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**Hazing Prevention: The Advisor Perspective**

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## **Abstract**

There has been extensive research conducted on students' perceptions and understanding of hazing in fraternities and sororities (Allen & Madden, 2008; Allen & Madden, 2012; Alexander, 2018; Cokley et al., 2020). Despite preventative efforts and existing research, hazing continues to occur and continues to threaten the future of fraternity and sorority life. There is little to no research on chapter advisors' understanding of hazing and hazing prevention in their roles. The purpose of this qualitative study is to examine the role that fraternity advisors play in the education and prevention of hazing, through interview with the advisors. The study looks at the training and resources provided to chapter advisors from national headquarters and institutions to assist them in successfully overseeing their organizations. Results show that there is an overwhelming need for more training, better support, and resources to be provided to chapter advisors. The results indicate that chapter advisors are excellent candidates to educate members on hazing and hazing prevention, but they are not adequately trained on how to do so.

**Key Terms:** Fraternity, hazing, Greek life, group advisor

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **Introduction**

In the last five years there have been 11 reported deaths in fraternities due to hazing; two of these occurring within the first three months of 2021 (“Hazing Deaths”, 2017; Nuwer, 2021). Although 11 seems like a small number that is still 11 students whose lives were taken due to careless acts of hazing. Death is the ultimate impact of hazing, but “hazing continues to undermine the health and safety of students, their groups, and the larger communities in which they operate” (Allan et al., 2020, p. 1). Acts of hazing do not always result in death, but there are frequently adverse impacts that can take a physical and emotional toll on the overall health and well-being of those involved. Despite preventative efforts, research shows that over half of all undergraduate students report experiencing hazing throughout their undergraduate years (Allan & Madden, 2012). Many have theorized the reasoning behind hazing, but the motives still remain unclear; furthermore, students’ perceptions of hazing are also vague (Allan & Madden, 2012; Allan et al., 2019; Alexander, 2018; Chambers et al., 2018).

Student organizations are required to have a faculty or staff member as the advisor, and most fraternities have multiple people serving in advisor roles. Little research has been conducted on the role that advisors play in the education and prevention of hazing. Additionally, there is little research in general that focuses on advisors and their positions. If universities aim to reduce hazing on college campuses, it is imperative to provide advisors with adequate training and resources to allow them to better educate and support their student organizations.

Hazing is reported as most frequently occurring in Greek and athletic organizations (Alexander, 2018; Allan & Madden, 2008; 2012). These organizations typically hold strong values of traditions, rituals, and initiation practices. Alcohol is frequently associated with these ceremonies, which often allows for hazing acts to occur with or without intent (Chin et al., 2018). In some instances, students have normalized forcing other members of their organizations to drink large amounts of alcohol as a way to bond or build trust (Chin et al., 2018). Past research has shown that although students are aware of the negative risks associated with heavy drinking and other hazing behaviors, they believe it makes their connections stronger (Chambers et al., 2018). The roles that advisors have in these situations are unclear.

Student organizations risk being shut down as hazing continues to occur throughout the United States (Allan & Madden, 2008). The results of this study provide information for those who train and support fraternity advisors. These results can also instruct better preparation in educating advisors in their roles not only for hazing prevention, but in all aspects of being a fraternity advisor.

### **Personal Statement**

To maintain research integrity, I find it is important to disclose my experiences and beliefs towards fraternity and sorority life that may affect this study. I believe in the good of fraternity and sorority life. I believe that there is power to make substantial changes for the better among Greek organizations. I spent four years at my undergraduate institution being an active member of a sorority. I saw firsthand the “good” that Greek communities can achieve. I could write pages about my experiences in my organization,

but ultimately, I will say, being a member of my chapter allowed me to grow immensely as an individual.

After spending a year in my organization, I gained the confidence to run for a leadership position. I had a special interest in the Greek community as a whole, and because of that I accepted a leadership role as Vice President of Public Relations (VP of PR) on the Panhellenic Council. This position allowed me to work closely with all of the sororities and fraternities on campus. In this position I worked directly on the marketing and coordination of advertising for all chapters on campus. I oversaw the marketing for recruitment for the sororities. Ultimately, I learned a great deal about each of the other organizations and how they functioned. After spending a term as VP of PR, I accepted a new position and served a second term as Vice President of Member Education. In this role I worked directly with the new member educators for the sororities and fraternities on campus. With my Interfraternity Council (IFC) counterpart, we planned a new member retreat to help orient new members to fraternity and sorority life. This also provided me with lots of opportunities to interact with and learn about how different organizations functioned and orientated their new members to their group.

