to participate (2)

*Skip To: End of Survey If Do you agree to participate? = Choose not to participate*

End of Block: Welcome and Consent

Start of Block: Fraternity Affiliation

FratAffiliation What is your fraternity affiliation?

- Acacia (1)
- Alpha Gamma Rho (4)
- Alpha Tau Omega (5)
- Beta Theta Pi (6)
- Delta Chi (7)
- Kappa Alpha Order (8)
- Kappa Sigma (9)
- Phi Gamma Delta (FIJI) (10)
- Phi Kappa Psi (11)
- Pi Kappa Alpha (12)
- Sigma Alpha Epsilon (13)
Sigma Chi (14)
Sigma Nu (15)
Sigma Phi Epsilon (16)
Tau Kappa Epsilon (17)
Theta Chi (18)
Theta Xi (19)
Other (please specify) (20) ________________________________________________

End of Block: Fraternity Affiliation

Start of Block: Individual/Student

Age

▼ 16 (16) ... 45 or older (45)

Gender What is your gender?

Male (1)
Female (2)
Trans male/Trans man (3)
Trans female/Trans woman (4)
Gender queer/Gender non-conforming (5)

Different identity (please specify) (6)

Community How would you describe the community where you grew up?

Rural area (1)

Small city or town (2)

Suburb near a large city (7)

Large city (3)

Q64 In which state did you spend the most time before coming to LSU? (If you did not grow up in the United States, please select "I did not grow up in the United States."

Alabama (1) ... I did not grow up in the United States (53)

Race/Ethnicity How would you identify your race/ethnic background?

American Indian or Alaska Native (1)

Asian (2)

Black or African American (3)

Hispanic (4)

Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (5)

White (6)

Two or more races (7)

Race/Ethnicity Unknown (8)
Hispanic/Latinx Are you Hispanic or Latinx?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Religion How would you describe your religious identity?

________________________________________________________________

Sexual Orientation How would you describe your sexual orientation?

- Asexual (1)
- Bisexual (2)
- Gay (3)
- Heterosexual or straight (4)
- Pansexual (5)
- Queer (7)
- Different identity (please specify) (6)

Semester Enroll Which semester did you enroll at LSU?

- Prior to fall 2016 (1)
- Fall 2016 (2)
- Spring 2017 (3)
- Fall 2017 (4)
- Spring 2018 (5)
Classification  What is your classification in college?

- Freshman/first-year (1)
- Sophomore (2)
- Junior (3)
- Senior (4)
- Graduate student (5)
- Unclassified (6)

Degree  If there were no obstacles, what is the highest academic degree you would like to attain in your lifetime?

- Will take classes, but do not intend to earn a degree (1)
- Vocational certificate/Diploma (2)
- Associate degree (A.A. or equivalent) (3)
Bachelors' degree (B.A., B.S., etc.) (4)

At least a Bachelor's, maybe more (5)

Master's degree (M.A., M.S., etc.) (6)

Doctoral degree (Ph.D., Ed.D., J.D., etc.) (7)

Medical degree (M.D., D.D.S., D.V.M., etc.) (8)

ParentIncome What is your best estimate of your parents' total income last year? Consider income from all sources before taxes.

Less than $25,000 (1)

$25,000-$49,999 (2)

$50,000-$74,999 (3)

$75,000-$99,999 (4)

$100,000-$124,999 (5)

$125,000-$149,999 (6)

$150,000-$174,999 (7)

$175,000-$199,999 (8)

$200,000-$224,999 (9)

$225,000-$249,999 (10)

$250,000 or more (11)

I don't know (12)
Financial Independence: Are you financially independent (your college expenses are paid by someone other than your parents or guardians, e.g., yourself, your employer)?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Working: Are you currently working?

- Yes, I am currently working on campus. (1)
- Yes, I am currently working off campus. (2)
- Yes, I am currently working for multiple jobs both on campus and off campus. (5)
- No, I am not looking for working opportunities. (3)
- No, I am currently unemployed, but I am looking for working opportunities. (4)

Display This Question:

If Are you currently working? = Yes, I am currently working on campus.

Or Are you currently working? = Yes, I am currently working off campus.

Or Are you currently working? = Yes, I am currently working for multiple jobs both on campus and off campus.

Working Hours: About how many hours a week do you usually spend working on a job for pay?

- 1 to 10 hours (1)
- 11-15 hours (2)
- 16-20 hours (3)
- 21-30 hours (4)
- 31-40 hours (5)
- More than 40 hours (6)
Residence

School Where do you primarily live during the school year?

