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Fraternity Member'S Perceptions Of The Benefits And Limitations Of On-Campus, University-Owned Fraternity Housing And Off-Campus, Chapter-Owned Fraternity Housing

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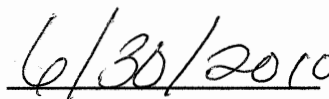
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Fraternity Member's Perceptions of the Benefits and Limitations of On-Campus,

University-Owned Fraternity Housing and Off-Campus, Chapter-Owned Fraternity Housing

(TITLE)

BY

Erin Therese Morettes

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

Master of Science in College Student Affairs

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

June 2010

YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING
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ABSTRACT

This purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the perceptions of fraternity members in relation to their experience living in off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity housing and on-campus, university-owned fraternity housing. The fraternity resided in an off-campus chapter house for several decades and recently relocated to a housing facility provided by the university. General theme emerging from participants' responses were critically evaluated based on prior research. The findings of this study suggested that the participant's perceived on-campus housing to be an overall better living environment than off-campus housing in the areas of academic success, residential community, and student persistence and engagement. However, on-campus housing created more pressure on the participants to recruit members in order to reach the required campus minimum occupancy rate for the chapter. Off-campus housing negatively affected the academic success of the members and was described as a party atmosphere 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. These findings are followed by a discussion section connecting participant responses to prior research, as well as recommendations for future researchers, fraternity/sorority professionals, university administrators, and national fraternity and sorority officials.

DEDICATION

To my parents,

Steve and Therese Morettes

Words cannot describe the unconditional love and support you have provided to me since the day I was born. You have always believed in me and have instilled such high morals and values in all your children. Many people are afraid of turning into their parents, I can only hope that I am half the parent you have both been to me.

I love you.

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This thesis could not have been completed without the support, advice, and dedication from several individuals who have made such a large impact on this project and my heart. I would like to express my utmost respect and gratitude to these individuals.

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Words can not express my love for the fraternity and sorority community at Eastern Illinois University. Each organization has been a positive influence in my life and you have inspired me to share with other Greek communities the amazing work that has been created at EIU. I would specifically like to thank the men of Sigma Chi fraternity and the women of Alpha Gamma Delta sorority for welcoming me into your homes and giving me the opportunity to see the day-to-day benefits of fraternal organizations.

Seeing the growth of your members and your organizations over the last two years makes me so proud of the legacy you will leave behind for the members of the future.

To the men of Sigma Chi, you will always have a place in my heart. Your ability to put a smile on my face and brighten up my day with laughter helped me through so many days over the past two years.

I am very privileged to be a member of Alpha Psi Chapter of Sigma Sigma Sigma at Eastern Illinois University. The chapter truly promotes high standards of ethical conduct, strong womanly character, and a perpetual bond of friendship. I have grown so much as a person because of these values and the wonderful women I am able to call my sisters. I would personally like to thank Jillian Ruddy, Becca Minkwitz, Lindi (Kerby) Ludwigsen, Erika Boettger, Amie Adams, and Mary Kate Lobough for being the best of friends and sisters.

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Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
Chapter I.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Purpose of the Study	3
Significance of the Study.....	5
Reflective Statement	6
Limitations.....	6
Definitions of Terms	6
Summary.....	8
Chapter II.....	10
Review of Literature.....	10
<i>Brief History of Fraternity Housing</i>	10
<i>Greek Housing and Student Development</i>	14
<i>Fraternity and Sorority Role on a Campus</i>	17
<i>Fraternity and Sorority Academic Success</i>	21
<i>Fraternity and Sorority Persistence and Engagement</i>	25
<i>Fraternity and Sorority Residential Community</i>	28
Summary.....	30
Chapter III	31
METHODOLOGY	31
<i>Design of the Study</i>	31
<i>Research Questions</i>	31
<i>Participants</i>	32
<i>Site</i>	33
<i>Data Collection</i>	35
<i>Interview Protocol</i>	36
<i>Treatment of Data</i>	36
<i>Summary</i>	36
Chapter IV	38
Results/Findings.....	38
Introduction.....	38
Results	39

Summary.....	64
Chapter V	66
Discussion and Conclusions	66
Discussion.....	66
Recommendations	74
Implications	75
Conclusion	76
References	77
Appendix A.....	822
Appendix B.....	888
Appendix C.....	90
Appendix D.....	911
Appendix E.....	922
Appendix F	933
Illustration A.....	944

Chapter I

Introduction

Housing college students is a major issue for university administrators. Specific to the purposes of the present study, off-campus fraternity and sorority housing has been an alternative living arrangement for fraternity and sorority members for many years (Birdseye, 1907), thus alleviating some pressure on the institution to house students on campus. Managing off-campus fraternity and sorority housing is expensive and requires a major commitment by organization alumni in personal time and group supervision. More than 3 billion dollars are currently invested in off-campus fraternity and sorority housing by national and local organizations across the country (Capital Fraternal Caucus, 2010). Unfortunately, off-campus housing does not enjoy tax exempt status for those stakeholders wishing to support housing fraternity and sorority members in off-campus facilities. The Stephanie Tubbs Jones Collegiate Housing and Infrastructure Act (H.R. 1547/S. 781) is a bill currently before the U.S. Congress to allow individuals who wish to support facility structure and educational environment improvements of fraternity and sorority housing to receive tax-exempt credit. The Act states,

A 501(c)(3) organizations, will not lose its (c.) (3) tax-exempt status solely because it chooses to make housing and infrastructure grants to organizations (501(c)(2) or 501 (c.)(7) organizations, which should include all existing house corporations for fraternal housing) that provide for non-for-profit housing to college students. The grant may be used for any purpose that a grant made to built

a dormitory at a university could be used for, with the exception of recreational/physical equipment (Capital Fraternal Caucus, ¶ 1).

Whether the proposed Collegiate Housing and Infrastructure Act becomes law is still pending, however, the intent of the Act is to alleviate the tax code disparity that exists between higher education institutional housing and the housing provided by off-campus fraternities and sororities.

Many individuals, national fraternal organizations, and college chapters support this pending legislation because it will assist in removing a large burden of costs associated with off-campus living. Money otherwise used for taxes can be redirected to more productive areas such as remodeling projects that could lead to environments that are enjoyable, safer and more conducive to learning.

Likewise, in addition to the cost savings that would be realized from the tax legislation, universities could also realize space re-acclimation desperately needed to deal with residential communities that are over campus capacity.

Ramapo College in Mahwah, N.J., has opened two new residence halls since 1999, with three more planned in the next few years. Yet despite turning double rooms into triples and offering nearby freshman free housing in their sophomore year if they give up their rooms this year, the school has an overflow of 130 students (Lord, 2001 p.45).

Fraternity and sorority housing has been providing an off-campus, yet university connected, alternative for students since the mid 19th Century (Porter, 1888). Fraternal housing at its best can provide a cost efficient integrated learning environment where individuals with common interests and morals have the opportunity to academically and

socially develop equal to if not better than those students living in an on-campus residence hall (Johnson, 1972).

Have sizable payrolls for head residents, hall counselors, and even corridor proctors preformed the counseling functions of helping new students to adjust to college life any better, really, than the informal work along these lines preformed in fraternities by housemothers, pledge trainers, and 'big brothers?' Even regarding the promised reduction in living costs, expected to flow from institutional operation, mass feeding and exemption from taxes, where are board and room charges lower than in the fraternities of the same campus?" (p. 265).

Yet, others have argued that students who reside in on-campus housing are likely to be more involved and have higher academic performance. "Two decades of data on dorm living and academic performances indicate that students at Ohio State University who live off-campus are 15 percent less likely than their on-campus peers to complete their degrees" (Lord, 2001 p. 46). So the question remains, does an on-campus fraternity chapter house provide better student retention, academic success, and residential community, in effect, a better living environment, than that of an off-campus fraternity chapter house?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present study was to examine the opinions and perceptions of fraternity members who recently relocated from off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity housing to on-campus, university-owned fraternity housing in relation to issues of student retention, academic success, and residential community. As the review of literature revealed, there has been very little quantitative or qualitative research that examines

fraternity member's perceptions on their fraternity living environment. This study expands the existing research, albeit limited, in the area of on-campus fraternity living and its perceived influence on student retention, success, and community within the fraternal organization.

The goal of the present qualitative study was to explore whether there are factors influencing fraternity member's perceptions of their benefits of living on-campus versus living off-campus within student retention, academic success, and residential community. This research may help future university and chapter policy implementation as well as illuminate unknown perceptions and trends.

Four research questions guided the present study and were chosen to extract the perceptions and personal experiences of fraternity member's views on housing.

1. What are the perceptions of fraternity members concerning their choice of off-campus and on-campus housing experience?
2. What are the perceptions of fraternity members concerning the similarities and differences between the on-campus, university-owned, fraternity chapter house and the off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house with regard to retention?
3. What are perceptions of fraternity members concerning the similarities and differences between the on-campus, university-owned, fraternity chapter house and the off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house in regard to academic success?
4. What are the perceptions of fraternity members concerning the similarities and differences between the on-campus, university-owned,

fraternity chapter house and the off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house in regard to residential community?

Significance of the Study

Currently, there is limited research comparing alternative fraternity living environments. This study sought to provide a foundation for further research in the areas of National Interfraternity Council fraternity housing, National Panhellenic Conference sorority housing, National Pan-Hellenic Council fraternity and sorority housing, Multicultural Greek Council fraternity and sorority housing, athletic housing, and other recognized student organization housing.

The perceptions of fraternity members moving from off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity houses to on-campus, university-owned fraternity housing were investigated. The study sought to contribute new and original research to the field of fraternity life. Since there is very little quantitative and qualitative research about the perceptions of the benefits and limitations of on-campus and off-campus fraternity housing, this research will be valuable to universities and colleges who are looking to provide on-campus, university-owned housing.

Inter/national fraternal organizations can use the results of the data to aid in the decision to choose to own an off-campus chapter house on private property, rent property from a college or university and operate a facility, or work with university administrators to house fraternity and sorority members in a university-owned facility managed by the university's residence life department. The results of the study can also be used to provide additional resources to improve the living environments for fraternities who have both on-campus and/or off-campus housing.

Reflective Statement

The principal investigator (PI) had a prior relationship with all of the research participants prior to the start of the study. Having a prior relationship may have impacted whether participants chose to participate or not. Likewise, due to the nature of qualitative research, the primary researcher's familiarity with the participants may have led to certain assumptions that were not explored or taken for granted. As a result, the PI bracketed her perceptions as much as possible given her supervisory role in the fraternity / sorority community. The PI also lived in a campus-based sorority facility physically identical to the on-campus fraternity facility into which the group under study moved.

Limitations

Only members who have lived in a nationally recognized official off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity house and an on-campus, university-owned fraternity house were interviewed for the purposes of the study. There is a possibility that members who lived in a nationally recognized off-campus fraternity chapter house, in an unrecognized off-campus fraternity chapter house, in an on-campus fraternity house, or in another form of university housing (i.e. a floor in a residential hall/dormitory) could provide insight to further trends that were not discussed by the research participants. Finally, the purpose of qualitative research methods is to understand the group or individuals under study, and not to generalize results to other times and locations (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

Definitions of Terms

1. **Academic Success.**—Academic success is dependent on the fraternity and campus culture. A fraternity or fraternity member's success is usually measured

against the campus all fraternity GPA, campus all male GPA, over-all campus GPA and if they meet or exceed campus academic requirements.

2. **Active Member.** –Active member is a member who has been initiated into lifelong fraternity or sorority membership and is active at the collegiate level (University of Cincinnati Greek Life) Retrieved November 5, 2008, from http://greeklife.uc.edu/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.viewPage&page_id=98C69A14-CF1C-2465-12FC447FFB5782F4).
3. **Association of Fraternity Advisors (AFA).** – The Association of Fraternity Advisors is a professional association of fraternity and sorority professionals (Association of Fraternity Advisors, 2005).
4. **Chapter.** – A chapter is the campus group of a national organization.
5. **Fraternity.** – A fraternity is “a social association of the students or alumni of a college or university, usually having a name consisting of three Greek letters, such as ‘Phi Beta Kappa’” (Oxford English Dictionaries, 1989, ¶ 1).
6. **Interfraternity Council (IFC).** – Interfraternity council is the governing body of all fraternities on a campus which are chapters of any of the 73 North-American Interfraternity Conference organizations.
7. **Nationally Recognized Off-Campus Chapter House.** – A nationally recognized off-campus chapter house is a facility that is located off of university property that members of the same fraternity reside in during an academic year. The house typically displays the chapter’s greek-letters on the building and the activities of the organization take place inside the location. The facility is recognized to be an official location of a chapter by the National Organization.

8. **North-American Interfraternity Conference (NIC).** – “The North-American Interfraternity Conference [formerly known as the National Interfraternity Conference] advocates for the needs of its member fraternities through the enrichment of the fraternity experience; advancement and growth of the fraternity community; and enhancement of the educational mission of the host institutions” (North-American Interfraternity Conference, 2007, ¶ 1).
9. **On-Campus Chapter House.** – An on-campus chapter house is a university owned residential building with the purpose of housing members of the same fraternity/sorority in the same location. Typically it is recognized by the National organization.
10. **Residential Community.** – A residential community is the atmosphere which is created by the members that reside in the fraternity chapter house (Berger, 1997).
11. **Student Retention.** – Student retention is the percentage of students who continue to maintain their membership in the fraternity from year to year.

Summary

This chapter has presented an introduction to the present research on academic success, retention, and community environment associated with off-campus versus on-campus fraternity housing in one chapter of a national fraternity. Chapter II reviews previous research as it relates to on-campus and off-campus fraternity housing. Chapter III describes the qualitative methodology used for this study. The methodology includes the design of the study, participants, and collection and treatment of the data. Chapter IV describes the common themes that emerged from an analysis of participant responses to

interview questions. Chapter V discusses the conclusions and findings for the study, recommendation to student affairs practitioners, recommendations for future researchers.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of fraternity members about the impact of university-owned, on-campus fraternity chapter housing on retention, academic success, and healthy residential community atmosphere compared to off-campus housing. The review of literature is organized under the following headings: Brief History of Fraternity Housing, Greek Housing and Student Development, Fraternity and Sorority Roles on Campus, Fraternity and Sorority Academic Success, Fraternity and Sorority Persistence, and Fraternity and Sorority Residential Communities.