In my position I also planned hazing prevention week, which was a week of events dedicated to spreading awareness to the dangers of hazing and providing resources on how to stop acts of hazing. Spending two years as a leader for our Greek community was a remarkable experience. I will not say it was always easy, there were many moments of struggle, frustration, and tears. There were moments where I struggled to see the “good” that could come from these organizations. These moments included hearing about the senseless acts of hazing occurring in the organizations that put members and

even nonmembers at risk. There were times that I was upset and questioned my own role as a Greek member when I heard about purely ignorant behaviors that resulted in negative outcomes for chapters. During these times I often wondered, why were advisors not stepping in? Why were these organizations able to get away with so much nonsense and negative behavior? I reflected back to my own chapter advisors, we had a couple I had come to know and work with in my group. One was always around and always wanted to be involved, but another never seemed too interested in my organization. I wonder now, did advisors even know about these situations? Were they given the proper resources to prepare themselves for their roles? Did they even have an interest in being involved in these organizations?

It was not until I attended the Association of Fraternal Leadership and Values (AFLV) conference that the severity of hazing in fraternity and sorority life became clear to me. I listened to the parents of three different fraternity men speak. They bravely shared their stories of how their children had all been victims of hazing; and all three of these instances had unfortunately resulted in death for their children. Listening to their stories was incredibly difficult, but in that moment, I knew fraternity and sorority life needed to be reformed. I realized that these parents were sharing their worst nightmares, because they wanted to prevent innocent men and women from losing their lives and their futures due to senseless activities. As I was sitting there trying to take in their information while keeping my composure, I began to think about what I could do to help put a stop to hazing. It was the topic on my mind for the next few weeks, months, and still to this day, I ask myself how we can, as a Greek community, put an end to hazing for good. All these questions that I have begun to grapple with compelled me to research this topic.

My Greek experience was not always perfect, but it is something that I will always be thankful for. I am thankful for those who were with me on the journey; my sisters, my fellow brothers and sisters in other groups, and my advisors. Even though there were times of doubt, I still believe that the pros outweighed the cons. I believe that the future of fraternity and sorority life could be affected if acts of hazing do not cease to exist, and that is why I have chosen to research this topic, because I do believe in the good that can come from going Greek.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Although there has been extensive research conducted on hazing in student organizations, there still is a disconnect between students being able to define hazing and accurately identifying it in their own organizations (Allan & Madden, 2008; Allan & Madden 2012; Allan et al., 2019; Alexander, 2018; Chambers et al., 2018; Ellsworth, 2006). One could assume that this may be due in part to the lack of education or discussion between members and their advisors; however, with the right training, advisors could play a more active role in changing student behavior. This is why I have chosen to conduct this study. The purpose of this qualitative study is to examine the role that fraternity advisors play in the education and prevention of hazing. In addition to this, the study will look at the training and resources provided to advisors from national headquarters and institutions to assist them in successfully overseeing their organizations.

### **Research Questions**

To meet the study's objectives, the following research questions are posed:

1. How do fraternity advisors define hazing?

2. What training and tools do advisors receive to help them serve as fraternity advisors?
3. How do advisors perceive their roles in educating and preventing hazing?

### **Significance of the Study**

This study provides a deeper look into the overall preparation of fraternity advisors, with a lens on preparation related to hazing. The information from this study is useful to those who train fraternity advisors, fraternity advisors themselves, and those considering becoming an advisor of a fraternity. An additional benefit is that the results will show training coordinators if advisors are properly being given the resources to successfully guide their organizations. The results from this study can be used to better prepare advisors for situations concerning hazing, which will hopefully lead to the elimination of hazing by individuals in fraternities.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Secrecy, specifically involving hazing, in fraternal organizations poses a limitation to this study. There is a risk that participants may not be completely honest in their responses, due to the notion that traditions are sacred and often kept secret. This is why advisors will be used as participants as they are less likely concerned about this issue and more willing to speak about their experiences as advisors than about secret happenings within the organization.

The number of participants in this study could be considered an additional limitation. A small number of participants means that the study should not be generalized to the population. However, because this is a qualitative study the interviews allowed for

extensive conversation on the topic. The participants all provided similar responses and had similar experiences, which increases the validity of the study.

A third limitation is that the study contains participants from public institutions that are all mid-size and located in the Midwest. Experiences could be different for larger or smaller institutions outside of the Midwest. Recruiting participants proved to be a challenge and information was sent to potential participants to provide information and insight into the study and clearly articulate the purpose and intentions to help alleviate any concerns. For the purpose of this study having advisors from different institutions was the focus, and not too much thought was given on geographic location or size of institutions.

Additionally, being a female researching male organizations is a potential limitation. It is possible that participants will be less likely to share certain details of their organizations, because of our differences in gender. It is possible that I may learn more than anticipated, potentially obtaining information on a serious situation that went unreported and likely had questionable actions. This is something I must be prepared to handle, as it may be a sensitive topic that weighs on emotions. Members of the thesis committee serve in various roles related to fraternities and will be utilized throughout for guidance, support and direction when such incidents come up.

### **Definitions of Terms**

*Advisor.* One who gives advice in a particular field. In student affairs there are many types of advisors. These include but are not limited to academic advisors, chapter advisors, fraternity and sorority life advisors. For the purpose of this study the term will refer to a chapter advisor.