- Dormitory or other campus housing (1)
- Residence (house, apartment, etc.) within walking distance of campus (2)
- Residence (house, apartment, etc.) within driving distance of campus (3)
- Fraternity house on campus (4)
- Not applicable: homeless or in transition (5)

Display This Question:
If Where do you primarily live during the school year? = Fraternity house on campus

FratHouse Are you required to live in your fraternity house?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

LiveWith With whom do you live during the school year? (select all that apply)

- No one, I live alone (1)
- One or more other fraternity brothers (2)
- One or more other students who are not members of my fraternity (3)
- My parents/guardians (4)
- My spouse or partner (5)
- My child or children (6)
Other relatives  (7)

Friends who are not students at LSU  (8)

Other  (9) ________________________________________________

College Which college are you currently enrolled in at LSU?

▼ College of Agriculture (1) ... Other, please specify (13)

EnrollmentStatus Thinking about this current academic term, how would you characterize your enrollment at LSU?

Full-time (12 or more credit hours) (1)

Part-time (less than 12 credits) (2)

Grades What have most of your grades been up to now LSU?

A+, A (1)

A-, B+ (2)

B (3)

B-, C+ (4)

C, C- (5)

D+, D, or D- (6)

F (7)
ParentEducation Did either of your parents graduate from college?

- No (1)
- Yes, father only (3)
- Yes, mother only (4)
- Yes, both parents (2)
- Don’t know (5)

PoliticalViews How would you describe your political views?

- Very Liberal (1)
- Liberal (2)
- Neither Liberal or Conservative (3)
- Conservative (4)
- Very Conservative (5)

AlcoholFrequency How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?

- Never (1)
- Monthly or less (2)
- 2-4 times a month (3)
- 2-3 times a week (4)
- 4 or more times a week (5)

*Skip To: End of Block If How often do you have a drink containing alcohol? = Never*
Standard Drinks The following questions ask about alcohol use. For these questions, a "standard drink" refers to approximately 12 oz of regular (5%) beer, 5 oz of table wine, or 1.5 oz of 80 proof liquor.

SixDrinks How often do you have six or more standard drinks on one occasion?

- Daily or almost daily (1)
- Weekly (2)
- Monthly (3)
- Less than monthly (4)
- Never (5)

StandardDrinks How many standard drinks containing alcohol do you have on a typical day?

- 0 (1)
- 1 or 2 (2)
- 3 to 4 (3)
- 5 to 6 (4)
- 7 to 9 (5)
- 10 or more (6)

End of Block: Individual/Student

Start of Block: Chapter

Chapter Description The following questions refer to the LSU chapter of your inter/national fraternity.
ReasonsJoining What influenced your decision to join a fraternity? (select all that apply)

- Meeting fraternity members before I went to college (1)
- Meeting fraternity members once I arrived at LSU (2)
- Friends from my high school joined a fraternity (3)
- Networking (4)
- Academic support (5)
- Philanthropy opportunities (6)
- Community service opportunities (7)
- Other (8) ________________________________________________

 SemesterFrat Which semester did you join your fraternity?

- Prior to fall 2016 (1)
- Fall 2016 (2)
- Spring 2017 (3)
- Fall 2017 (4)
- Spring 2018 (5)
- Fall 2018 (6)
- Spring 2019 (7)
NMSize How many members were in your pledge/new member class?

- 1-9 (1)
- 10-19 (2)
- 20-29 (3)
- 30-39 (4)
- 40-49 (5)
- 50-59 (6)
- 60-69 (7)
- More than 70 (8)
- Don’t know (11)
ChapterSize How many members (new members and initiated members) are currently in your chapter?

- 1 - 25 (1)
- 26 - 50 (2)
- 51 - 75 (3)
- 76 - 100 (4)
- 100 - 125 (5)
- 126 - 150 (6)
- 151 - 175 (7)
- 176 - 200 (8)
- More than 200 (9)

NMPeriod How long is your fraternity’s new member period?

- Less than 1 week (1)
- 1 week - 2 weeks (2)
- 2 weeks, 1 day - 4 weeks (3)
- 4 weeks, 1 day - 6 weeks (4)
- 6 weeks, 1 day - 8 weeks (5)
- 8 weeks, 1 day - 10 weeks (6)
- 10 weeks, 1 day - 12 weeks (7)
- Longer than 12 weeks (8)
House

Does your fraternity have a house?