Brief History of Fraternity Housing

In the eighteenth century, Phi Beta Kappa, the first Greek-lettered organization, was founded with both a social and academic purpose. Following in Phi Beta Kappa's footsteps, many other Greek-lettered organizations were formed on college campuses across the country. Meetings were held in off-campus locations away from the watchful eyes of faculty members (Anson & Marchesani, 1991).

The American College Fraternity was nearly three-quarters of a century old when in spring 1846 a group of young men started meeting in a log cabin in the forests just outside of the city of Ann Arbor, Michigan (Tobin, 2008). Andrew Ten Brook, a professor at the University of Michigan, followed students of Chi Psi fraternity into the woods after suspecting that these individuals were committing crimes, such as belonging to a secret society, in the surrounding areas of university property. Ten Brook confronted the students outside of the log cabin chapter structure and demanded to know what was

occurring in its premises. The students professed that they had been sworn to secrecy and Brook set off on a quest to cease fraternity existence at the University of Michigan. Many faculty members became outraged when they received word of the secret societies and supported the expulsion of any member who claimed affiliation to a fraternity. In 1849, local citizens came to the aid of the fraternity men. "Many of the expelled students were 'among the most talented and moral of the members of the institution,' they [leading figures of Ann Arbor] declared; the move against free association was 'an abridgement of the rights of man'" (¶ 8). It wasn't until the 1850 when the public had sided with the fraternal organizations in their rights to free assembly that the university reinstated the secret societies.

In 1855, Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity constructed their own log cabin to host secret gatherings at Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio (Porter, 1888).

The site selected was a deep ravine, far away from any human dwelling.

Neighboring farmers were hired to fell the trees and to raise the frame of the ark of a house, forty-five feet in length by ten in height. The entire chapter rested not until they had plastered the outside crevices with mud. Inside the room was nicely ceiled, and furnished with good tables and chairs, a carpet, and several pictures.

The walls and roof of the building were ingeniously deadened with saw-dust and charcoal, so that not the remotest whispers could reach the ears of curious eavesdroppers, if any should have the temerity to penetrate to the recesses of this sylvan retreat (Porter, 1888, p. 753).

The building of a facility for the use of chapter purposes, including room and board, was a turning point in making fraternal organizations durable and powerful groups on university campuses.

The building of this lodge gave a great impetus to the owning of society homesteads. Before this the various chapters had been accustomed to rendezvous stealthily in college garrets, at village hotels, or anywhere that circumstances and pursuing faculties made most convenient. But when the assurance was once gained that the fraternities might own their premises and make them permanent abiding-places, the whole system became straightway established on a lasting foundation (Porter, 1888, p. 753).

In 1861, Delta Kappa Epsilon at Yale University built a two-story building for its members, equipped with amenities that surpassed the average dormitories of the time. Thus was the beginning of "a long epoch of more and more elaborate house-building, the culmination of which has scarcely been reached at the present day" (p. 754). In less than 40 years, fraternity chapter housing grew from an isolated log cabin in the Michigan woods to elaborate structures that today would be valued in the millions of dollars.

During the nineteenth century, many fraternities and sororities refocused the organizations toward communal living in chapter housing which emphasized social activities. Additionally, colleges and universities had a large influx in student admissions and relied on fraternity and sorority houses to host students (Birdseye, 1907). The very idea of "the college man" (p. 97) at the turn of the last century involved fraternity membership (Clark, 2010). Birdseye (1907) described the importance of the fraternities at that time.

About twenty-five years ago the Greek-letter fraternities passed into the third or present stage of their development, in which they have begun to provide their own houses or lodges in which are spent the college family lives of their members.

They have thus passed from their merely social period to that of the college family home, which they provide for their undergraduate members, and through which they have become a permanent educational influence. Their position in the college life is now recognized and powerful. They own many magnificent chapter houses, maintain close relations between their graduates and undergraduates, and between their various chapters; their members no longer dwell by choice in the college dormitories, but in the fraternity houses, where frequently commons are served. To this extent the fraternity lodge represents a considerable proportion of the endowment of the colleges, and where the fraternities are strongest the latter have substantially ceased to build new dormitories. The fraternity houses are sometimes built on the campus, on land leased from the college (p. 213).

Fraternities were so much a part of the campus scene in the first decade of the twentieth-century that even college yearbooks emphasized the importance of membership in the university community. The 1907 *Michiganensian*, the University of Michigan yearbook, even indicated those members who lived in the Ann Arbor community (*Fraters in Urbe*) along with those members on the Michigan faculty (*Fraters in Facultate*) in addition to those men who were undergraduate members (*Fraters in Universitat*).

Birdseye (1907) also explained that fraternities played a more important role in the college home lives and the educational influences on fraternity and sorority members while alleviating colleges and universities of the burden of building new residence halls.

The sixth edition of the *Manual of American college fraternities* (Baird, 1905) reported that fraternities owned 290 houses and 368 chapters rented houses. By 1906 the total number increased from 658 to 743. Nearly a century later, “[t]here are over 15 million students in higher education and a large portion of those students live in over 5,500 fraternity chapter houses” (De Los Reyes & Rich, 2003, p.119). In fact, universities and colleges now consider providing on campus, university owned property and/or facilities for fraternities and sororities standard practice. As of 2010, “one out of every eight college students lives in Greek housing” (Capital Fraternal Caucus, 2010, ¶ 7). Additionally, fraternity and sorority chapter houses at both public and private universities largely rely on chapter housing to house a portion of their student population.

Greeks operate housing for more than 250,000 students at no cost to the host schools or the American taxpayers. Greeks own and manage more than \$3 billion in housing stock on college campuses in the United States, but the replacement value of this housing is immeasurable (¶ 13).

As the amount of students who have enrolled at higher education institutions continued to increase, the need for alternative student housing has also risen. Fraternity and sorority chapter housing has played a vital role in the housing of students and is likely to continue to do so in the future.

Greek Housing and Student Development

Fraternity and sorority housing played a large role in influencing the standards of behavior that ultimately effect student retention, academic success, and the quality of residential community for members that reside in the facilities as well as those who live elsewhere and pay parlor fees to use the facility. As Chickering and Reisser (1993) stated,

A residence hall or Greek house has the most impact when it [influence of friends] becomes an effective – and affective – subculture or reference group for its members. Like a new floor plan, the values and behavioral norms of an adopted group become the background for the individual's personal actions and attitudes. When students themselves form the community, shared standards and rules for conduct are not as likely to be seen as arbitrary or coercive. It is ironic that the group may demand more obedience than a parent would. It may even reinforce self-defeating behavior, but since we tend to defend what we identify with, those sub-cultural tyrannies may not be questioned (p. 393).

If a chapter member sets a high standard, his/her peers will either accept the standard or reject the new standard, thus setting new behavioral norms for what members residing in the facility agree to accept as unspoken guidelines for personal conduct. Chickering and Reisser (1993) believed that "The norms of the student subcultures both affect and are affected by the institutional culture" (p. 395). Thus, depending on the type of culture that is created by fraternities and sororities, the development of its members in the areas of student retention, academic success, and residential community can be positively or negatively affected.

Cote and Levine (1997) researched student perceived goodness of fit with their educational environment and recognized the "[i]mportance of students being motivated to engage in reciprocal relationships with their learning environments in order to enhance their human capital skills" (p. 229). Therefore, if a student finds the college setting to be motivational then they are more likely to utilize learning environments, such as a residential building, to improve the student's personal development. Eberly, Wall, and

Shaw (2005) assessed the learning environment associated with Sigma Phi Epsilon's Residential Learning Communities (RLCs) among 1,060 members in an on-line survey using selected items from the University Residence Environment Scale and the Educational Benchmarking, Inc., Fraternity Survey. An RLC "is an accredited program based on the residential living / learning concept, seeking to augment the fraternal experience with an academic focus beyond the classroom" (Sigma Phi Epsilon, 2005, p. 1) and is housed in a fraternity-managed living facility. An important element of the RLC concept is active participation of campus faculty members in the life of the chapter. Designated Faculty Fellows, not members of the fraternity, must be provided with office space in the chapter facility, hold regular office hours, work with the chapter's academic programming, and teach a for-credit course in the facility. On the basis of factor analysis, the researchers found that members reporting greater faculty engagement in their chapter's activities reported greater satisfaction with measures of personal academic support, living space, and the overall quality of the chapter environment.

Pike (2003) examined student involvement and academic achievement and found many differences between Greek affiliated students and students who were not affiliated with social Greek organizations. Fraternity and sorority members were just as involved in university activities as non-Greeks but senior members of fraternities and sororities were significantly more involved than non-affiliated seniors. Additionally, Greek affiliated seniors made greater improvements in academic development and all Greek members reported more advancement in their personal development when compared to members not associated with fraternities and sororities.

While the impact of the fraternity facility on academic success, student retention, and residential community is still being discovered, many positive and negative factors outside of the facility effect the development of Greek-affiliated students.

Fraternity and Sorority Role on a Campus

Fraternity and sorority organizations, depending on the higher education institution, typically make up one of the most powerful student social groups on campus. To demonstrate the dominance Greek organizations can have on a campus, more students voted for the 2010 Greek Week Queen Candidates than the student's who voted in the Student Government election at the same institution where the present study took place (Carr, personal communication, April 17, 2010). Greek organizations, and more specifically the Greek community, hold a tremendous amount of authority and responsibility on a University campus. Historically, researchers have noted that fraternities and sororities have held powerful influence specifically over Greek-affiliated students but also the entire student body in terms of setting norms of academic and social behavior (De Los Reyes and Rich, 2003; Stannard and Bowers, 1970; and Wallace, 1967). It has been further recommended that university administration and faculty work with and support fraternity and sorority organizations to synergize goals and create a unified vision for students.

The power and responsibilities held by fraternities and sororities can be used positively or negatively to shape the relationship the organizations have with administration, faculty, and the non-affiliated student population. *The Michiganensian* (1907), the yearbook for The University of Michigan, demonstrated the shift from faculty animosity to a supportive and important role within fraternity and sorority organizations.

Each fraternal organization listed all members associated with their organization that were current university faculty or staff members. Wallace (1967) explained the similarities and differences of fraternity and sorority organizations and the faculty members.

Teaching faculty and Greek-lettered organizations have a variety of characteristics in common. These characteristics include being formally organized, stable hierarchies of bureaucratic offices, channels of authority and communication, old and strong ties to a common cause that reach beyond the school and its current members, a variety of resources, a history with honored traditions, and both are controlled by adults who are highly educated, have some capital, and serve as middle-and upper-class role models for adolescent college students. However, with all these things in common they do have some differences that set them vastly apart. Fraternity members are typically younger than faculty members placing a generation gap between them. There are also differences in organizational status, professors serve as the college's service and the student represents the clientele. Fraternities serve as the most organized segment of the student body and hold themselves accountable for rules and regulations set by themselves. Most importantly, since social Greek organizations are the most powerful student organization, because they are the most organized, they can be the largest resistance to faculty member's influence; on the other hand, where the faculty and Greek organizations agree, the fraternities and sororities may be the most powerful allies of faculty influence (p. 643).

Thus a positive and supportive relationship between fraternal organizations and the university, in addition to clearly established expectations, may help clear up faculty ambivalence concerning the existence of fraternities on campus. The Sigma Phi Epsilon Residential Learning Communities are evidence of the powerful learning environments that can be created when faculty members and fraternal organizations work cooperatively (Eberly, Wall & Warren, 2007).

In addition supporting the mission of the institution, fraternity and sorority chapters are also accountable to the regulations laid out by their governing associations and to national, state, and local laws. National fraternity chapters must adhere to many policies set forth by the North-American Interfraternity Conference (www.nicindy.org), the National Fraternity of which the chapter is affiliated, the Fraternity Insurance Purchasing Group (FIPG) (www.fipg.org), the University's Code of Conduct and Recognized Student Organization policies, the campus Interfraternity Council or governing council to which the fraternity belongs, and to local chapter bylaws. Unfortunately, governing association policies may be overwhelming, leading some chapter members to focus their attention on high risk activities rather than the mundane lower risk, day-to-day activities.

Regardless whether a fraternal organization resides on-campus or off-campus, the organization still has a responsibility for the safety all individuals who enter into the facility. McCarthy (2000) recognized the legal implications of policy inattention when he noted the following legal opinion.

If a chapter owns the land on which its facility sits, as landowners, they have the responsibility to exercise reasonable care towards anyone who enters the property.

Even if a chapter rents the facility in which they live they still have responsibilities to keep the house in a safe condition. If a chapter knows about a facility issue/problem and takes no action to correct it or warn the guests then the chapter would most likely be found liable for any issues. If an accident is foreseeable and nothing is done to correct the problem which could cause the accident, liability will often follow. (p. 22).

Yet, many times with off-campus chapter houses, the facility begins to deteriorate and chapter members take it upon themselves to fix a problem or ignore the issue all together. McCarthy also explained that advisors of the organizations tend to neglect policies that are not necessarily addressed constantly by the governing associations. "While most advisors are very familiar with the alcohol and hazing policies of national offices and the Fraternity Insurance Purchasing Group (FIPG), the policies pertaining to fire, health, and safety are often forgotten and overlooked" (p. 22). McCarthy further explained that policies pertaining to fire, health, and safety are just as important as policies regarding alcohol and hazing and have serious consequences for chapters who don't comply, including loss of insurance.

Life safety upgrades are the top challenge facing fraternal housing. Only half of our housing has fire sprinklers so our smaller and older living spaces have twice the injury rate of other campus fires and significantly higher rates of property losses. 80% of fatalities in student housing fires since 2000 have occurred in off-campus housing such as fraternities and sororities. (Capital Fraternal Caucus, 2010, ¶ 8).