**Chapter Advisor.** One who provides guidance and support to the chapter and chapter officers in several areas of operation (University of Connecticut Student Activities Advisor Manual, 2014).

**Fraternity.** A men's student organization formed to help cultivate leadership skills and gain a sense of social identity. Fraternities are often philanthropic, a place to network, and offer an environment to grow outside of the classroom in addition to providing a fun extracurricular environment (The Best Schools, 2019).

**Fraternity and Sorority Life.** Commonly referred to as "Greek life". Many people are transitioning away from the use of Greek life, to more inclusive terminology.

**Fraternity and Sorority Life Director.** Commonly referred to as "Greek life director". Oversees the office of fraternity and sorority life at an institution. Directors have a wide range of duties including advising student leaders, working with Greek organizations, program planning, risk management, and expansion and assessment of Greek organizations.

**Hazing.** Any activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses or endangers regardless of a person's willingness to participate (Allan & Madden, 2012).

**National Headquarters.** All Greek organizations have a national headquarters. These offices are responsible for making policies for the individual chapters at different institutions.

**New Member Orientation.** Formerly referred to as "pledging", typically refers to the period of time between being given a bid and initiation. This term is an updated version of "pledging" that many organizations use as more inclusive terminology. For the

purpose of this paper pledging will be referred to as the new member period or orientation, and pledges will be referred to as new members.

*Sorority.* A women's student organization formed to help cultivate leadership skills and gain a sense of social identity. Sororities are often philanthropic, a place to network, and offer an environment to grow outside of the classroom in addition to providing a fun extracurricular environment (The Best Schools, 2019). This term is being defined because of its relevance to fraternity and sorority life, but for the purpose of this study sororities were not examined.

### **Summary**

Hazing continues to be an issue at institutions throughout the United States, with a majority of the cases involving fraternities. The future of fraternity and sorority life could be affected if hazing does not cease to exist. Fraternity advisors work closely with their organizations, and with the proper preparation can play a role in the prevention of hazing. The significance of this study comes from the lack of current research on fraternity advisors and their roles. This study aims to provide crucial research on fraternity advisors and their roles in the education and prevention of hazing. Additionally, this study will examine the training and resources that advisors receive to help them be successful in their roles. The results of this study can be used as a guide for training coordinators to prepare their advisors for their positions. Although, there are some limitations to this study, I will be taking measures to maintain confidentiality and allow participants to speak freely about their experiences. It is my hope that this study can be used as a lens for further research on hazing in fraternal organizations with a specific lens on fraternity advisors and their roles.

## CHAPTER II

### Review of Literature

Much of the research that has been conducted on hazing in fraternities, focuses on the student members of the organizations (Allan & Madden, 2008; Allan et al., 2019; Alexander, 2018; Cokley et al., 2020; Ellsworth, 2006). There is little research that examines fraternity advisors and their duties, not only in hazing prevention, but in their roles as a whole. Since most of the research regarding hazing is on students, this literature review will focus on perceptions of hazing and hazing in organizations, as well as the role advisors play in these organizations.

#### **Hazing in Organizations**

Acts of hazing are reported in various student organizations on college campuses. According to the Hazing Prevention website (2021) 55% of students involved in clubs, teams, and organizations experience hazing. Furthermore, 73% of those involved in social fraternities and sororities and 74% of those involved in varsity athletics experienced behaviors meeting the definition of hazing (Stop Hazing Research Lab, 2020). Hazing has been reported in fraternities, sororities, Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), marching bands, and athletics (Ellsworth, 2006). Although hazing is reported to occur in many student organizations, there are three student organizations that are reported to most frequently encounter acts of hazing. Allan and Madden (2008) surveyed 11,482 undergraduate students from 53 colleges and universities on student hazing. Of the students who were a part of a varsity athletic team 74% reported that they had experienced at least one hazing behavior to join or maintain membership on the team; and 73% of members of fraternities and sororities reported the same. The third highest

was club sports which was 10 percent behind varsity athletics and Greek organizations, with 64% of members reporting they had experienced at least one hazing behavior (Allan and Madden, 2008). Allan and Madden identified that the remaining student organizations that were included in the study had over 20% less members who reported they had experienced a hazing act. In a similar study conducted by Allan and Madden in 2012 to survey the nature of hazing on college campuses it was found that 70% of respondents who had reported experiencing hazing were members of an athletic team, fraternity, or sorority.

In a study conducted by Alexander (2018) with 15 participants who were involved in fraternities, sororities, and club sports, 10 reported that they either personally experienced or witnessed behaviors that they considered hazing in their organizations. This study consisted of a small sample size which allowed for the interviews to collect in-depth answers that may not have been accessible through a survey. The findings showed that interviewees defined hazing in three main themes; use of force, physical or mental abuse, and new member commitment or worthiness (Alexander, 2018). Participants also shared their personal stories related to hazing and 31% of these stories were related to alcohol use. A limitation was that all participants identified as white (Alexander, 2018). The lack of racial and ethnic diversity poses the question of if findings would be different if the sample population was more diverse. Alexander noted that future research should be conducted with a more diverse group, including predominately black fraternities and sororities.