- Yes, on campus (1)
- Yes, off campus (2)
- No (3)

Display This Question:

If Does your fraternity have a house? = Yes, on campus
And Does your fraternity have a house? = Yes, off campus

HouseResidential

Do students live in your fraternity house?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Legacy

Did any other members of your family join a fraternity or sorority before you? (select all that apply)

- Yes, grandparent (1)
- Yes, father (2)
- Yes, mother (3)
- Yes, brother (4)
- Yes, sister (5)
- Yes, other (6) ________________________________________________
- No (7)
Active Semesters Including the current semester and the semester when you were a new member, how many semesters have you been active in your fraternity? (Exclude semesters studying abroad or taking a semester off)

 ▼ 1 (1) ... 9 or more (9)

Leaving_Ever Have you ever considered leaving the fraternity/sorority community at LSU?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Display This Question:
If Have you ever considered leaving the fraternity/sorority community at LSU? = Yes

Leaving_Now Are you currently considering leaving the fraternity/sorority community at LSU?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Leadership Have you held any leadership positions in your chapter?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Display This Question:
If Have you held any leadership positions in your chapter? = Yes

Leadership_Exec Have you served as an executive officer (e.g., President, Vice President, Treasurer) for your chapter?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)
IFC Have you been involved with the Interfraternity Council at LSU?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Display This Question:
If Have you been involved with the Interfraternity Council at LSU? = Yes

IFC_Leader Have you held any position(s) with the Interfraternity Council at LSU?

- Yes (please list positions held) (1)
- No (2)

End of Block: Chapter

Start of Block: New Member Experience

New Member Intro The following questions refer to your experiences as a new member (pledge) in your chapter.

NM_Activities As a new member, were you ever required by active/initiated members of your chapter to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Never (1)</th>
<th>Once (2)</th>
<th>Twice (3)</th>
<th>Three Times (4)</th>
<th>Four Times (5)</th>
<th>Five to Ten Times (6)</th>
<th>More than Ten Times (7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participate in scavenger hunts (14)</td>
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<td>Drive other people around (15)</td>
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<td>Clean the fraternity house (17)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Perform strenuous exercises (16)</td>
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<td>Listen to extremely loud or repetitive music during pre-initiation or initiation events (2)</td>
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<td>Only associate with other members of your new member class (other than when you were attending class) (3)</td>
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<td>Undergo individual or group (lineups) interrogation (4)</td>
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<td>Perform errands or acts of servitude for active/initiated members (5)</td>
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<td>Be subjected to embarrassment/humiliation in public (12)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be subjected to embarrassment/humiliation in private (13)</td>
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<td>Drink alcoholic beverages (6)</td>
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<td>Consume drugs other than alcohol (18)</td>
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<td>Consume unpleasant foods (7)</td>
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<td>Perform sexual acts (8)</td>
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<td>Steal an item (9)</td>
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<td>Be struck by an object (fist, paddle, etc.) (10)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**NM_Documented** Were any of these behaviors photographed or otherwise documented? If yes, please specify which ones.

- Yes (please specify)  (1) ________________________________________________
- No  (2)

End of Block: New Member Experience

Start of Block: Organizational Culture

**OC_TeamCollab** The following items address teamwork and collaboration in your chapter. Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree (1)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree (3)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Strongly agree (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Members of my chapter function as a team. (13)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Members of my chapter constructively confront problems. (14)</td>
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<tr>
<td>My chapter has a productive working relationship with LSU. (17)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
My chapter has a productive working relationship with its inter/national headquarters. (18)

---

**OC_ClimMorale** The following questions address climate and morale in your chapter. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree (1)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree (3)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Strongly agree (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My chapter motivates me to put forth my best efforts. (11)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Members of my chapter are satisfied with the current culture. (22)</td>
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<td>My chapter respects its members. (12)</td>
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<td>My chapter is accepting of different races. (19)</td>
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<tr>
<td>My chapter is accepting of different religious identities. (20)</td>
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<tr>
<td>My chapter is accepting of different sexual orientations. (21)</td>
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<tr>
<td>There is an atmosphere of trust in my chapter. (14)</td>
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<tr>
<td>My chapter motivates people to be efficient and productive. (15)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The following questions address belonging and commitment to your chapter. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree (1)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree (3)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Strongly agree (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy discussing my chapter with people outside it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>o</td>
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<tr>
<td>I feel like 'part of the family' in my chapter.</td>
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<td>(22)</td>
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<tr>
<td>My chapter has a great deal of personal meaning for me.</td>
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<td>(12)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I feel a strong sense of belonging to my chapter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(19)</td>
<td>o</td>
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<tr>
<td>If I had not already put so much of myself into my chapter, I might consider leaving.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(14)</td>
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<tr>
<td>It would be too hard for me to leave my chapter right now, even if I wanted to. (20)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my chapter now. (21)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I believe that a member must always be loyal to his chapter. (15)</td>
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<tr>
<td>One of the major reasons I stay in my chapter is that I believe loyalty is important and therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to remain. (23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one's chapter. (24)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The following groups are looking out for my chapter's best interests:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Strongly disagree (1)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree (3)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Strongly agree (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alumni of our chapter (1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Our chapter advisors (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Our inter/national headquarters (5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other fraternities at LSU (4)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Interfraternity Council (IFC) at LSU (7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Greek Life Office at LSU (6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other LSU administrators (8)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