Overall, fraternities and sororities take on more individual and group responsibility than any other student group. That individual and group responsibility can have very hefty penalties for the fraternity or sorority and its individual members if the obligations to safety are disregarded. Furthermore, fraternal organizations play a very large role in setting the student campus culture (Wallace, 1967).

Fraternity and Sorority Academic Success

There is little research that describes the effect of the fraternity facility on the academic success of the residents in the facility. Many studies take a general look at fraternal organizations in relation to academics. In an early study on this subject, Mehus (1934) compared the academic achievement of students who were involved in a variety of activities, including students who were in fraternities and sororities and those who were not. The experiment evaluated the grade point averages of students at the University of Minnesota and at Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio, at the end of the first semester of 1927 and 1928. The subjects of the study were divided by their gender and class year. Further, the twenty-fifth percentile, the median, and the seventy-fifth percentile students were divided by the students participating in the specific extra-curricular activity was calculated and measured against individuals who did not partake in that activity.

The results of the study showed specifically regarding the difference between the scholarship of fraternity men and non-fraternity men were almost indifferent; fraternity men earned a 2.09 and non-fraternity men received a 2.10 grade-point-average. The results for sorority women and non-sorority women showed that sorority women earned slightly higher grades; sorority women earned a 2.60 and non-sorority women earned a

2.46 grade-point-average. The study then grouped activities into intellectual, emotional, social, fine arts, and physical outlets. The results showed that there was practically no difference in scholarship of men who were in fraternities and those who were not, while sorority women ranked higher than the non-sorority women (Mehus, 1934).

In a more recent study, Pascarella and others (1994) found that when comparing standardized scores of reading comprehension, mathematics, critical thinking, and composite achievement, first year fraternity males earned lower scores than non-fraternity males. The findings of their study implied that the peer culture and time commitments of Greek organizations were inconsistent with the educational and intellectual mission of the university and college missions. Pascarella, Flowers, and Whitt (2001) completed a subsequent study comparing the same standardized scores of fraternity men and sorority women in their sophomore, junior, and senior year to analyze the cognitive effects of Greek affiliation beyond the first year.

Following the same sample further through their college careers, and using essentially the same research design and analytical model, the present study found that the negative effects of fraternity or sorority membership were much less pronounced during the second or third years of college (p. 128).

Further studies have examined the fraternity's role in academic dishonesty by providing opportunities to advance a student's academic performance through "short cuts." Stannard & Bowers, (1970) study on academic dishonesty by individuals in Greek organizations found that individuals feel a lot of pressure to succeed academically so the group's reputation is not harmed and the recruitment efforts are positively impacted.

Storch & Storch (2002) studied the academic dishonesty of fraternities and sororities at the University of Florida to determine if the organizations had any impact on academic dishonesty. Their study found, "members of fraternities and sororities reported higher rates of academic dishonesty than non-members and the degree of involvement in a fraternity or sorority was associated with increased rates of academic dishonesty" (¶ 11).

The impact of academic achievement and Greek housing has been questioned since the 1960's and studies indicated that there was no difference between the academic success of individuals living in Greek housing and individuals living on-campus. "No difference was found in academic achievement between Greeks living in their chapter house, residence hall students and individuals living in off-campus housing" (p.11) based on a fifty-year review of literature on the topic (Binder, Schaub, Seiler, & Lake, 2002).

Blackwell (1957) explained that the difference between acceptable and unacceptable scholarship may be a result of enforcement of suitable study conditions in the fraternity house. Chapters should have quiet hours throughout the weekdays and possibly the weekend to promote an environment that is suitable to study. Chapter presidents and house managers should be the individuals who enforce quiet hour policies and infractions of quiet hours should be handled by the chapter's standards board. "Next to the necessity of developing a chapter's sincere interest in and support of good scholarship, ranks the necessity of providing optimum conditions under which fraternity members can study effectively" (Blackwell, 1957, p. 60). Blackwell further explained that there are physical conditions that the fraternity chapter house must have to create a successful academic environment. "Physical conditions, such as adequate heating, ample

ventilation, proper distribution of light, either artificial or natural, and sufficient desk and stowage space are all important to scholarship achievement” (p. 60). Accordingly, in order for fraternity members that reside in the chapter house to be academically successful it is recommended that their living conditions support an academic environment.

Coley & Henry (2000) outlined the benefits of on-campus fraternity and sorority housing for the students and the university.

On-campus housing promotes the fraternity/sorority house as an extension of the classroom, thus making the house an educational, not merely social, facility. It is a unique living-learning environment that promotes active learning, critical thinking skills, human relation skills, and values-development. The on-campus fraternity/sorority house serves to help organizations return to the values upon which they were founded... scholarship, leadership, brotherhood/sisterhood, and service. (p. 9).

Currently, the national tax code allows for tax-deductible financial contributions to higher education institutions for enhancement and modifications of student facilities. Fraternity and sorority organizations may also receive tax-deductible financial contributions only if “[t]he grant is of a purely educational nature, such as libraries, scholarships, leadership programming, computer wiring, and study facilities” (Capital Fraternal Caucus, 2010, ¶ 1&2). The disparity between the tax-exempt donations for university owned housing and fraternity chapter housing is that donations to the fraternity chapter can not be used for the improvement of the facility structure, such as the addition of an adequate study room, or for safety improvements, like the addition of sprinkler

systems. “The Capital Fraternal Caucus (2010) legislation, if approved, allows for “[f]raternal education foundations to have equivalent economic rights to fund collegiate housing as the universities to build for similarly situated students” (§ 4). The hope of improving chapter facilities is to provide Greek housing that provides a safe environment with an emphasis on academics (Capital Fraternal Caucus, 2010).

Overall, fraternities seem to have either a negative impact or no impact at all concerning academic success. Likewise, the chapter facility is neither harming nor advancing the academic environment for success for the residents compared to other housing options. Some evidence exists that suggests fraternal living environments are improved when faculty members are academically engaged in the organizations (Eberly, Wall, & Warren, 2007).

Fraternity and Sorority Persistence and Engagement

There have been many studies that analyzed the impact of Greek affiliation on persistence. Beil and Shope (1990) found a positive relationship between persistence and Greek membership. Smith (1991) discovered a relationship between social integration, similar to that one might find in Greek life, and persistence. Turek (1993) found that Greek membership was a predictor of persistence in first and second year men. Lastly, those students living in Greek houses were found to be far more involved in activities on campus than non-Greeks (Marji, 1994).

According to Astin (1999), an engaged student leads to a better college experience. Astin’s theory states, “Student involvement refers to the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience” (p. 297). Thus, a highly involved student is one who, for example, devotes considerable energy to

studying, spends much time on campus, participates actively in student organizations, and interacts frequently with faculty members and other students. Conversely, a typical uninvolved student neglects studies, spends little time on campus, abstains from extracurricular activities, and has infrequent contact with faculty members or other students.

Likewise, Tinto's (1993) Interaction Model also examined student engagement and emphasized the interaction between behavior and perception by students as they integrate their academic and social worlds. Milem (1997) utilized Astin and Tinto's theories to study student persistence and concluded the following: 1) "the extent to which students become involved during their first 6 to 7 weeks of a semester are significantly related to whether they are likely to persist at the institution" (p. 9), and 2) "faculty play a critical role in the persistence process" (p. 9).

Schroeder (1994) used statistics and a wide variety of sources to come to the conclusion that students who live in a residence hall are more likely to be involved in campus activities, social activities, and have about a 12% higher graduation rate than students who commute or live off-campus. The residence hall setting has great potential for educational programming, service learning, and integrated living and learning experiences for students that reside in the residence hall.

In addition to increased retention rates of students who live in on-campus housing, there is also a stronger bond created with the university (Coley & Henry, 2000).

Not only does a strong student community foster a sense of unity and positive regard, but it can also have a significant impact on students' retention rates and academic success by helping students feel more connected to the institution and

their organization. In addition, data show that students who choose to live on-campus are retained at a slightly higher level than those who choose to live off-campus (p. 8).

However, dating back to the 1970's, fraternities have faced problems in trying to have individuals choose to reside in their chapter house facilities. Johnson (1972) explained that some individuals may not consider joining a fraternity because they believe that the chapter house living would be too costly. In fact, "[s]urveys at many campuses show that fraternity charges for board and room are fully competitive with those of on-campus residence halls, and frequently lower – to the astonishment of outsiders who still think of them as luxurious and high priced" (p. 265-266). Though fraternity chapter houses may have the same or lower room and board rates in comparison to the traditional residence hall, many chapters find it difficult as underclassmen to handle all the financial and physical responsibilities of maintaining a chapter house. "[G]reeks struggle as all Americans do with inflation, spiraling property taxes, higher labor costs for kitchen and maintenance help, and ever more complicated tasks of management" (p. 266).

Outside of trying to get potential members to see past the costs associated with living in the fraternity chapter house, many fraternities struggle to have their own members continue to live in the chapter house. "In housing they faced a problem of 'senioritis' – a tendency of members to seek alternatives to chapterhouse living in outside, apartment accommodations" (p. 266). Similar results exist for members of fraternal organizations who live in on-campus, university owned fraternity housing in comparison to members who live in off-campus, chapter owned fraternity housing.

Fraternity and Sorority Residential Community

The purpose of social organizations are to provide a deeper connection with the members of the organization and to hold its members to a higher standard of excellence, but it is unknown if the chapter facility is fostering the environment for the students to fulfill this mission. According to De Los Reyes and Rich (1993), issues of drinking and substance abuse, hazing and poor academic performance present a “time bomb waiting to explode” (p. 122) for university administrators who seek to mitigate these behaviors.

Some college administrators that have on-campus fraternity and sorority housing have indicated a more positive impact on the overall university community. “On-campus housing can enhance the connections that students develop within their own organization, with members of other fraternities and sororities, and with the campus and local community” (Coley & Henry, 2000, p. 8). For example, Mercer University stated “we have found that on-campus housing has significantly enhanced relations between our organizations by promoting casual interactions between members of various organizations, from walking to class together to going next door to ask that the music be turned down” (p. 8). Likewise, “Mercer’s Greek Village created a neighborhood-like atmosphere and has resulted in organizations holding one another accountable for behavior that is disruptive to the community” (p. 8).

By providing on-campus, university owned chapter facilities, the university demonstrates its commitment to support the purpose of the organizations.

Building new campus housing for fraternities and sororities sends a message that the University is committed to the success of its fraternity/sorority community.

From a recruitment perspective, it also communicates to prospective students that a vibrant student life is important to the University (Coley & Henry, 2000, p. 9).

In 1995 the Housing department at a mid-size Midwestern University expanded Greek Court for the third time and created housing for National Pan-Hellenic Council historically black fraternities and sororities. Lewis, president of Black Greek Council and member of Phi Beta Sigma at that time, said, "People will see that this is a multi-million dollar project, so apparently the university respects us and feels that we are a growing organization" (Cole, 1995, p.1). As Miller confirmed, "When members of the Panhellenic and Interfraternity Councils moved into Greek Court, the number of members in each group increased seven to eight percent" (p. 1). Having a larger amount of chapter members has assisted the chapter in filling the chapter house number requirement with the university.

Based on the literature review, there appears to be increased attention on the impact of fraternity and sorority membership and community living on the life of the university. University presidents are concerned about the decline of student life and the apparent divorce between the classroom and student life outside of it (De Los Reyes and Rich, 1993). As Birdseye (1907) stated a century ago,

a chapter not owning a house is greatly handicapped, and much more so if it is not able even to lease one. There is therefore a constantly increasing effort to build or rent houses, and probably in all the larger institutions there are such for all the important societies" (p. 216).

From that time to this, interest in the housing needs of fraternity and sorority students continues to be an important topic of research.

Summary

The third chapter will outline the current study in terms of methodology. The fourth chapter will provide the common themes found through personal interviews in terms of research questions and themes. The fifth chapter will provide recommendations and future research of the current topic.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Design of the Study

The purpose of the present study was to examine the perceptions of fraternity members who recently relocated from off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter housing to on-campus, university-owned fraternity housing in relation to academic success, student retention, and residential community. This qualitative study provided an opportunity to gather rich data in the areas of fraternity member's perceptions on chapter housing options.

The phenomenological qualitative approach for the current study attempted to capture the experience of an activity from the participants' perspective (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2006). Qualitative research allows the researcher to "analyze data inductively by categorizing and organizing the data into patterns that produce a descriptive, narrative synthesis" (p. 9). Glaser and Strauss (1967) provided some general guidelines for conducting this type of research: 1) identify the phenomenon of interest, 2) identifying a process to pursue the interest, 3) make a decision regarding initial collection of the data based on an understanding of the phenomenon, 4) determine which group or subgroup to collect data and 5) utilize the data to foster the development of emergent categories.

Research Questions

Four research questions guided the present study and were chosen to extract the perceptions and personal experiences of fraternity member's views on housing.

1. What are the perceptions of fraternity members concerning their choice of off-campus and on-campus housing experience?
2. What are the perceptions of fraternity members concerning the similarities and differences between the on-campus, university-owned, fraternity chapter house and the off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house with regard to retention?
3. What are perceptions of fraternity members concerning the similarities and differences between the on-campus, university-owned, fraternity chapter house and the off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house in regard to academic success?
4. What are the perceptions of fraternity members concerning the similarities and differences between the on-campus, university-owned, fraternity chapter house and the off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house in regard to residential community?

Participants

Research participants in the study were undergraduate members of a national fraternal organization associated with the North-American Interfraternity Conference (NIC). A total of three participants out of four who were eligible were used for the present study. The participants interviewed came from a nationally recognized fraternity chapter with a well established local housing corporation. All participants were white males, between the ages of nineteen (19) to twenty-two (22), who were full members of their Greek-lettered organization for over a year. All participants held leadership roles on their chapter executive board and two out of the three participants held executive roles on

the campus Interfraternity Council. This phenomenological qualitative study allowed the participants to express their experience with fraternity housing in greater detail rather than via a paper-and-pencil questionnaire.