A qualitative study conducted by Chin et al. (2020) on the use of alcohol in varsity sport presents three main themes as to why hazing occurs most frequently in

varsity athletics. These themes can also be applied when looking at fraternities and sororities. The first theme is students are seeking membership and acceptance (Chin et al., 2020). First-year members more readily accept the challenges presented to them by older members, because they have a strong desire to be a part of the organization. These “challenges” are often presented in behaviors that fall into the category of acts of hazing. The second theme presented by Chin et al. was having the freedom, or lack of, to opt out of activities. New or younger members feel that they do not have the freedom to choose not to participate in an activity that was presented to them by a veteran member. Older members often demand a reason if someone chooses not to participate, therefore new members feel they do not have the choice to say “no.” The last theme discusses universities and the people in power to make positive changes to the current culture (Chin, et al., 2020). It focuses on coaches, advisors, and those who work directly with the students in these organizations. It was expressed that the people who have the ability to make a positive change are often aware of the acts of hazing occurring, but they also feel it plays a vital role in the students’ experiences in these organizations. This was especially common when the hazing behaviors were minor acts that seemed to not cause much harm. Chin et al. concluded that those who coach or advise students are often aware that acts of hazing are occurring to a certain extent and they typically choose to not acknowledge it under the assumption that it is good for bonding and for members to have fun. These three themes help to explain why acts of hazing most frequently are associated with athletics, fraternities, and sororities.

### **Levels of Severity of Hazing Occurring in Student Organizations**

According to stophazing.org (2020) hazing occurs on a spectrum that goes from low risk behaviors to high risk behaviors. The low risk behaviors are categorized as intimidation and can include deception, social isolation, demeaning names, and silence periods among other similar behaviors (stophazing.org, 2020). These align with what Alexander (2018) found related to new member commitment and worthiness. The next level of severity are behaviors that are categorized as harassment. Examples of harassment include verbal abuse, threats or implied threats, sleep deprivation, and sexual simulation (stophazing.org, 2020). Alexander (2018) identified physical and mental abuse as one of the three main forms of hazing. The most severe level of hazing is acts of violence. Examples at this level are forced consumption of alcohol or drugs, branding, abduction/kidnapping, sexual assault, water intoxication, and paddling or others forms of assault (stophazing.org, 2020). And, this aligns with Alexander's third main form, use of force. Hazing can occur in many different forms with varying levels of severity. Allan and Madden (2012) concluded hazing can involve high-risk behaviors that are dangerous, abusive and sometimes illegal. The researchers found that alcohol consumption, humiliation, isolation, sleep-deprivation, and sex acts are the hazing behaviors most frequently reported on college campuses.

A later study conducted by Allan et al. (2019) continued to support Allan and Madden's (2012) findings. When looking at hazing occurring in student organizations the top three types of hazing being reported involve participating in drinking games, associating with only specific groups, and being yelled at or talked down to by other

members. The authors of this study concluded that most participants engaged in hazing in forms of high-risk drinking, social isolation, personal servitude, and humiliation.

The previous mentioned research shows that alcohol is present in many acts of hazing. This ranges from participating in drinking games to forcing members to drink large amounts of alcohol until they become sick or unconscious. The use of alcohol as an act of hazing is among the more severe hazing behaviors, yet it is one of the most common (Chin et al., 2020). Chin et al.'s study focused primarily on alcohol, athletics, and hazing and the researchers concluded the role of alcohol is significant. Many of the coaches were quoted stating they believe alcohol is a key component in having fun, but they are also aware of the dangers that can come with it (Chin et al., p. 1004). It can be assumed that members in these organizations have a similar mindset when the use of alcohol is present in their organizations.

### **Gender Based Research on Hazing**

The type of hazing that occurs in student organizations can differ by gender. For the purpose of this literature review, *gender* refers to male and female, and no other genders were referenced in the research. Veliz-Calderon and Allan (2017) provided an analysis of Allan and Madden's (2008) study. It was more common for hazing practices to be associated with humiliation and articulated as a loss of power and status among males. Among females, however, hazing practices typically revolved around the objectification of bodies, for example circling fat on bodies. It was common for males to focus on the physical aspects of hazing such as alcohol abuse and physical strength; while females typically reported more on the psychological side (Allan and Madden, 2008). Females reported that dominant beauty ideals were prominent in their hazing experiences.

When females did discuss the physical aspects, they focused more on the physical effects of sleep deprivation or food related hazing.