End of Block: Organizational Culture

Start of Block: Hazing

The following questions are about various aspects of hazing.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Strongly disagree (1)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree (3)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Strongly agree (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having new members participate in scavenger hunts (31)</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having new members drive other people around (32)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having new members clean the fraternity house (34)</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having new members perform strenuous physical exercises (33)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having new members listen to extremely loud or repetitive music during pre-initiation or initiation events (2)</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having new members only associate with other members of their new member/pledge class (other than attending class) (7)</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having new members undergo individual or group (lineup) interrogation (6)</td>
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<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having new members perform errands or acts of servitude for active/initiated members (27)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subjecting new members to embarrassment/humiliation in public (23)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subjectsing new members to embarrassment/humiliation in private (30)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having new members drink alcoholic beverages (8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having new members consume drugs other than alcohol (35)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having new members consume unpleasant foods (9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having new members perform sexual acts (10)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having new members steal an item (12)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Striking new members with an object (fist, paddle, etc.) (13)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Having new members be totally nude at any time (15)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (please specify) (36)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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240
**Haze Attitudes** The following items address your attitudes toward hazing. Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree (1)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree (3)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Strongly agree (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hazing is unacceptable under any circumstance.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(17)</td>
<td>○</td>
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<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hazing is acceptable as long as nobody gets hurt. (2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hazing is acceptable as long there is a purpose behind the behavior. (4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>○</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazing is a rite of passage into an organization. (12)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>○</td>
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<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hazing helps organizations see who will be loyal members. (16)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(16)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following items address hazing in fraternities and at LSU. Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree (1)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree (3)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Strongly agree (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My chapter hazes its new members. (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other fraternities at LSU haze their members. (2)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other teams and organizations at LSU (besides fraternities) haze their new members. (3)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>LSU’s campus culture promotes hazing. (11)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason</td>
<td>Strongly disagree (1)</td>
<td>Disagree (2)</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree (3)</td>
<td>Agree (4)</td>
<td>Strongly agree (5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>They want to uphold traditions. (1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>They want to create stronger members. (2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>They want to create group bonding. (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>They want to create a better fraternity. (8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (4)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Haze.OtherReasons** *Other teams and organizations haze their new members because...*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Strongly disagree (1)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree (3)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Strongly agree (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They want to uphold traditions. (1)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They want to create stronger members. (2)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They want to create group bonding. (3)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They want to create a better team/organization. (8)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (4)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Haze Expectations The following items address the expectation of hazing in your fraternity and on campus. Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree (1)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree (3)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Strongly agree (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I expect to be hazed when I join a student organization at LSU. (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I expected to be hazed when I joined my fraternity. (2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>When I participated in fraternity recruitment, I was concerned about hazing. (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would quit my fraternity if my fraternity were hazing its members. (4)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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X+
The following items address your views about hazing policies and resources at LSU. Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree (1)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree (3)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Strongly agree (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LSU’s policies against hazing help prevent hazing in fraternities at LSU. (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>LSU’s policies against hazing help prevent hazing in other organizations and teams at LSU. (8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>LSU staff and administrators provide effective resources for stopping hazing. (2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>LSU staff and administrators are prepared to address major hazing incidents. (13)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
When it comes to hazing policy enforcement, LSU targets fraternities more than other organizations. (9)

LSU is more concerned with policing fraternity activities than preventing hazing. (10)

Haze Prevention Which hazing prevention programs have you participated in, if any? (Check all that apply)

☐ Online training(s) through LSU (1)

☐ Online training(s) through my inter/national headquarters (2)

☐ Other online training(s) (please specify) (3)

☐ Program(s) led by a chapter officer (4)

☐ Program(s) led by LSU's Interfraternity council (5)

☐ Program(s) led by the LSU Greek Life Office (8)

☐ Other programs (please specify) (6)

☐ I have not participated in any hazing prevention programs (7)
Haze_PreventionFreq How often do you participate in hazing prevention programs?