Purposeful sampling (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2006) was utilized to contact potential candidates for the study. A list of names of fraternity men were gathered based on personal contacts with the stipulation that they had recently relocated from an off-campus, fraternity owned chapter house to an on-campus, university-owned chapter house. Due to the specific requirements of living in an off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house and subsequently in an on-campus, university-owned fraternity chapter house, only four individuals were eligible to participate in the study. Three of four eligible research participants consented to participate. These three participants represented 27.3 percent of the 11 students who lived in off-campus fraternity housing one year, and 17.6 percent of the 17 students who lived in on-campus fraternity housing the first year the chapter was housed on-campus.

Site

All participants were currently working to earn their bachelor's degree from a mid-western, public university with a total population of 12,000 where 15% of the school's population was associated with social Greek lettered organizations. The participants also were members of a successful and recognized fraternity community that has been honored by the National Interfraternity Conference and the Mid-American Greek Council Association as a premier fraternity community (Robyn Carr, personal communication, September 21, 2008).

The former, off-campus fraternity house consisted of two adjoining buildings, former private residences, housing a total of 11 members out of an organization with 36 total members in fall 2009 (Fraternity/Sorority Grade Reports, Fall 2009). The wooden frame buildings were approximately 70 years old and contained 10 bedrooms, a formal chapter room, a business / study room, a kitchen in each building, and one shower facility in each building. One building had an attached car port, with a private volleyball court in a fenced backyard. The buildings were located two blocks from the center of campus.



The on-campus Greek Court facility housed up to 35 members in 18 two-man rooms. The wooden frame, duplex brick-faced building was constructed in 1990, and housed two organizations with an Associate Residence Director apartment connecting the fraternity housing units. In addition to student rooms, the building contained a formal chapter room, kitchen, an adjoining study room shared with another fraternity, 10 suite-style bathrooms, and one guest bathroom. A storage room for Ritual equipment is also available.



Photograph 2: A Greek Court unit (Retrieved June 2, 2010, from <http://www.eiu.edu/~housing/greekct.php>)

Data Collection

All participants who qualified for the study were sent a letter through the U.S. Mail (Appendix E) requesting their participation in the present study. Participants were asked to confirm their agreement to participate via email or in person to the principal investigator (PI). When an email was received by the PI, participants were emailed the Participation Consent Form (Appendix B) and a Demographic Survey (Appendix F) to be used for descriptive purposes. After the consent form and demographic survey were sent to participants, the PI contacted the participant via email to schedule a date and time for an interview lasting up to an hour. Prior to the start of the interview, the principal investigator described the interview process and asked the participant if he had any questions or concerns regarding consent. A signed and dated copy of the informed consent was given to the participant and the original document was kept on file with the PI.

Interview Protocol

The PI served as the instrument for data collection (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). The same semi-structured interview protocol was used with all participants (Appendix C). The protocol items were created to draw out the opinions and experiences of the participants to answer the four research questions presented in Chapter I. Follow-up probes were used to draw out detailed descriptions of circumstances and perceptions from the participants.

Treatment of Data

All interviews were video recorded by the PI in the same on-campus secured and confidential room. Once the interviews were concluded, the PI transcribed the videotape audio files onto a personal computer. Participant names were substituted with numbers in the resulting audio transcripts. The video audiotapes were transcribed on a personal computer using a word processing program. The data were analyzed using constant comparative analysis (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2006) by the PI to discover themes emerging from participant responses. To protect against as well as minimize any potential risk to confidentiality, all tapes with any identifying materials were locked in a drawer inside of a locked room. The researcher was the only person with access to both the locked drawer and room. The transcribed materials will be stored in a password-secured folder for three years and then destroyed. Only the PI will have direct access to the data.

Summary

Chapter III provided an explanation of the qualitative methodology used for the present study of fraternity housing options. Chapter IV will concentrate on the themes

emerging from analysis of responses to the four research questions. Chapter V will summarize the findings of the present study, provide practical suggestions for university administrators and national organizations, and suggest future possibilities for research in fraternity housing.

Chapter IV

Results/Findings

The voices of three American college fraternity members who transitioned from living in an off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity house to living in an on-campus, university-owned chapter house is described below. The men explained their experiences and feelings associated with their living environments off-campus and on-campus.

Introduction

This chapter provides the results of individual interviews with three participants completed for the purposes of the present study. Each participant was asked a series of questions based on four major research questions (Appendix C). After initial research questions were asked, follow-up questions were asked based on participant responses. Each interview was conducted in a quiet, private room located in the university's on-campus fraternity and sorority housing. In order to provide as much anonymity as possible, participants names were not used in the discussion below. Rather, each participant was given an identification number to represent their voice. The first individual interviewed was participant #1, the second participant interviewed was #2, and the final participant interviewed was participant #3. Constant-comparative data analysis (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006) was used to discover emerging themes based on analyzing participant responses first within research question, then across respondents, until no new codes were identified. Codes were grouped into categories, then categories assigned to themes. Emerging themes are presented below grouped within the original research questions.

Results

What are the perceptions of fraternity members concerning their choice of off-campus and on-campus housing experience?

The most prominent theme occurring through all participant interviews was the financial costs associated with on-campus and off-campus fraternity housing. The participants preferred the financial security of paying the university for their housing, rather than what was to them an unknown source when living off-campus, even though it was the fraternity's alumni house corporation. Participant #1 offered his view of his personal finances and the chapter finances.

I would say on-campus it is a lot better; definitely a system I prefer having. I was paying the University for my tuition and student fees and then paying some mysterious entity when I was living in the [off-campus] chapter house. Now, on-campus, it is all billed to the same account so it is a lot simpler. I don't have to write a third check or a second check any more. There is also a little bit of confidence, I guess on my part, that I am not going to be over charged when paying the university. We had a [housing] deposit when we were at the old house, like anyone that rents off campus houses, and I've never heard of any one of our members getting a deposit back. On-campus I know I am going to get it back if I didn't damage the room. I didn't plan on [damaging the room], so I'd say it's a better, it's a better financial relationship. It was never good having to deal with the money off-campus. I like to have as little money to be going to the hands of my brothers, and through [the fraternity] as much as possible, cause there is just too many things that could go wrong there.

Participant #2 who also served as the chapter treasurer explained that it was such a personal hassle to collect rent from the chapter members. By moving on-campus, the university took on the responsibility of collecting room and board from the chapter members who lived in the facility.

I think it is easier living on-campus because it is not like the fraternity is asking for thousands of dollars; it's like the university is asking you for the money. Our dues have gone down somewhat but I structured our dues so that we only needed a certain amount of money from each person. But I upped it more if you lived in the house, then you get an additional discount, and if you paid in full you get an additional discount. So, like we did it like that so it still seemed really expensive but if you were smart about it then it was not that expensive.

The participants also explained that when the chapter members were considering moving on-campus there was a preconceived notion that living on-campus would be much more expensive. Participant #3 expressed his perception of the members' views on the expense of off-campus and on-campus living.

Everyone thought on-campus was a lot more expensive to live in when we were living off-campus because the university has the meal plan attached to the price of rent and utilities and everything like that. Everyone didn't see that off-campus the members who lived in the house were just paying rent, and chapter dues were paying for utilities and maintenance so they thought that coming on-campus was way more expensive, and that didn't make any sense.

Yet, participants were concerned with losing their chapter identity by having to recruit more members so that they would have enough members to live in the on-campus chapter

house. The university had strict policies in place if the chapter did not fill the on-campus chapter house with at least 33 students. For every person the chapter was below the minimum number, the chapter had to pay \$800.00 to the university, in effect, an “empty bed” fee. Participant #1 expressed his concerns about either having to grow the chapter membership or be faced with monetary fines from the university.

I never wanted to be in a chapter that was anywhere above 60 members and still I think that is possible to do that but I mean, it’s not the change that I wanted to have, to have that pressure now. If you don’t recruit you are going to get kicked out of the on-campus house or be fined thousands of dollars from the university. Two off-campus financial themes emerged from the participants interviewed. The first theme was that the participants felt that they were paying too much to live in the off-campus house and not receiving the quality of living that they should have been receiving. The second theme was that members did not know where their money was going to when they paid their rent.

Participant #2 explained the breakdown of costs for living in the off-campus chapter house.

I think the cost all balances out to pretty much the same on-and-off campus, but I know that living off-campus was like \$2,000 per semester just to live there, which is pretty expensive. Off-campus we weren’t allowed to live there over the summer, at all or anything like that, so it was like four grand to live there for the year which in all reality was like eight or nine months of school. But people living in the off-campus chapter house didn’t have to pay any utilities. Utilities came out of everyone’s dues, which were ridiculously expensive having like cable for each

of the houses, water, heat and air conditioning. Two years ago our water heater broke and we had like a \$900 water bill. The finances were definitely ridiculously high living there.

Participant #2 further stated, "When I pledged the chapter, it was \$495 to pledge and then a year later it was \$550. The increase in cost was just to keep up with the house deteriorating and we were pumping more and more money into it."

When Participant #1 explained the dues structure of the chapter, he spoke about how even as an executive board member he did not know specifically who the chapter members were paying to live in the off-campus chapter house. "We weren't paying a university when we lived off-campus. Well, whoever we were paying back then... it's still very unclear." Participant #2 talked about how the fraternity's housing corporation was in charge of the chapter's financial standings, and would not let the chapter members in on where the fraternity stood with their money.

Our housing corporation was obviously concerned about money and we tried so many times to see where all of the chapter's money was going after years and years of living there, like where all the money was going and why we still owed so much money on the mortgage and things like that. Our housing corporation kind of never really let us in on any of the financials of what was going on, and [the housing corporation members] would freak-out if we bugged them about it. So they were really dysfunctional in that aspect, and then they were part of the negotiations for moving because originally the university was going to buy the properties, but the university wasn't going to pay us hardly anything for them so they were more concerned about getting top dollar for the properties. . .

Besides an emerging financial theme, the personal safety theme appeared throughout the interviews with the participants. The participants expressed that the on-campus chapter house was much safer than the off-campus chapter house.

Participant #3: Safety is definitely a lot better on-campus, I think. The only problem is people leaving the double doors unlocked. During the day we can keep it unlocked so members who don't live here are able to walk in and come in without banging on the door or calling someone to let them in. We lock the doors at night and safety is pretty nice, especially with university staff members walking through the building every night. Safety off-campus was really bad. The doors never shut all the way. We had a pin-code lock to get into the doors which people would tell their girlfriends the number, and then over school breaks, we got broken into twice over the past year, and everyone got all their things stolen in their rooms. So safety is definitely a lot better in the on-campus chapter house.

Participant #1 discussed his view of safety regarding the off-campus chapter house.

The fire extinguishers were usually full except on the occasion when someone came home and took it off and used it when there was no fire. I don't think that there was anything electrically wrong with the off-campus chapter house, but really the biggest safety issue was when there were a lot of people at the house, they were drunk or just not responsible. For example, I was completely sober one night and I had turned the oven on and had completely forgot about it, and it must have been on for about 8 hours before I realized it and came back. So I mean as far as the off-campus house, it was surprisingly safe for how it looked. If the house wasn't sturdy it would have needed to be changed. When we moved we

were also at the end of its life span. Everything in that house would have needed to be changed within the next 5 years; the roofing, the siding, the foundation. That would have all needed to be replaced, but for the age that it was in, I think it was actually pretty safe. I don't know if that was us up keeping it or just that it was built well, I don't know what it is.

The participants also addressed that it was very easy to gain access to the facility and someone's room, regardless of whether or not one was a member. Participant #2 explained the pin-code lock and declared, "We had the code to get into our main door and everybody in our entire house knew it, and half the girls on campus knew it, but anyone could come in and out at any time." Participant #1 explained how easy it was to gain access into a locked bedroom in the off-campus chapter house.

It became painfully clear towards the end of the semester that if somebody wanted to get into your room, that's all there was to it, because the doors looked like doors but they were more like cardboard; you could kick it once and the hinge would come off and someone was in your room. That's part of the reason why that break-in happened over winter break, we all left. I don't even know how the people who broke in got in but the doors were a joke. Each one of the doors was broken.

The participants also expressed two very different experiences with the facility conditions of the off-campus and the on-campus fraternity housing. Participants described the off-campus chapter house to be in a very poor condition and the on-campus chapter house to be in great condition. Participant #1 explained the poor conditions of the off-campus chapter house.

[H]eat initially comes to mind. Obviously we paid for all the utilities so it was kind of like heat ration and I know that the windows aren't very well sealed. The whole house was pretty much a vacuum. I remember at the end of fall semester, like December, it was at least 50 degrees in my room and then 60 maybe in the rest of the house, so you know it would be 8:30 at night and I would have other things that I had to do but it was just so cold that I wanted to go to sleep. So the poor heating quality of the house quickly comes to mind. The other thing that happened is the plumbing always failed in the annex and the chapter house. I lived in the annex, but in the chapter house the showers would continuously go out and that requires a lot to call people and you know when you are relying on members in your house to make the call; that sometimes it takes forever.

Participant #2 compared the living conditions of the off-campus and the on-campus chapter houses.

Well, when we lived off-campus last year, a month into school our washing machine broke so we had to go to the laundry mat. So that sucked. We did have a volleyball court off-campus but the sand wasn't as nice as it is at our on-campus house, but the net was nicer off-campus and I think we played a lot more volleyball there versus on-campus. Off-campus we had to cut our own grass and stuff like that which we never did so the upkeep always looked terrible and our house corporation wasn't very good. The heating and air conditioning was awful in the off-campus house. All the windows were terrible and would let air in and out. We never got money from our housing corporation to fix anything. On-

campus, a lot of that maintenance is taken care of and we have washers and dryers, which is awesome.

Participant #3 shared his views of the off-campus chapter house.

It was really run down off-campus. There were a couple rooms upstairs that were converted into bedrooms. To use the community bathrooms we had to go all the way down to the basement to take a shower or go to the bathroom. There was only one toilet on the main and top floor. Just trying to share the shower and bathroom with everybody was hard because you had to schedule your stuff around everyone's schedule so you could actually take a shower. You would walk all the way down to the basement and then finally hear somebody in the shower and have to walk all the way upstairs. Just the living environment was really poor, like I said. Windows were really drafty, there were holes in the walls everywhere, and the kitchen was falling apart. It was a really lousy situation; there was one washer and dryer in the annex that was shared between the houses. The washer broke half-way through the year and our house-corp wouldn't buy us a new one even though it was 15 years old.