Both female and male students reported that they felt stronger friendships with those who they had experienced acts of hazing with, but for different reasons. Male students expressed that they felt a closer bond due to going through the actual acts of hazing with their peers; while females felt closer due to the secrecy that was associated with hazing.

Ellsworth (2006) studied whether students' definitions of hazing activities differ among student organizations. A survey was given to students in fraternities, sororities, ROTC, varsity athletics, and marching band to identify how definitions of hazing behaviors vary between organizations. Although this study focused more on students' definitions of hazing and less on the types of hazing they actually experience, the results between genders are similar to what Veliz-Calderon and Allan (2017) concluded through their analysis. Ellsworth reported that the most significant finding of the study was that the differences in defining hazing varied the most by gender rather than by organization (p. 49). The study identified that being forced to do calisthenics for excessive amounts of time or to excessive levels was more frequently identified as a hazing behavior by women than men. This shows that men were either more accepting to, or less able to recognize the physical aspects of hazing than women. Findings also showed that women had more experiences and definitions of psychological hazing than men. This research shows that not only do hazing acts vary by gender, but the students' perceptions of activities that are considered hazing also varies by gender.

## **Students' Perceptions of Hazing**

Although, this study is being conducted with advisors, I have chosen to include a section on students' perceptions of hazing because of the lack of research on the topic relating to advisors. There is an apparent disconnect between how students perceive hazing in their own organizations and their overall perceptions about what is considered hazing. Members of fraternities, sororities, and varsity athletics all report different perceptions of hazing (Allan and Madden, 2008, 2012; Ellsworth, 2006). Silveira and Hudson (2015) conducted a study on hazing in collegiate marching bands. Of 1,215 participants nearly 30% indicated that they observed some form of hazing in their marching band. The researches also examined students' attitudes towards hazing. The findings showed students could identify what was considered a hazing behavior, but when they witnessed or experienced that behavior they did not believe that they had been hazed. This same disconnect was also mentioned in Veliz-Calderon and Allan's (2017) analysis, which found that 90% of students who were hazed did not label their experiences as hazing. Campo et al.'s (2005) study on students' attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs related to hazing shows a similar disconnect. The researchers noted that there was a clear discrepancy between self-identification as participating in hazing and participation in hazing as defined by university policy (Campo et al., 2005, p. 146). They suggested that this discrepancy could be due to students having a narrow definition of hazing.

Alexander's (2018) qualitative study identified three common themes associated with the participants' definitions of hazing. These themes are the use of force, physical or mental abuse, and new member commitment or worthiness. Over half of the participants identified hazing as, "forcing or pressuring individuals to do things that they normally

would not do under typical circumstances” (Alexander, 2018, p. 44). Of the 15 participants 40% expressed the common theme that if an action is going to be considered hazing it must also cause the member some kind of mental distress or physical harm (Alexander, 2018, p. 47). In addition, 34% of respondents reported that hazing is something that must occur for a member to be accepted into the group. Alexander noted that although these three themes were used in students’ definitions of hazing, students did not identify activities they experienced as hazing, even when these activities contained the three mentioned themes. Students’ perceive that groups haze because of three main reasons: as a form of bonding, due to previous cycles and traditions of hazing, and elitism (Alexander, 2018). Elitism was used to infer that organizations want to accept only the best of the best, so members must prove their worthiness through hazing activities. These themes of students’ perceptions of hazing are similar to the themes presented previously in this review by Chin et al. (2020) on why hazing occurs most frequently in athletics, fraternities, and sororities.

### **Initiations, Traditions, and Rituals**

Initiations, traditions, and rituals are three terms that are frequently thought of when discussing fraternities, sororities, and athletics. Initiation and ritual ceremonies are important events that relate to the values and histories of these organizations. Students’ perceptions and definitions of hazing become even more unclear when it involves a tradition, initiation, or other ritual ceremony.

A study was conducted by Cokley et al. (2001) on students’ attitudes about pledging and hazing in Greek organizations. This was a quantitative study that surveyed 258 undergraduate students from various ethnic backgrounds. The researchers found that

students' attitudes varied by gender. Women believed that pledging should be a positive experience; while men believed more in the conformity to pledging rules. Attitudes also varied by ethnicity, showing that African American students had higher beliefs about the purpose of pledging than European Americans and Latinx students. African American students also had more positive perceptions of Greek organizations than the other ethnic groups (Cokley et al., 2001, p. 453). The researchers suggest that future research be conducted with a greater focus on students of ethnic minorities.

Chambers et al.'s (2018) study was an expansion of the research conducted by Cokley et al. (2001) to explore the relationship between hazing and initiation in fraternities and sororities on a college campus. The researchers found that although participants had an overall positive attitude towards the initiation processes, many participants struggled to determine what an appropriate behavior for initiation was and what was considered a hazing behavior. Furthermore, it is important to note that overall, participants showed a tolerance for hazing to some degree, due to their responses regarding conformity to initiation rules (Chambers et al., 2018, p. 53). Students did not indicate strong feelings towards conformity to initiation rules or beliefs about the difficulty of the initiation process. The results of this study showed some differences among race and gender as well. Men felt stronger about the difficulty of the initiation process than women. African American students felt less strongly about the purpose of initiation than their European American/Caucasian and Latinx/Hispanic peers. The researchers found that overall white male students felt stronger about conforming to the rules of initiation and they believed in the difficulty of the process, but they were slightly more likely than women to voice a moral concern.