- Monthly (or more frequently) (1)
- A few times per semester (2)
- Once per semester (3)
- Once per year (4)
- Less than once per year (5)

End of Block: Hazing

Start of Block: Qualitative Phase Invitation

Q44
This is a multiple phase study. The researcher is also conducting interviews with selected participants from the survey phase. Completing an interview is optional.

Interview participants will receive a $25 gift card in exchange for their time.

If you would like to sign up for an interview, please follow the link on the next page.

End of Block: Qualitative Phase Invitation
APPENDIX K. INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Questions – Qualitative Portion

Before the Interview

- Have student sign the consent, ask if they have any questions before we begin.
- Introduce myself (background, why I’m doing the study) – sorority member, some experience as FSL advisor
- Emphasize that I’m not here to get anyone in trouble, everything will be confidential
- I don’t think this is anything too scary – haven’t been issues thus far, but do want to make sure they’re comfortable. If they don’t want to answer a question, that’s totally fine – can move to the next one. If something is unclear, please ask.
- Can also end the interview at any time. Even when interview is done, if they change their mind, I will respect that by deleting the recording and not using their responses in my dissertation.
- I will keep the recording for up to 18 months but will honor requests to delete the recording sooner if you choose to remain in the study but want the recording deleted.

Background/Personal Experiences

1. Background questions
   a. Tell me about yourself.
   b. Do you work? What kind of job? Financially independent?
   c. When did you enroll at LSU? (semester and year – e.g., fall 2018)
   d. Why did you choose to attend LSU?

2. What made you want to join a fraternity at LSU?
   a. Did you have friends or family members who were involved in a fraternity before you?
   b. What interested you the most about fraternity life? (e.g., social experiences, service opportunities, academic support, networking)
   c. What did you think being in a fraternity would be like?
   d. What gave you that impression? (e.g., social media, TV, movies)

3. When did you join your fraternity?
   a. Which semester and year (e.g., fall 2018)
   b. What was your class standing at that time (e.g., freshman, sophomore, junior)

4. What was your pledging/new member experience like?
   a. Which fraternity did you join?
   b. How many people were in your pledge/new member class?
   c. What types of activities did you do?
d. How, if at all, did your chapter promote bonding among the new members and within the chapter?

5. How have you been involved in your fraternity?
   a. Leadership/officer experiences?
   b. Big brother/mentor?

6. About how many hours per week do you spend doing activities for your fraternity?

Chapter/Chapter Culture

7. How does your chapter treat its new members?
   a. How, if at all, does the treatment of new members differ from initiated members?
   b. What would you say is the most important part of your new member process?

8. Tell me about your chapter.
   a. What are the members in your chapter like?
   b. How do you feel that your chapter does or does not function as a team?
   c. How does your chapter motivate its members?
   d. How do new members show that they are committed to your chapter?

9. How open is your chapter to diverse groups such as different races, religions, and sexual orientations?

10. What does your fraternity do well?

11. What needs improvement in your chapter?

12. Have you ever considered leaving your chapter?
    a. (if yes) Why did you consider leaving?
    b. (if yes) What made you stay?

13. Thinking back over the time that you’ve been in your fraternity, what have been some of the significant events or moments for your chapter during your time in the fraternity?

Greek System

14. How do you feel your chapter fits in to the overall Greek system at LSU?

15. What are your views on the Interfraternity Council?
    a. What interactions do you have with IFC?
    b. Have you ever been part of the IFC?
16. What are your views on the Greek Life Office staff?
   a. How have you interacted with the Greek Life staff?

17. What have been some of the significant events or moments for the Greek system while you’ve been in it?

**Campus/Campus Culture**

18. What does LSU’s Greek system do well?

19. What needs improvement in LSU’s Greek system?

20. If you were talking to an incoming first-year student at LSU, what would you tell them about fraternity life at LSU – your fraternity specifically, and the system?