When asked about the conditions of the facility on-campus the participants responded with a more favorable outlook of their environment. Participant #1 described what it was like living in the on-campus, university-owned chapter house.

Well, if anything breaks we just file a work order and it gets fixed either within that day or the next day. They [building service workers] clean the hallways and I think they might clean the chapter room, I don't know – I've never seen them do it. They [university grounds crew] clean the outside and do the landscaping which

was kinda a problem at our old house. They'll [building service workers] hang things on the wall and all the carpentry is done by them [university carpenters]. Our rooms are still our responsibility but that would have been like that off-campus. I didn't have a meal plan when I lived off-campus so now that I can eat in the dining centers; that was a big change for me. That's probably about it when it comes to, I mean, I think they offer a lot in these rooms, about the same if not more than the dorms with the suite bathroom suite-style, that was a big plus and helped ease into the new house. However, it is still very much a business to them and not us being just residents. I guess, you know, it should be but when we were trying to move in here we wanted to have people live on the second floor and obviously we ended up losing that war. I think that if there had been a different kind of relationship where the university was not only looking at the bottom line of numbers, we might have been able to have it, the second floor. We would have been able to split up into single rooms. I know that they did a study and found that it would have made it harder for us to fill the house; I don't know what basis that study really had; they never really elaborated on that. I think that if we had a different relationship with the university we would have handled the issue differently but I still like all the things that they provide in here.

The PI asked participant #3 a follow up question concerning his perception on anything he would like to see changed in the on-campus chapter house.

No. It's pretty much what I expected. There is nothing that I could really ask for more than what we've received. I'd say, I was under the false impression that they cleaned the suite bathrooms too. I was first disappointed when I found out that

they didn't clean the bathrooms but then after a while I realized that request would have been completely unreasonable. I would not want someone walking into my room every day to clean the bathroom, so there was really nothing. I don't think there is anything they could improve on in the chapter house.

Participant #2 explained his perception of how parents and the sororities on-campus viewed the facility.

We have a really nice place. If our parents come it looks awesome versus showing them more of an Animal House style off-campus house in all reality. It looks really nice, I like that, it's a fun place to show. A lot of sororities that we have had dry-functions with have complemented us on how our house looks.

Participant #3 discussed the improvement of the bathroom, shower, and laundry situation on-campus.

On-campus it is one bathroom and one shower per 4 people. So that is a lot easier when you can have the bathroom door open and know that no one is in there right away. And even if there is someone in your bathroom there is an extra bathroom in the entryway that you can use if someone is in the shower or something like that. And you can always just go into anybody else's room that's home and use theirs. For laundry there is 4 washers and 4 dryers between our house and [other fraternity chapter] and you know at least with 2 guy houses, the machines are not always full cause guys don't like to do their laundry that much.

What are the perceptions of fraternity members concerning the similarities and differences between the on-campus, university-owned, fraternity chapter house and the off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house with regard to retention?

In both the off-campus housing and the on-campus housing context concerning retention, participants referred to the chapter's bylaws that executive members must live in the chapter facility, and the unwritten policy that new members of the organization had an obligation to live in the chapter house. Participant #1 summed up the commitment that he and Participant #3, both executive board members at the time, had to live in both the off-campus and on-campus chapter house.

When living off-campus, our [local] by-laws stated you had to live in the house when you were on the executive board as President or Vice President. So it wasn't an option. I would have probably chosen to live on-campus anyway because we were having a tough time filling [the on-campus chapter facility] because it was such a transition and kind of short notice for us all to do that.

Since moving on-campus the chapter has increased their executive board live-in requirement to include the Treasurer. Participant #3 explained the process for deciding who had to live in both the on-and-off campus chapter house came down to the requirement for executive members to live in the house, and then the youngest members were expected to fill the remaining openings. The obligation that younger members felt to fulfill their duties to the chapter was so strong that participant # 2 discussed how he had to break a housing lease to live in the chapter facility.

I had already signed a lease for another off-campus house and we had three houses next to each other that were going to be our off-campus party houses. We [the chapter members] couldn't fill the [adjoining off-campus chapter] houses and I had been a pledge the previous year, so I broke my lease to live in the annex.

The chapter had a requirement that 11 men had to live in the off-campus chapter house and annex, yet the chapter officers found it difficult to get members to live in the buildings. Participants stated that members had to live in a chapter facility for one year to fulfill their housing obligation to the fraternity. After a member lived in the facility for a year, he was no longer required to live in the chapter facility except on a voluntary basis. Participant #3 explained that filling the off-campus house was one of the biggest problems the fraternity faced. Participant #2 clarified the common trend of the year long live-in requirement.

You did your year and you were done. We had a lot more of off-campus [party] houses then. Only one man that I know of lived in the house for more than a year. No, before I was here [names a second man] lived there for two years too. But everyone lived there for a year and that was it cause we only had 11 spaces to fill.

Moving on-campus continued to negatively affect the fraternity's housing and member retention. During the period of transition to the campus facility three members decided that they would rather disaffiliate from their organization than have to live in the on-campus chapter house. Participant # 2 informed the PI that "Well, we are really small right now so we did lose three guys we tried to force into signing [an on-campus contract] and they wouldn't, so they just dropped [their membership]." Participant #1 also expressed his fear that members in the future may disaffiliate from the chapter because they would not want to live in the on-campus chapter house.

[T]here is always going to be that fear that if we had to force them to live-in they might not stay. If we had members who were juniors by standing but upwards of 24 [years of age] because of military reasons or because of transfer reasons, I

could not see them living in the house, especially with a roommate in university housing. If it came down to it I don't know if they would decide that [membership in the organization] was worth it.

The participants also expressed that a large amount of pressure was placed on the fraternity to increase recruitment numbers so that they would have enough men to meet the university's required residence number of 33 so the chapter was not charged \$800 for each empty bed under the minimum number. Participant #3 explained, "There is not a meeting or night or day that doesn't go by that I'm not thinking about how we are going to reach that number and what to do if we can't reach that." All the participants touched on the pressure that the chapter was feeling to recruit members so that they would be able to meet the required number. Participant #1 described that he understood that the chapter needed to recruit more men in order to be successful from a housing stand point, but was not sure that increasing the chapter size was the best thing for the chapter as a whole.

Now when there is a quota, is it a positive change? Maybe, in the sense of size but I don't know if it was the change that I was hoping I'd have to make. I never wanted to be in a chapter that was anywhere above 60 members and still I think that is possible to do that. I mean, it's not the change that I wanted to have; that pressure.

The overall perception among participants for the future of on-campus fraternity housing was that members would need to live-in for more than one year.

Participant #3: I think that once we've been here for a full 4-year cycle where people don't remember being off-campus they will only know of being here.

Members will know the requirement of living on-campus and as soon as it gets

full then members can start living off-campus. But we have made it so that people kind of want to be here anyways so anyone that lives off-campus kind of wants to be here anyways. Anyone that lives off-campus comes here anyways, so I think they will be okay with living here for more than one year if need be.

What are perceptions of fraternity members concerning the similarities and differences between the on-campus, university-owned, fraternity chapter house and the off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house in regard to academic success?

While each participant described his perception of the academic environment within the off-campus fraternity house and the on-campus fraternity house, there was one emerging theme described by the participants that related to both the on-campus and off-campus chapter house. The participants agreed that neither the on-campus or off-campus chapter house provided a good environment for academic success. Participant #1 felt that regardless of the environment, the academic success of the individual and the group together as a whole was dependent on the choices each individual made towards the progress of their own academic success.

[I] don't think there was a change either because it still comes down to their [chapter members'] choice. I mean, as hard as it could be sometimes, the library was really close, you had to do the same walking distance, maybe even less actually than you had to do here [on-campus chapter house]. The people that lived there [off-campus chapter house] got the grades they got then and they will probably get the same grades they will get this semester unless they do something about them because there are just as many distractions now. I don't think it has

anything to do with the house as much as that you're living with essentially a floor of your friends.

Participant #1 clarified his previous statement by explaining that in the off-campus chapter house, each individuals' job was to "be the police officer if you want to cut something out," yet at the on-campus fraternity chapter house, participant #1 felt that the university set rules on quiet hours and members could confront brothers only if their needs were not being met.

Obviously the fraternity is the one making the rules here [on/off campus chapter housing]. You can bring it up at chapter like, "Hey, we need to set something here for quiet hours or we need to set something here so this room can only be used for that [purpose]," and you don't get that at the dorms even if you go to your RA because nobody really cares.

Participant #3 agreed that the academic success of the chapter was determined by the members actually doing the work to receive good grades.

I think the [academic] focus has definitely increased here [in on-campus housing], just that we kinda came over here it was kinda a new slate, but I don't think that focus has in turn helped our success academically. The members that were slacking off-campus don't feel like they have to do this new requirement. So the focus is there, it is just getting the people to do it.

Participant #2 explained, "I think that both of them are not great environments for academic success. You live with so many people and it's so easy to get distracted, but I definitely did worse when I lived off-campus." Participant #2 also explained that it was

very easy to get distracted in both chapter houses because there was always something else to do rather than homework or studying.

I think that they are both not the best environments for academic success. It takes discipline and that is something everyone has to learn – discipline and time management. I do think that we have a lot nicer study room but we are a lot further away from the library and stuff.

Emerging themes dealing with academic success specific to the off-campus chapter house surfaced throughout the interviews. 1.) There was no accountability for attendance at academic study hours and the chapter facilities were not utilized for academic purposes, and 2.) The chapter facility negatively affected the academic performance of residents.

Lack of chapter accountability for poor academic performance was apparent when the participants were asked to talk about their off-campus environment for academic success. The off-campus facility did not have a large enough space to devote to studying and there was inadequate furniture (i.e. chairs) or materials (i.e. computers) provided in the off-campus business/study room. The participants also explained that the chapter officers would verbally remind members that they needed to complete study hours but that there was never a consequence if a member did not attend study hours. In order for a member to be sent to the chapter standard's board for poor academic performance, a member needed to receive a grade point average below a 2.0 for three consecutive semesters, which participants acknowledged as a very low standard. Participant #3 described the off-campus environment.

The academic environment wasn't very good off-campus, it was more free floating and study hours were to be done on your own time. If we were ever to go to the library as a group to do study hours, we would have to go somewhere that wasn't the house because there wasn't a big enough space to be in one area. . . . It wasn't a very good environment; definitely was more of a punishment to do your study hours if you didn't have good grades already. There wasn't any time to get everyone to go together to do the study hours so the chapter's Academic Advisor kind of fell to the side on study hours, or wasn't able to regulate the chapter members.

In addition to not being held accountable for poor academic performance and attendance at study hours, participants described the environment of the off-campus chapter house to be disruptive to their studies. The temperature of the building was one of the factors that affected the performance of the participants.

[I] remember at the end of fall semester, like December, it was at least 50 degrees in my room and then 60 maybe in the rest of the house. So you know it would be 8:30 at night and I would have other things that I had to do but it was just so cold that I wanted to go to sleep.

In addition to the temperature of the off-campus chapter house, the participants described how the social atmosphere of the building disrupted their studying and sleeping patterns. Participant #1 described what he thought his off-campus living environment was going to be before he moved into the facility and what he actually experienced once living in the off-campus chapter house.

Obviously you want to hang out with the people who are in your fraternity when you are rushing. The off-campus chapter house is where I went to for all my pledge meetings and that's where I went to go hang out. When you're there, like an hour or two hour intervals, then it is a great place to be because everyone stops by and you want to see everyone that you are in the fraternity with. It's a different reality when you live there, but from the beginning standpoint it just seemed like the center of all activity. Which it kind of was, and that was part of the down side of it when you actually lived there.

I think what I saw and what I got were pretty close to the same thing but what I didn't realize was what I saw wasn't what I wanted. So you know at first glance it looked like a party house, people were there having fun drinking or whatever they were doing, and that's the place where anyone could go do it and you didn't have to knock; the doors were unlocked and everyone in the fraternity knew the code to get into the door and you could bring anyone you wanted over. It seemed like it was open all hours of the night. Once you move in there you realized you don't want to be at that party 24/7. At least for me I'm kind of a little more, I'm probably the most conservative out of the people living there and the most willing to yell at people. I kicked people out tons of times and a lot of times they just didn't listen. I mean it would be things like midnight or one-o'clock in the a.m. and the base woofer begins to shake the house and the wall. So anyone anywhere remotely close to me I could hear playing music. You know, the party seemed like a great idea when I had a dorm to go back to, but when I lived there, over time I began to hate it, especially in the morning right before my eleven

o'clock, walking down there and seeing the mess. Thankfully we had someone who was really responsible about cleaning that up, but if we hadn't I would have had to be the one to do it, and I was not looking forward to that.

[W]hen you are just visiting you don't understand that you're not the first person to walk into the door, you're probably the 60th person who's like "let's party tonight!" You're just like, "No!" And they don't understand that it's like there is a barrier between people who are living there and who are just visiting there. Using it like it's a bar. I guess, if there was something I would have wanted as a general consensus is that if nobody who lives in the house is down there [in the main room], or if enough [house residents] are sleeping or something, it's time to leave.

The emerging on-campus chapter house themes revolved around chapter facility study areas. The three participants perceived that the chapter members utilized both the chapter study room and the chapter living room/dining room as places to study. They also all believed that the study room was a nicer room to study in than the off-campus location.

All participants remarked that the on-campus chapter study room was used by many of the chapter members, unlike the study room in the off-campus chapter house. In fact, participants described that the on-campus chapter room was also used as a study area even though the room contained many distracters such as two televisions, video games, a pool table, and other items. The participants liked that they no longer had to go to the library to study, even though being further away from the library was considered a

downfall of the on-campus chapter house. The participants also commented on how they believed the study room was a nice and quiet setting to study.