Alcohol was discussed previously in this literature review as a frequent part of hazing activities. Alcohol is frequently involved with many student organizations' initiation processes and rituals. According to Chin et al., (2020) "first-year athletes more readily accept the challenges of the established veteran team members, challenges that often involve pushing and testing the limits of their peers with alcohol" (p. 999). In joining a new organization new members are seeking acceptance from older members making them more accepting to activities that can be considered hazing. Multiple athletes interviewed during the study stated that alcohol was an expected part of the initiation process and many teammates had "normalized" forcing other teammates to drink large amounts of it (Chin et al., 2018). Furthermore, athletes stated that drinking alcohol with teammates was an important way to build trust. The conclusion was drawn that although the negative risks associated with heavy drinking and other hazing behaviors are very high, many teammates view it as a way to bring their team closer and create stronger bonds.

### **Understanding the Fraternity Chapter Advisor Role**

There are many different interpretations and assumptions of what student organization advisors are expected to do in their roles (Bloland, 1962). Advisors can serve in a variety of different roles with different levels of responsibility and can be extremely involved in the organizations they advise, or they can do the minimum required. The level of involvement depends on the advisor, the students they are working with, and the type of organization they are advising (Bloland, 1962). This section will cover several important concepts related to advising and how it relates to fraternities specifically. In understanding these various advisor types, it is important to understand

the role they play to the student organization. It is also important to understand the different types of advisors, in the fraternity world we have fraternity and sorority life advisors who are responsible for the whole community, there are faculty and staff advisors whose primary focus is not advising, and this is often not even a part of their job description. And finally, there will be a section regarding the training and development of advisors.

### ***The Role of Advisors***

To begin with we need to have a basic understanding of the role of a student organization advisor in higher education. Bloland (1962) defined the functions, or purpose, of an advisor in three primary areas: (a) maintenance or custodial functions; (b) group growth functions; and (c) program content functions. Micek (2013) conducted a qualitative study at one midwestern institution to examine student organization advisors and their roles. His participants included those working with student organizations as well as fraternities and sororities. Similar to Bloland, Micek's participants identified their roles as having to attend meetings, help with logistics, and assist in financial management.

The maintenance or custodial function focuses solely on ensuring that the organization continues to exist and does not engage in negative behavior (Bloland, 1962). In Micek's (2013) study advisors reported that they typically attended the large body meetings, executive board meetings, and individual meetings with executive members, helping them develop agendas for these meetings. To maintain regular maintenance as Bloland (1962) indicated within the fraternity system it may mean meeting with the executive board and creating the agenda, attending general meetings, and making sure

that dues are getting paid and that the money is being spent appropriately. Micek also found that advisors saw their role sometimes as a rule enforcer or helping them understand different policies and procedures; however, many identified that they did not feel prepared to serve in that role because they did not always know the rules or policies they were expected to follow. The fraternity system is filled with rules, policies, procedures, and functions that can be challenging to navigate because they are working with the institution they are based at as well as within the larger national fraternal structure. This can pose many challenges to the untrained or new advisor.

Group growth function entails improving the operation and effectiveness of the group and helping the organization progress toward its goals (Bloland, 1962). Students have a limited time in college while the advisor is likely to outlast the current student population and is there to help ensure the organization continues long after a group of students has been there. Micek (2013) indicated that in his study participants talked about assisting with long-range planning in their groups. Within a fraternity this means they are having conversations about recruitment, new member education, and the functions of the organization. They may talk with current members about what they are looking for in new members and how to attain those individuals.

Bloland (1962) stated the last function of the advisor was program content or planning activities and events that will contribute to the educational and overall development of students. The purpose of most groups on college campuses is either for academic or social purposes, and fraternities can be a mix of those two. These organizations exist to provide students with outlets for learning, development, and social engagement outside the classroom. Advisors can play a key role in encouraging the

students to consider different opportunities as well as guide them in the planning and implementation of their activities. Micek (2013) described the duties of an advisor as, “providing information and clear communication, providing consistency and long-range planning, managing risks, enforcing policies or navigating ethical dilemmas, and holding students accountable” (p. 31).

There is lack of universal understanding for the role of advisors and it is often left up to the individual to do what they want for the organization. Advisors balance many roles, they serve as mentors, facilitate team building, and occasionally foster mediation among members. Micek’s (2013) research indicated that without training, support, or development the role is often misunderstood. Within the fraternity organizations there is a bit more support and this study hopes to gain insight in to what those roles look like, especially as it relates to hazing.