21. How do you feel that your chapter fits into the campus culture overall?

22. How do you feel that LSU does or does not support fraternities on campus?

**Hazing**

23. How would you describe the hazing culture at LSU (on campus broadly, and specifically within the Greek system)?

24. To what extent would you say your chapter does or does not align with the campus hazing culture?

25. To what extent do you think LSU’s hazing prevention policies and programs have been effective?

26. What suggestions, if any, do you have for helping change the culture in your chapter and on campus?

**Closing**

27. Pseudonym?

28. Have I missed anything?

Still looking for participants – do you know anyone who might be interested in doing an interview? (Can be in your fraternity, but I’m especially looking for other fraternities)
### APPENDIX L. CODES AND THEMES FROM QUALITATIVE PHASE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Code Concepts</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Code Instances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative Cultures</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Values – Academics</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance Members’ Experiences</td>
<td></td>
<td>Values – Professional aspirations</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting with Others</td>
<td>Values – Social experiences</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Values – Networking opportunities</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Values – Spending time together</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Values – Friendship</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Values – Sense of brotherhood</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attitudes – Fraternity is a good place to meet people</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Functioning as a Team</td>
<td>Attitudes – Chapter functions as a team</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Values – Resolving issues together</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>Attitudes – Chapter is “pretty diverse”</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attitudes – Chapter not as open as it should be</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Attitudes – Chapter is more accepting than other HWFs</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding HWFs in Broader Cultures</td>
<td>Broader cultures</td>
<td>Beliefs – SU is like other universities in its conference</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Partying</td>
<td>Values – Partying</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Football and tailgating</td>
<td>Beliefs – Tailgating is big part of SU experience</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Beliefs – Tailgates facilitate bonding</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>Attitudes – Alcohol is part of fraternity and state culture</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Attitudes – Alcohol facilitates bonding</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Perception is They’re Out to Get Us”</td>
<td>Institutional Rules</td>
<td>Beliefs – SU could let up on some regulations</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Beliefs – SU overenforces hazing policies</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Attitudes – Working within SU’s parameters</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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252
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Code Concepts</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Code Instances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>External Groups</td>
<td>Beliefs – Sam Clark death led to institutional culture shift/policy change</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beliefs – SU is hard on fraternities</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beliefs – SU does not like fraternities</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beliefs – SU tries to keep everyone safe</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beliefs – IFC is not out to get fraternities</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazing Policies and Programs Are Not Always Effective</td>
<td>Beliefs – Hazing prevention policies and programs are not effective</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beliefs – Hazing prevention programs are somewhat effective</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Beliefs – Hazing prevention resources are effective</td>
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<td>Hazing Is “Not Nearly What It Used to Be”</td>
<td>Attitudes – Hard work facilitates bonding</td>
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<td>Attitudes – Risky behaviors can facilitate bonding</td>
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<td>Current Hazing Culture</td>
<td>Beliefs – Hazing at SU is decreasing</td>
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<td>Beliefs – Hazing still exists at SU</td>
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<td>Beliefs – Other fraternities are harder on their members</td>
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<td>Beliefs – Hazing has decreased since Sam Clark death</td>
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<td>Attitudes – Inconvenient, Not Severe</td>
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<td>Beliefs – Culture change is needed</td>
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<td>Defining and Recognizing Hazing</td>
<td>Beliefs – Hazing is decreasing at SU</td>
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<td>Cycle of Hazing</td>
<td>Attitudes – Hazing is cyclical</td>
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VITA

Kimberly Rogers Davis was born and raised in Georgia and attended Mercer University, where she joined Alpha Gamma Delta women’s fraternity. Kimberly’s involvement as a resident assistant, sorority leader, and Panhellenic Council leader at Mercer informed and impacted her career trajectory. She moved to Louisiana shortly after her graduation from Mercer University in 2010 and began her career at the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts in Natchitoches, where she worked in Student Services as a Student Life Advisor (2010–2013) and Coordinator of Residence Life (2013–2016). While working at the Louisiana School, Kimberly earned her Master of Science in College Student Personnel in May 2012. In 2016, she transitioned to Centenary College of Louisiana in Shreveport, where she worked simultaneously in housing and residence life, fraternity and sorority life, student conduct, and Title IX.

She began her doctoral studies in August 2018 as a full-time student and Graduate Assistant for Title IX. Although she knew she wanted to research fraternity and sorority life, her interest in studying hazing evolved as she realized she wanted to ask and address some of the most critical issues facing fraternity and sorority life. In subsequent years, she has presented research about hazing at regional and national student affairs and higher education conferences. Additionally, she was a co-author of the 2020-2025 National Leadership Education Research Agenda.