Participant # 3: I always see people going in the study room to study because it is secluded and it is really quiet. People study in the chapter room and they might be the only one in there and then the second someone walks in the chapter room and starts turning on the t.v. [the person studying] just walks into the study room. It is really nice that you don't have to pick up all your stuff and go to the library where it is kind of loud to begin with.

When asked about the on-campus academic environment, participant #2 also commented on the common use of the study room and addressed the use of the chapter room as an environment conducive to study.

Even though we live with so many people, so many times throughout the day the entire chapter room is empty so people do use it for studying. Especially during finals week there was a bunch of people there because the library is always overcrowded.

What are the perceptions of fraternity members concerning the similarities and differences between the on-campus, university-owned, fraternity chapter house and the off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house in regard to residential community?

Participants' interviews showed no common trend in residential community that existed between both the off-campus chapter house and the on-campus chapter house. The participants described the residential community of the on-campus house and the off-campus house as having very different qualities. The off-campus chapter house was described as a very loud and social community where there was little control over the

environment created by the members. While on-campus, the members described the environment as being more strict and that they were not happy about sharing their room with another person, but they found the building to be a nicer place to live and easier to communicate with each other.

The off-campus facility structure allowed all members living in the building to have single rooms but on-campus members were required to share a room with another person or pay an additional \$800 to have a double room as a single room status. Participant # 1 remarked, "I was disappointed at first about the thought of a roommate but I had lived with one before so I could get over it." Participant #3 also talked about how the chapter members felt about having to have a roommate.

It was kind of hard on everyone to now have a roommate cause in the off-campus house everyone had single rooms. So now, having to pair people up who are juniors and seniors, when they have lived by themselves for two years - it's hard to get them to see the point of having a roommate and be in a dorm-like atmosphere.

Throughout the interviews, the participants would compare the on-campus facility to a dormitory and had perceived that on-campus living would be very strict on the members in obeying policies and procedures. Participant #3 commented on his feelings of strictness in the residential community many times throughout his interview. He described that before moving to the on-campus fraternity chapter house, members felt that the residential community was going to be like living in a dorm again. The off-campus chapter house was described as being laid back and members could do whatever they wanted. Yet, participants described that the members had an understanding that once

they moved on-campus the university would be making and enforcing many of the rules for the chapter. Participant #3 described how members felt that they were being watched by the university in their on-campus setting.

People have felt more free to be drinking and just hanging out casually in the off-campus house and on-campus the members think they are being watched but they are not being watched as badly as they think. So people are just kind of uptight of what it was and now what it is.

It is important to understand that the on-campus chapter house was a completely dry facility and staff members conducted a walk-through of the building twice each night to ensure the safety of students and compliance to university policy.

In selling their off-campus property, the chapter's housing corporation invested thousands of dollars into new furniture and decorations for the on-campus chapter house. The university also provided the chapter members with new bedroom furniture, new carpet, and repainted the walls before the chapter members moved into the facility. The participants commented on how much nicer the facility looked in comparison to the off-campus facility and how they enjoyed no longer having the personal responsibility of maintaining the off-campus facility. Participant #1 described the responsibilities that the university was accountable for in the on-campus facility.

If anything breaks we just file a work order and it gets fixed either that day or the next day. They clean the hallways and I think they might clean the chapter room, I don't know – I've never seen them do it. They clean the outside. Do the landscaping which was kind of a problem at our old house. They'll hang things on

the wall and any carpentry is done by them. Our rooms are still our responsibility but that would have been like that off-campus.

Participant #3 shared the following.

We have a really nice place. If our parents come to visit, it looks awesome versus showing them more of an Animal House style off-campus house. In all reality, it looks really nice, I like that. It's a fun place to show. A lot of sororities that we have had dry-functions with have complemented us on how our house looks.

In addition to having a more positive view of their surroundings, the participants of the present study explained that having over 20 members living in one place has increased their chapter communication and the men had more daily and informal brotherhood events such as eating their meals together in the nearby campus dining service facility.

Participant #3: There is a just hallway of people. Being able to open your door and yell if anyone wants to go eat and someone will come out of their door. And all the doors are all open when people are in their room. Just being able to communicate with more people rather than at the off-campus house where you have to walk across to the other house to see if anyone is there. There is just more people here, it makes it easier to communicate for social activities or, you know, chapter involvement.

Participant #2 also explained that more things were able to be accomplished because so many people were housed in one location.

We have over 20 guys living on-campus so you have a lot of roommates and a lot of people that you can ask for help with things or get stuff done right away instead

of having to call people to meet, like “Ah, we both already live here; let’s just meet” kind of a thing.

When asked about the quality of the residential community within the off-campus chapter house, the participants described an all day and night party atmosphere, a level of disregard for other members who lived in the chapter house, and that the facility was usually messy or dirty.

All the participants remarked on the party atmosphere of the off-campus chapter house throughout their interviews. Participant #2 described his view of the atmosphere in the off-campus chapter house.

Seriously party. Every night of the week people were partying, like having random movie nights, and it wasn’t so strict and stuff and it was kind of like, whatever. Nobody cared what anybody else did. In our on-campus chapter house, we’ve had parties in our room and there are so many people in such close proximity that it gets loud and someone might be like “I have this assignment due tomorrow.” It’s like okay, I understand that, but I also want to party and live in my house and do whatever I want. It was more like literally anybody could do whatever they wanted in the off-campus chapter house. It was a little out of control but everyone had fun and everyone knew cleaning up was a pain and it was always a mess, but we had a couple house clean-up’s.

Participant # 2 later in the interview provided more details on the atmosphere of the off-campus chapter house by explaining that even on a Wednesday afternoon you could find people in the backyard of the house playing beer-darts. Participant #3 explained his view of the off-campus atmosphere.

The off-campus community was really loud and it was more of where everybody went to watch tv in-between class cause chapter house and the annex were really close to the campus. People would kinda just go to the annex in their free time to be loud, and the chapter house was kinda the quiet one out of the two houses.

The participants also described that there was a lack of respect for the members who lived in the off-campus chapter house. The participants explained that all members had access to the off-campus chapter house at any time because every chapter member paid dues to financially support the facility, so it was just as much the property of someone who lived in the chapter house as it was for someone who lived outside of the chapter house. The participants complained that members who did not live in the chapter house would not respect the request of the members living in the off-campus chapter house.

Participant #1 explained.

I'm probably the most conservative of the people living in the off-campus chapter house and the most willing to yell at people, so I know I kicked people out tons of times. A lot of times they just didn't listen or it would be things like midnight or one-o'clock in the a.m., and just the base begins to shake the house and the wall, like I said, heat goes through so sound waves are perfect for that kind of environment.

The off-campus chapter house was also described by the participants as being a dirtier place to live in when compared to the on-campus chapter house. Participant #2 shared, "the kitchen was disgusting, you couldn't leave anything in the fridge or freezer or someone else was going to eat it; we keep this one a little bit cleaner." Participant #1 explained a story about a plumbing issue that caused many problems for the fraternity.

[A]round Christmas-time we had a Christmas party and a girl that came, well, I'm not going to speculate what happened, well, something clogged our plumbing and our sump-pump exploded. So there was a large amount of human waste piled up in our basement for a little over a month because it happened right before Christmas break and we were all leaving, and no one wanted to stay and deal with that. The human waste sat there and fermented for a while and after that point you have to call the haz-mat team. You can't just clean that up yourself, so that took quite a few weeks and when it was finally picked-up, no one even wanted to go into the basement anymore, and it was never really fully cleaned.

Summary

Overall, the participants felt that on-campus, university owned housing provided a facility that was in very good condition and the university took over many of the responsibilities that were once held by the chapter members. The participant also expressed that they felt more comfortable paying the university and that the fraternity was much more financially stable on-campus. The safety of the members and their belongings dramatically increased when the chapter moved from off-campus to on-campus. Participants explained that neither the on-campus chapter house nor the off-campus chapter house provided a good environment for academic success. The participants claimed that the off-campus chapter house negatively affected their academic performance, however on-campus the fraternity members utilized the study room and chapter room as places to study.

The off-campus fraternity house had many negative connotations associated with the facility. The participants explained that there was little control over the very loud,

party atmosphere and there was a lack of accountability amongst the members for their actions and their academic performance. The facility had many issues that threatened the safety of the residents and their guests and the poor quality of the building made it very hard to maintain and recruit members to live in the chapter house. Financially it was difficult to collect rent from the members and the participants felt that they were paying too much money and not getting the quality of housing that they should have been receiving.

The following chapter will provided a summary discussion of the results, along with recommendations for future research, and implications for practice by fraternity and sorority campus advisors.

Chapter V

Discussion and Conclusions

The purpose of the present study was to interview undergraduate members who relocated from an off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity house to an on-campus, university-owned fraternity house. The interviews focused on the environments created for academic success, the retention of fraternity members in the chapter, and the residential community in each facility. Themes emerging from the interviews of members in a fraternity who moved from an off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity house to an on-campus, university-owned fraternity house were presented in Chapter IV. This chapter will compare the present themes with professional literature, provide implications for practice for student affairs practitioners, especially those in the field of fraternity and sorority life and college residential housing, and offer recommendations for future researchers interested in collegiate fraternity housing.

Discussion

The present qualitative study used cross-comparative analysis (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006) to examine emerging themes discovered through the interviews of three fraternity members' perspectives on chapter housing on and off campus. A number of shared themes emerged between the off-campus chapter house and the on-campus chapter house, as well as themes specific to only off-campus or on-campus fraternity living (Illustration A).

The themes that most impacted the participant's experience with on-campus and off-campus fraternity housing were the condition of the facility, the financial costs, and

the safety of the facility. Johnson (1972) addressed the miss-conception that many individuals may not consider joining a fraternity because they believed that the chapter house living would be too costly. In fact, “[s]urveys at many campuses show that fraternity charges for board and room are fully competitive with those of on-campus residence halls, and frequently lower – to the astonishment of outsiders who still think of them as luxurious and high priced” (p. 265-266). The participants supported Johnson’s findings because when the chapter members were considering moving on-campus there was a preconceived notion that living on-campus would be much more expensive. Participant #3 expressed his perception of the members’ views on the expense of off-campus and on-campus living.

Everyone thought on-campus was a lot more expensive to live in when we were living off-campus because the university has the meal plan attached to the price of rent and utilities and everything like that. Everyone didn’t see that off-campus the members who lived in the house were just paying rent, and chapter dues were paying for utilities and maintenance so they thought that coming on-campus was way more expensive, and that didn’t make any sense.

McCarthy (2000) suggested that many times with off-campus chapter houses, the facility begins to deteriorate and chapter members take it upon themselves to fix a problem or ignore the issue all together. Participant #1 supported McCarthy’s suggestions by stating that, “when you have a real landlord, they will come around and fix your problems [with the facility], but we owned the house so everything fell on us to fix anything that was wrong . . .”

The Capital Fraternal Caucus (2010) explained the significance of safety, especially fire safety for fraternity and sorority housing.

Life safety upgrades are the top challenge facing fraternal housing. Only half of our housing has fire sprinklers so our smaller and older living spaces have twice the injury rate of other campus fires and significantly higher rates of property losses. 80% [Sic] of fatalities in student housing fires since 2000 have occurred in off-campus housing such as fraternities and sororities. (§ 8).

Participant #1 recalled his own forgetfulness in turning the stove on and forgetting about it proves the importance of congress passing the Capital Fraternal Caucus legislation.

I was completely sober one night and I had turned the oven on and had completely forgot about it, and it must have been on for about 8 hours before I realized it and came back.

Fortunately, a fire did not result from the incident, but could have been a horrible and even deadly situation for the residents of the facility.

Student persistence and engagement in the residential setting may have a strong role in the overall satisfaction a student has with their college experience. Previous literature by Coley and Henry (2000), examined the persistence and engagement of Greek students and found that students who lived in on-campus housing enjoyed increased retention rates and a stronger bond with the university.

Not only does a strong student community foster a sense of unity and positive regard, but it can also have a significant impact on students' retention rates and academic success by helping students feel more connected to the institution and their organization. In addition, data show that students who choose to live on-

campus are retained at a slightly higher level than those who choose to live off-campus (p. 8).

The emerging themes of fraternity member persistence and engagement in the present study did not support Coley and Henry's findings. During the transition from off-campus, chapter-owned housing to on-campus, university-owned housing, the fraternity had three members who chose to disaffiliate their membership from the chapter rather than moving into university owned housing. Participant # 2 informed the PI that "Well, we are really small right now so we did lose three guys we tried to force into signing [an on-campus contract] and they wouldn't, so they just dropped [their membership]." Participant #1 also expressed his fear that members in the future may disaffiliate from the chapter because they would not want to live in the on-campus chapter house.

[T]here is always going to be that fear that if we had to force them to live-in they might not stay. If we had members who were juniors by standing but upwards of 24 [years of age] because of military reasons or because of transfer reasons, I could not see them living in the house, especially with a roommate in university housing. If it came down to it I don't know if they would decide that [membership in the organization] was worth it.

The participants also reinforced Johnson's (1972) thought that many fraternities struggle to have their own members continue to live in the chapter house to be true. "In housing they faced a problem of 'senioritis' – a tendency of members to seek alternatives to chapterhouse living in outside, apartment accommodations" (p. 266). Participants in the current study stated that members had to live in a chapter facility for one year to fulfill their housing obligation to the fraternity. After a member lived in the facility for a

year, he was no longer required to live in the chapter facility except on a voluntary basis. Participant #3 explained that filling the off-campus house was one of the biggest problems the fraternity faced. Participant #2 clarified the common Gentleman's understanding for the year long live-in requirement.

You did your year and you were done. We had a lot more of off-campus [party] houses then. Only one man that I know of lived in the house for more than a year. No, before I was here [names a second man] lived there for two years too. But everyone lived there for a year and that was it cause we only had 11 spaces to fill.