### ***Advisor Types***

To better understand the role of a chapter advisor, it is important to understand the various types of advisors. On the college campus there are basically two main types: those working in academics and those who work outside of academics. There are academic advisors, whose primary purpose is to guide students through the academic process (Bloland, 1962). This can include helping students schedule classes, meeting with them regarding their courses, and providing resources to promote student success inside and outside of the classroom. More specific to the purpose of this study, are student organization advisors, which would include fraternity and sorority, or fraternity and sorority life advisors. Student social groups are required to have an advisor for a variety of reasons including recruitment, keeping the organization out of trouble, providing

guidance, serving as a mentor, and ensuring that the organization continues to develop and grow as members graduate and new members join (Micek, 2013). Advisors for most organizations on campus are connected to the institution in some way, usually as an employee of some sort. There are also some individuals who are employed at the institution who have responsibilities to advise student organizations within their job description. For example, a residence hall director will likely be responsible for advising the hall council within their building.

Fraternal organizations fall into this category as social organizations and typically work with more than one advisor. Within their organization it is possible they will have multiple advisors. There will be a chapter advisor who oversees the organization and is the main advisor. Certain organizations may also have additional advisors who oversee areas such as finances and recruitment. A coordinator or director of fraternity and sorority life programs will have a primary focus of working with all of the fraternity and sorority organizations on campus. These advisors work with members on campus in areas such as advising, advocacy, and educational efforts (Role of Greek Advisors, 2020). The fraternity and sorority life advisor should guide and facilitate the work of chapter officers, their alumni advisors, and governing councils, as well as their respective national organization leadership in striving for student and chapter excellence (Role of Greek Advisors, 2020). In addition to this, the fraternity and sorority life advisor is responsible for maintaining accurate records of membership and retention, grades, and matters of conduct for all chapters.

Depending on the institution and fraternity, advisors for specific groups may be working at the institution as faculty or staff, may be alumni of the organization, or

community members who have been connected to this fraternal organization. There may also be a combination of different individuals who volunteer to work with the organization. These advisors are the ones who typically receive little training and advising is often not listed as part of their job description. Their responsibilities can include attending chapter and executive meetings, advising executive members, and making sure chapter members are following policies and procedures set by both their institutions and national headquarters (Role of Greek Advisors, 2020). This is the advisor type that involvement varies the most. These advisors can choose how involved they are with the chapter that they advise. The majority of national fraternities, if not all, are required to have a faculty or staff advisor. The training that these advisors receive, which will be discussed in the next section, can vary by institution and organization, presenting challenges for some advisors to effectively oversee and support their organizations.

### ***Training and Development of Advisors***

There are a limited number of training programs that exist to prepare professionals for advising a student organization on a college campus, and resources that provide information on advising exist in the form of handbooks and manuals (Dunkel & Schuh, 1998). Dunkel and Schuh (1998) provide a summarization of the training and resources available to advisors:

The typical training of the adviser is minimal. Some advisers refine their skills by taking advantage of professional organizations and associations to attend programs and listen to speakers. Others will use the organization's manuals or notebooks to provide advising information. Still other advisers have developed a

proven advising technique over many years of experience or have applied their knowledge of supervision to the role of advising. (p. 8)

Although this source is older there is little to no updated information on student organization advising in the literature. Micek (2013) specifically looked at the training and support of student organization advisors and found that while they had resources available many were unfamiliar with them and few had received any form of official training from the institution. This means faculty or staff members serving in this role typically are not getting adequate training and they are often left to develop their own approaches to advising.

Dunkel and Schuh's (1998) research is supported by DeSawal's (2007) mixed methods study on understanding how student organizations advisors approach advising. The majority of participants indicated that when they first began advising they were somewhat prepared to advise a student organization. The researcher found the percentage of those who felt they were not at all prepared to advise a student organization, was double for the group who indicated that advising was not part of their job description. What this means is that those who had advising in their job descriptions received different trainings than those who did not have it in their job descriptions. Participants were asked how they learned to advise student organizations and the responses fell into the following themes: trial-and-error; exposure to advising; observation; undergraduate experience; and training/graduate school (DeSawal, 2007). For some this was through graduate assistantships, watching how others advised, and considering how they were personally advised in their own experiences. Many participants said they learned through the use of trial-and-error, trying one thing and if it did not work then trying something

else (DeSawal, 2007). This can be frustrating for an advisor who may make many mistakes in the beginning but over time learns what is needed of them. Exposure to advising was used to describe on the job experience, many participants discussed being in the advising role and gaining experience in it was how they taught themselves. When training was referenced it was used “in general” rather than being able to discuss what was actually learned information from the trainings and resources (DeSawal, 2007, p. 71). The study’s results showed that overall there is a need for more trainings and resources to be created and utilized outside of the existing handbooks. The need for additional trainings was also reported in Micek’s (2013) findings. Micek stated that many participants discussed wanting or expecting some form of advisor training prior to taking the position.