The participants' responses to their perceptions of the environment of academic success in the off-campus chapter house and the on-campus chapter house did not support research completed by Binder, Schaub, Seiler, & Lake (2002). "No difference was found in academic achievement between Greeks living in their chapter house, residence hall students and individuals living in off-campus housing" based on a fifty-year review of literature on the topic (2002, p 11). The current study participants expressed that they believed that neither on-campus nor off-campus provided a good environment for academic success. However, the on-campus, university-owned chapter facility provided a nicer place to study, and the fraternity members utilized the study room and the main chapter room as places to study.

Participant # 3: I always see people going in the study room to study because it is secluded and it is really quiet. People study in the chapter room and they might be the only one in there and then the second someone walks in the chapter room and starts turning on the t.v. [the person studying] just walks into the study room. It is

really nice that you don't have to pick up all your stuff and go to the library where it is kind of loud to begin with.

Blackwell (1957) maintained that in order to create suitable study conditions in a fraternity chapter house, chapters should have quiet hours throughout the weekdays and possibly the weekend to promote an environment that is suitable to study. Chapter presidents and house managers should be the individuals who enforced quiet hour policies and infractions of quiet hours should be handled by the chapter's standards board. "Next to the necessity of developing a chapter's sincere interest in and support of good scholarship, ranks the necessity of providing optimum conditions under which fraternity members can study effectively" (Blackwell, 1957, p. 60). Participant #1 explained the atmosphere that occurred in the off-campus chapter house.

[S]o you know at first glance it looked like a party house, people were there having fun drinking or whatever they were doing, and that's the place where anyone could go do it and you didn't have to knock; the doors were unlocked and everyone in the fraternity knew the code to get into the door and you could bring anyone you wanted over. It seemed like it was open all hours of the night. Once you move in there you realized you don't want to be at that party 24/7. At least for me I'm kind of a little more, I'm probably the most conservative out of the people living there and the most willing to yell at people. I kicked people out tons of times and a lot of times they just didn't listen. I mean it would be things like midnight or one-o'clock in the a.m. and the base woofer begins to shake the house and the wall. So anyone anywhere remotely close to me I could hear playing music. You know, the party seemed like a great idea when I had a dorm to go

back to, but when I lived there, over time I began to hate it, especially in the morning right before my eleven o'clock, walking down there and seeing the mess. . .

Thus, if the chapter had an environment where quiet hours were enforced by the chapter members, a better academic environment may have been achieved.

Blackwell further explained that there are physical conditions that the fraternity chapter house must have to create a successful academic environment. "Physical conditions, such as adequate heating, ample ventilation, proper distribution of light, either artificial or natural, and sufficient desk and stowage space are all important to scholarship achievement" (p. 60). Participant #3 supported Blackwell's theory that certain physical conditions must be in place for an academically successful environment.

[I] remember at the end of fall semester, like December, it was at least 50 degrees in my room and then 60 maybe in the rest of the house. So you know it would be 8:30 at night and I would have other things that I had to do but it was just so cold that I wanted to go to sleep.

The residential community described in the off-campus fraternity house was consistent with previous literature that suggested fraternity housing is a dangerous environment. De Los Reyes and Rich (1993) asserted that issues of drinking and substance abuse, hazing and poor academic performance presented a "time bomb waiting to explode" (p. 122) for university administrators who seek to mitigate these behaviors. Participant # 2 described the fraternity's off-campus residential atmosphere.

Seriously party. Every night of the week people were partying like have random movie nights and it wasn't so strict and stuff and it was kind of like whatever.

Nobody cared what anybody else did. In our on-campus chapter house, we've had parties in our room and there are so many people in such close proximity that it gets loud and someone might be like "I have this assignment due tomorrow." It's like okay, I understand that but I also want to party and live in my house and do whatever I want. It was more like literally anybody could do whatever they wanted in the off-campus chapter house. It was a little out of control but everyone had fun and everyone knew cleaning up was a pain and it was always a mess, but we had a couple house clean-up's.

On-campus, the participant's perceptions of their residential community supported Coley & Henry's (2000) theory that, "On-campus housing can enhance the connections that students develop within their own organization, with members of other fraternities and sororities, and with the campus and local community" (p. 8). Participant #3 explained that the members' parents and women from sororities have a more positive view of the fraternity's on-campus housing.

We have a really nice place. If our parents come to visit, it looks awesome versus showing them more of an Animal House style off-campus house. In all reality, it looks really nice, I like that. It's a fun place to show. A lot of sororities that we have had dry-functions with have complemented us on how our house looks.

Participant #3 perception also supported Coley & Henry's (2000) finding that there is a better connection with the fraternity's own members when living on-campus.

There is a just hallway of people. Being able to open your door and yell if anyone wants to go eat and someone will come out of their door. And all the doors are all

open when people are in their room. Just being able to communicate with more people rather than at the off-campus house where you have to walk across to the other house to see if anyone is there. There is just more people here, it makes it easier to communicate for social activities or, you know, chapter involvement.

Recommendations

There are many areas of on-campus and off-campus fraternity and sorority housing that have yet to be investigated. It is the PI's perception that on the campus where the present study took place, members of fraternities who have had on-campus housing for many years perceive that off-campus, chapter-owned housing would be of greater advantage to the members of the fraternity than on-campus, university-owned living options. A deeper understanding of off-campus versus on-campus housing would have been acquired if members of the fraternity community who currently do not have any chapter housing, who currently live in an off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity house, and who have lived in university-owned, fraternity housing for many years would have been interviewed.

To verify the permanence of themes that emerged from the present study, a second study asking many of the same questions of members from the same chapter should be conducted in several years. A follow-up study would verify and expand themes relating to both on-campus and off-campus living that were initially discovered in the current study.

A comprehensive longitudinal study surveying members who reside in on-campus, university-owned chapter housing and members who reside in off-campus, chapter-owned housing across the United States should be conducted to examine the

relationship between forms of housing and academic success, student persistence and engagement, residential community, and personal development among fraternity and sorority members. Such a study could be an outgrowth of research using the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) (<http://nsse.iub.edu/>) or the University Learning Outcomes Assessment (UniLOA) (<http://www.uniloa.com/>), since both assessments include data from hundreds of colleges and universities with fraternity and sorority chapters.

Implications

As previously stated in the reflective statement provided in the first chapter, the PI lived in a campus-based sorority facility physically identical to the on-campus fraternity facility into which the group under study moved. Combining the PI's own positive experience with on-campus, university owned Greek housing and the results of this study, university administrators should assess their Greek housing options to see what changes can be made to allow for environments that create a positive atmosphere for academic success, student persistence and engagement, and residential community. While it may not be feasible for all universities to provide on-campus, university-owned fraternity and sorority housing, there are ways in which university administrators can further support members living in off-campus chapter houses. First, university administrators can support the Capital Fraternal Caucus (2010) which will allow for monetary donations to be given to improve many of the physical issues with off-campus fraternity housing such as safety, and the addition of or improvements to study facilities. Second, as McCarthy (2000) explained, "While most advisors are very familiar with the alcohol and hazing policies of national offices and the Fraternity Insurance Purchasing

Group (FIPG), the policies pertaining to fire, health, and safety are often forgotten and overlooked” (p. 22). Thus, university administrators should make themselves aware of the policies required of the organizations and assist in education and accountability of the students and advisors to the policies. University administrators can also encourage faculty involvement in organizations to increase the organization’s connection to the mission of the university. Third, according to Eberly, Wall, and Shaw (2005), faculty mentors with offices in the chapter living facility (on-campus or off-campus) who actively support student engagement improve member satisfaction on measures of personal academic support, living space, and the overall quality of the chapter environment.

Conclusion

This study was designed to explore the perceptions of fraternity members who had recently relocated from an off-campus, chapter-owned chapter house to an on-campus, university-owned chapter house and their perceived benefits and limitations of academic success, student persistence and engagement, and residential community. The results of this study indicated that the off-campus chapter house negatively affected the academic performance of the residents, that there was little control over the off-campus environment, and that the chapter had issues trying to fill the 11 person facility. In the on-campus chapter house, members perceived that the facility was in a nicer condition and they utilized many areas of the facility for studying. The chapter members also felt the organization was more financially stable since working with the university, and that there were more daily brotherhood events. However, on-campus the participants felt more pressure on the organization to recruit members just to meet the on-campus minimum number of beds that had to be filled to maintain occupancy.

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For IRB use only
 IRB File No.: ____
 Date received: ____
 Approval expires: ____

Appendix A

Eastern Illinois University
 Institutional Review Board

NEW APPLICATION FOR REVIEW OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

Federal regulations and Eastern Illinois University's IRB policy require that all research involving humans as subjects be reviewed and approved by the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to the commencement of the data collection. Approval of this project by the IRB only signifies that the procedures adequately protect the rights and welfare of the subjects.

1. Title of Project: On-Campus, University-Owned Fraternity Chapter Houses versus Off-Campus, Chapter Owned Fraternity Houses: The Benefits and Limitations of Student Retention, Academic Success, and Residential Community.

2. Principal Investigator*: Erin T. Morettes

Status: ☐ Faculty ☒ Student* ☐ EAP Staff ☐ Other—specify _____

*Note: Students engaging in research are required to have a faculty sponsor or executive, administrative, or professional (EAP) staff sponsor. List sponsor below.

Mailing address: 1017 Greek Court – Director's Apt., Charleston, IL 61920

Phone: (847) 636-8628 E-mail: etmorettes@eiu.edu

Department or Unit Counseling & Student Development

Has PI completed training (on-line tutorial for certification)? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Prior to IRB approval, all PI's, Co-PI's, and sponsors must complete either the "On-line Training Tutorial for Certification" or "CITI Training"

Co-Investigator or Sponsor: Dr. Richard Roberts

Status: ☒ Faculty ☐ Student ☐ EAP Staff ☐ Other—specify: _____

Mailing address: 2109 Buzzard Hall, Charleston, IL 61920

Phone: (217) 581-2400 E-mail: rlroberts@eiu.edu

Department or Unit Counseling & Student Development

Has Co-PI or sponsor completed training (on-line tutorial for certification)? ☒ Yes
☐ No

List additional co-investigators, including above information, on a separate sheet.

3. Level of Review Sought: ☐ Exempt (submit Form B) ☒ Expedited (submit form C) ☐ Full Committee

4. Is this research being conducted to meet requirements of a course or to complete an academic degree?

☒ Yes (do NOT submit your dissertation or thesis proposal) ☐ No

5. Estimated Project Starting Date: September 2009 Estimated Project Completion Date: May 2010

6. Extramural Funding:

Principal Investigator of Contract or Grant: N/A

Funding Source: N/A

Contract or Grant Title: N/A

Contract or Grant Number: N/A

7. Indicate the categories of subjects and controls to be included in the study: Check ALL that apply:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Abortuses/Fetuses	<input type="checkbox"/>	Patients
<input type="checkbox"/>	Decisionally Impaired	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prisoners
<input type="checkbox"/>	Decisionally Impaired (Institutionalized)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pregnant
Women			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Minors (17 yrs or less)—Give age range: _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Students
<input type="checkbox"/>	Normal Volunteers		

8. Approximate number of human subjects: 7

9. Indicate which of the categories listed below accurately describes this protocol:

☒ Not greater than minimal risk

☐ Greater than minimal risk, but presenting the prospect of direct benefit to individual subjects

☐ Greater than minimal risk, no prospect of direct benefit to individual subjects, but likely to yield generalizable knowledge about the subject's disorder or condition

☐ Research not otherwise approvable, but presents an opportunity to understand, prevent, or alleviate a serious problem affecting the health and welfare of subjects

10. Does this research involve any of the following? (Check all that may apply)

☐ Past, present, or future physical health of the participants

☐ Mental health (as defined in DSM-IV TR)

☐ Provision of health care to the participants

☐ Past, present, or future payments for the provision of health care to the participants

If any of the above categories are checked, please refer to Appendix 4, HIPAA Information, in the EIU Policy and Procedures for the Review of Research Involving Human Subjects

11. Will a public use data file be created? ☐ Yes ☒ No

12. Complete all items from the Research Description section, which follows this application form.

Investigator Assurance

I certify that the information provided for this project is correct and that no other procedures will be used in this protocol. I agree to conduct this research as described in the attached supporting documents. I will request approval from the IRB for changes to the study's protocol and/or

consent forms and will not implement the changes until I receive IRB approval for these changes. I will comply with the IRB policy for the conduct of ethical research. I will promptly report significant or adverse effects to the IRB in writing within 5 days of occurrence. I will be responsible for ensuring that the work of others involved with this project complies with this protocol. I will complete, on request by the IRB, the Continuation Request or Completion of Research Activities Forms.

Principal Investigator's Signature

Date

Faculty or EAP Staff Sponsor Assurance (required when a student is the PI)

This is to certify that I have reviewed this research protocol and that I attest to the scientific merit of this study and the competency of the investigator(s) to conduct the project. I assure that the investigator(s) is knowledgeable about the regulations and policies governing research with human subjects. I agree to meet with the investigator on a regular basis to monitor study progress and compliance with IRB policy for the conduct of ethical research.

Faculty or EAP Staff Sponsor's Signature

Date

RESEARCH DESCRIPTION

Provide responses to the following items and submit your responses along with Form A. Each response should be numbered or labeled to correspond to the following items. If an item does not apply to your research project, simply indicate "Not applicable." The research description (answers to all of the items below) should not exceed 5 type-written single-spaced pages. Use a font size of 11 or larger.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. **DESCRIPTION**—The purpose is to examine the opinions and perceptions of fraternity members who recently relocated from off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter housing to on-campus, university-owned fraternity housing in relation to issues such as student retention, academic success, and residential community. As the review of literature revealed, there has been little quantitative or qualitative research that examines fraternity member's perceptions on their fraternity living environment. This study expands the existing research, albeit limited, in the area of on-campus fraternity living and its perceived influence on the retention, success, and community within the fraternal organization. The goal of the study is to explore whether there are factors influencing fraternity member's perceptions of their benefits of living on-campus versus living off-campus and within student retention, academic success, and residential community.

This will be a qualitative study that allows for rich data in the areas of fraternity member's perceptions on chapter housing. This research may help in the future with University and chapter policy implementation as well as illuminate unknown perceptions and trends.

It is hypothesized that the fraternity members will perceive that student retention, academic success, and residential community is positively impacted while living in an on-campus, university-owned fraternity chapter house.

Research Questions:

- Why did you choose to reside in the fraternity chapter house when it was located off-campus? -- Why did you choose to reside in the fraternity chapter house when it was located on-campus? --- What is your perception of the similarities and differences between the on-campus, university-owned fraternity chapter house and the off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house in regards to the retention of your chapter members?
- What is your perception of the similarities and differences between the on-campus, university-owned fraternity chapter house and the off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house in regards to academic success?
- What is your perception of the similarities and differences between the on-campus, university-owned fraternity chapter house and the off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house in regards to the residential community?

2. **DISSEMINATION**— The results of the research will be disseminated through the publication of a master's thesis for the College Student Affairs program at Eastern Illinois University and deposited in Eastern Illinois University's library.

METHODOLOGY

3. **PARTICIPANTS**— The participants of the study are all active members of a nationally recognized fraternity who currently live in an on-campus, university-owned fraternity chapter house and have once lived in an off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house. All participants are white males, between the ages of nineteen (19) to twenty-two (22), who have been initiated members of their Greek lettered organization for over a year. All participants are currently working to earn their bachelor's degree from a mid-western, public university with a total population of 9,000 where 15% of the school's population is associated with a social Greek lettered organization. Due to the specific requirements of living in both an off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house and an on-campus, university-owned fraternity chapter house, only seven individuals are eligible to participate in the study.

4. **RECRUITMENT**— The participants of this study will be chosen from a finite pool of subjects. The subjects are identified by having both lived in an off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity house and an on-campus, university-owned fraternity chapter house. All participants who qualify for the study will be sent a letter of participation through the U.S. Mail. [Attachment: Letter of Participation]

5. **LOCATION OF STUDY**— The location of the study will be in a room owned and operated by Eastern Illinois University. However, the location of the study will not occur in an on-campus, university owned fraternity chapter house. The particular room will be secure and confidential to protect the identity of the participants.

- a. Not applicable.
- b. Not applicable.

6. **INSTRUMENTS, RESEARCH MATERIALS, RECORDS, & PROCEDURES**— Participants will be

subjected to an in person, recorded interview with a principal investigator facilitating the conversation. The

interview should last about one hour per participant. A transcription of the interview will take place to

interpret the participants views and opinions of on-campus, university-owned fraternity chapter houses in comparison to off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter houses.

An initial demographics survey will be administered during the beginning of the first semester to collect data on the participants including their racial ethnicity, the income of the family, year in school, how long a student has lived in the fraternity chapter house, and their initial views about living in the fraternity chapter house. Participants will sign waivers to release grade-point-averages from Eastern Illinois University throughout the beginning and end of the study.

[Attachments: Waiver to release Grade Point Average]

7. **DATA COLLECTION, STORAGE, AND CONFIDENTIALITY**— The participant's interviews will be recorded via video camera. The initial set of data will be recorded with identifiers but changed to an alternate identifier in the transcription. The videotapes will then be transcribed on a personal computer using a word processing program. To protect against as well as minimize any potential risk to confidentiality, all tapes with any identifying materials to a person's identity will be locked in a locked drawer inside of a locked room. The researcher will be the only person who has access to both the locked drawer and the locked room. The transcribed materials will be stored in a password-secured folder and only the principal researcher will have direct access to it. If an individual formally withdraws from the study, his data will be erased from the video and transcription documents.

Participants will be videotaped in order to record responses for transcription. Only the principal researcher will have access to the tapes and they will only be used for transcription purposes. Once the research has been completed, the data will remain in the principal researcher's residence in a locked location for three years. Once the three years have concluded, all records will be destroyed.

8. **INFORMED CONSENT**— Subjects will receive a letter asking for their participation in the study. Once agreeing to participate via email, a letter of consent will be emailed to the participant. Prior to the start of the interview, the principal investigator will describe the interview process and ask the participant if he has any questions or concerns regarding consent. A signed and dated copy of the informed consent will be distributed to the participant and the original document will be kept on file with the primary researcher.

RISKS/BENEFITS

9. **RISKS**— The short term and/or long term potential risks that are related to participating in this study is if a traumatic event is associated with an event that took place within the on-campus or off-campus chapter house, it could be psychologically damaging for the individual to talk or relive the memory of the event. Though the likelihood of this occurring is rare, it is still a potential risk.
10. **SAFETY PRECAUTIONS**— To protect against as well as minimize any potential risk to confidentiality, all tapes with any identifying materials to a person's identity will be locked in a locked drawer inside of a locked room. The researcher will be the only person who has access to both the locked drawer and the locked room. All participants will also have their names replaced with a pseudo name to identify them throughout the study and within the transcription of the interview.

11. **BENEFITS**— The individuals participating in this study will not directly benefit from participating in this study. However, the results of this study will provide many benefits to fraternal organizations world-wide. Since there is very little quantitative and qualitative research about the benefits and limitations of on-campus and off-campus fraternity housing, this research will be valuable to Universities and colleges who are looking to provide on-campus, university owned housing. Inter/national fraternal organizations can use the results of the data to aid in the decision to choose to own a chapter house or rent from a college/university. The results of the study can also be used to provide additional resources to improve the living environments for fraternities who have both on-campus and/or off-campus housing. The potential significance of this study is to act as a catalysis for colleges and universities across the nation to consider building on-campus fraternity housing, with a foundation of research that weighs the potential positives and negatives for the fraternity members. Currently, there is limited research on this field and this study provides a foundation for further research in the areas of National Panhellenic Conference sorority housing, National Pan-Hellenic Council fraternity and sorority housing, athletic housing, and other recognized student organization housing.
12. **BENEFITS VS. RISKS**— The risks to the participants are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits to the subjects because there is little knowledge on the benefits and limitations of fraternity housing. With this knowledge, future generations of fraternity men can benefit from improvements made due to the data reported in the study. Furthermore, the risks to the participants are minimal in comparison to the knowledge that is expected to result from this study.
13. **INCENTIVES AND RESEARCH RELATED COSTS**— The incentive that is offered to the individuals participating is credit towards an educational requirement mandated by the Interfraternity Council, a governing body of the college fraternities. Fraternity members must participate in at least three (3) educational opportunities during the academic semester to remain in good standing with the Interfraternity Council. By participating in this study they will receive credit for one (1) educational opportunity. If an individual withdraws from the study before the completion of the research, he will not receive credit for the educational opportunity. Students participating in the study will lose nothing of monetary value as a consequence of participating in the research.

QUALIFICATIONS OF INVESTIGATORS

14. The primary investigator is a graduate student in the College Student Affairs program at Eastern Illinois University, and has had training in research methods and interview skills. The primary advisor to the research holds a doctoral degree, and has completed research in the field of counseling and student development. Any and all research conducted by the primary researcher will be overseen by the primary advisor.

OTHER (Provide information regarding the following if applicable)

15. **DATA SAFETY AND MONITORING FOR NIH SPONSORED RESEARCH**—Not applicable.
16. Not applicable.

Appendix B

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

On Campus, University Owned Fraternity Chapter Houses versus Off-Campus, Chapter-Owned Fraternity Chapter Houses : The Benefits and Limitations of Student Retention, Academic Success, and Residential Community

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Erin T. Morettes and Dr. Richard Roberts from the Department of Counseling and Student Development at Eastern Illinois University. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Please ask questions about anything you do not understand before deciding whether or not to participate.

You have been asked to participate in this study because you have been identified as a person who has had experience in living in an on-campus, university-owned fraternity chapter house and an off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose is to examine the opinions and perceptions of fraternity members who recently relocated from off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter housing to on-campus, university-owned fraternity housing in relation to issues such as student retention, academic success, and residential community.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to :

- (1) Answer several open-ended questions about your experience living in an on-campus, university-owned fraternity chapter house and an off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house and the benefits and limitations on student retention, academic success, and residential community.
- (2) Agree to the recording of the interview using a digital video recorder.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information obtained in connection with this study that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by the principle researcher who will have complete ownership of all information shared by the participants. Only pertinent findings of the research will be shared with the thesis committee members.

The researcher will be the only person who will have access to the video files of the interview. All interviews will be transcribed and the original tapes will be destroyed after the approval of the master's thesis by the committee members.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Participation in this research study is voluntary and not a requirement or a condition for being the recipient of benefits or services from Eastern Illinois University or any other

organization sponsoring this research project. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind or loss of benefits of services to which you are otherwise entitled.

You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer. There is no penalty if you withdraw from the study and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. However, if you choose to use the project to receive one (1) credit towards the Interfraternity Council (IFC) educational points, you must complete the project.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

If you have any questions or concern about the treatment of human participants in this study, you may call or write :

Institutional Review Board

Eastern Illinois University

600 Lincoln Ave.

Charleston, IL 61920

Telephone : (217) 581-8576

E-mail : eiurb@eiu.edu

You will be given the opportunity to discuss any questions about your rights as a research subject with a member of the IRB. The IRB is an independent committee composed of members of the University community, as well as lay members of the community not connected with EIU. The IRB has reviewed and approved this study.

I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at any time. I have been given a copy of this form.

Printed Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

Appendix C

Research Questions

1. What are the perceptions of fraternity members concerning their choice of off-campus and on-campus housing experience?
2. What are the perceptions of fraternity members concerning the similarities and differences between the on-campus, university-owned, fraternity chapter house and the off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house with regard to retention?
3. What are perceptions of fraternity members concerning the similarities and differences between the on-campus, university-owned, fraternity chapter house and the off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house in regard to academic success?
4. What are the perceptions of fraternity members concerning the similarities and differences between the on-campus, university-owned, fraternity chapter house and the off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity chapter house in regard to residential community?

Appendix D**Eastern Illinois University****AUTHORIZATION TO EXCHANGE OR REQUEST INFORMATION**

Student information is confidential under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g. Therefore, your authorization is necessary to permit the release of information concerning your academic records to third parties.

The Authorization to Exchange/Request Information is for the purpose stated below:

I, _____ hereby authorize Erin T. Morettes in the Department of Counseling and Student Development at Eastern Illinois University to access my academic records and information including, but not limited to, grade point average for research purposes pursuant to a research project in which I am a participant.

I understand that I have a right to be told what information was exchanged.

I understand that only Erin T. Morettes will have access to my records, and that my academic data will be kept confidential.

I understand this authorization will be valid until May 31, 2010.

I affirm that I am eighteen (18) years of age or older.

Signature of Student

Date

Print name

Appendix E

Letter to Participant

October 12, 2009

RE : Participation in the research of on-campus and off-campus fraternity housing

Dear Participant,

I am a second year graduate student in the College Student Affairs master's degree program at Eastern Illinois University. Currently, I am in the process of collecting data for my thesis titled "On-Campus University-Owned Fraternity Chapter Houses versus Off-Campus, Chapter-Owned Fraternity Houses : The Benefits and Limitations of Student Retention, Academic Success, and Residential Community". My goal is to explore whether there are factors influencing fraternity member's perceptions of their benefits of living on-campus versus living off-campus within student retention, academic success, and residential community.

You were identified as a potential participant for the study because you are a person who has lived in both an on-campus university-owned fraternity chapter house and an off-campus, chapter-owned fraternity house. Your participation in the study is completely voluntary. If you agree to participate your involvement in the study will include an interview about your experience with student retention, academic success, and residential community within the fraternity chapter house and a demographic survey. The interview will last approximately one (1) hour and will be completely confidential. The interview will take place in person and on-campus.

Your participation is critical to the success of the study. Your insight to living in both an on-campus and an off-campus fraternity house will provide future resources to Universities who are looking to provide on-campus fraternity housing. Also, your perceptions may help identify unknown limitations that can be addressed by college professionals. By agreeing to participate in the study, you will also receive one (1) credit of Interfraternity Council (IFC) educational points for the Fall 2009 semester.

If you choose to participate in the study, email me at etmorettes@eiu.edu to confirm your consent to participate. When your email is received, a one page demographic survey and a letter of informed consent will be emailed to you. When those documents are received, a time will be established to conduct an interview with you.

If you have any questions about the study and your participation, you can contact me by phone at 847.636.8628 or by email at etmorettes@eiu.edu.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Erin T. Morettes
Candidate for Masters of Science, College Student Affairs
Eastern Illinois University

Appendix F**Demographic Survey**

Name : _____

Age : _____

What is your race : _____

What is your year in school : _____

What is your major : _____

What is your current Grade Point Average : _____

I have lived in the off-campus chapter house for at least 1 year ?

☐ Yes

☐ No

I currently live in the on-campus chapter house ?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Illustration A

On-Campus & Off-Campus Emerging Theme Illustration

	Off-Campus	Both	On-Campus
Perceptions Of Housing Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Expensive ❖ Paying an Unknown source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Financial Costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Better financial security
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Many safety issues including access to the facility, upkeep, and policy violation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ More secure on-campus than off-campus
Perceptions Of Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Very Poor Living Conditions ❖ Very hard to get 11 members to live in the off-campus house ❖ Live in for one year and then you never have to live in the facility again 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Living Conditions ❖ Executive & new members have an obligation to reside in facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Great Living Conditions ❖ Large pressure to recruit to fill the chapter house on-campus ❖ Negatively affected chapter membership ❖ Members will live in the facility for more than one year

On-Campus & Off-Campus Emerging Theme Illustration

Perceptions Of Residential Community	Perceptions Of Academic Success	Off-Campus	Both	On-Campus
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ No accountability for study hours ❖ Chapter facilities were not utilized for academic purposes ❖ Facility environment negatively affected the residents academic performance ❖ Very loud and social environment ❖ Very little control over the environment created by the members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Neither facility provided an atmosphere for academic success ❖ Individual's decision to be successful ❖ Set academic rules/policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Utilized the chapter study room and the living room/dining room as study areas ❖ Viewed the study areas to be pleasant places to study ❖ More strict environment ❖ Did not enjoy having roommates ❖ Nicer place to live ❖ Easier to communicate with each other