### **Theoretical Framework**

To understand decisions around hazing in fraternities and sororities Kohlberg’s (1958) theory of moral development will be used. This theory explains how individuals develop their moral actions over the course of their lifetime and what impacts that development. Kohlberg also identified that some people may never move out of a stage, and that this was impacted by many internal and external factors. Kohlberg’s theory is broken into three sections: pre-conventional morality, conventional morality, and post-conventional morality. Each of these sections is broken into two more categories. They are further explored below.

#### ***Punishment/Obedience***

The first stage in pre-conventional identified as punishment and obedience; and Kohlberg (1958) identified that individuals will avoid doing what is wrong, especially if

it could lead to punishment. In this stage individuals do what they are told and follow the rules. New members of a fraternal organization are looking to belong and will do whatever they can to be accepted avoiding getting in trouble. The older members as well as the advisor are seen as the authority figure and members are looking to them to understand the expectations. The advisor, in most cases, is the individual who has the greatest power and authority and is the most likely to take action when the members do something wrong. If the advisor says, “do not haze, or you will get in trouble” individuals in this stage will not engage in hazing behaviors.

### ***Rewards***

The second stage in pre-conventional is rewards. Kohlberg (1958) found that individuals in this stage want to be rewarded for their behavior. Individuals also begin to see that there may be different viewpoints, besides those of their authority figure. They begin to put their own values and needs at the forefront of decision making (Kohlberg, 1958). In this stage individuals look to meet their own self-interests above all others. This is where a student would begin to engage in hazing behaviors. If an individual believes that hazing in their organization is valued or necessary, they will engage in the behaviors even at the risk of punishment. At this stage the power of authority figures and the reward systems set up could really make an impact.

### ***Good Intentions***

Good intentions is the first stage in conventional morality. In this stage individuals conform to the majority and will engage in what is considered good behavior (Kohlberg, 1958). Good behavior does not necessarily mean what is right, but more so, what is seen as the norms and accepted behavior by the group. Action is evaluated in

terms of intentions, meaning if an individual believes hazing will bring their group closer and create a stronger bond, then they are going to haze. Additionally, if the majority of the organization engages in hazing, an individual will conform and view this as good behavior. This stage along with the previous one, rewards, are the two stages where individuals will engage the most in hazing behaviors regardless of consequences and what is expressed by the advisor.

### ***Obedience to Authority***

The second stage in the conventional level is obedience to authority, and Kohlberg (1958) identified that individuals in this stage begin to realize the importance of doing one's duty and rules are in place to benefit everyone. Individuals will begin to do what is expected to show respect for authority and maintain social order. Members may still engage in hazing behaviors during this stage, but if the advisor challenges them to do what is right and educates them on why the rules are in place they may begin to question their behaviors and their purpose for hazing. If a member has a good relationship with the advisor, they will be less likely to engage in hazing due to the fact that they want to show respect to their authority figure.

### ***Difference Between Moral and Legal Right***

Difference between moral and legal right is the first stage in the post-conventional level, and in this level, individuals feel obligated to follow societal rules and believe that rules are necessary to keep us safe (Kohlberg, 1958). This is the stage where morality becomes considered and relied upon for the sake of society. Norms of right and wrong are no longer thought of individually, but instead defined in laws or institutionalized rules (Kohlberg, 1958). This is a stage not all students will reach, and if they do they will not

engage in hazing behaviors because they know that it is morally wrong and goes against the rules of their organizations and institutions. Sigma Phi Epsilon (SigEp) is an example of an organization that has put a program in place to help members reach this level. Their balanced man program, “serves as the centerpiece of the SigEp chapter experience and provides the experience that today’s students need to be successful during and after college” (Sige.org). The program is a non-pledging, non-hazing developmental experience that focuses on personal, academic, leadership, and professional skills (Sige.org). Through the Balanced Man Program members are more likely to reach this level of moral development, because there is an emphasis on doing what is right and also allows members to challenge themselves to become a balanced man.

***Morality of Universalizable, Reversible, and Prescriptive General Ethical Principles***

The final stage of Kohlberg’s (1958) theory is morality of universalizable, reversible, and prescriptive general ethical principles. This stage focuses on everything as a whole and considers the views of everyone. There is an orientation not only toward existing rules, but also toward the conscience as a direct agent, mutual trust and respect, principles of moral choice involving logical universalities, and consistencies (Kohlberg, 1958). If an individual acts against how they believe they should, self-condemnation and guilt result, which does not occur in previous stages. Kohlberg identified that many individuals never reach this stage in their lifetime. Rarely will a college student ever be at this stage, and if they are they will not engage in hazing.

***Summary***

Kohlberg’s (1958) theory on moral development indicates there are three levels of development creating a total of six stages. Students’ perceptions of authority, morality,

and ethics evolve as they move through the various stages. Members who engage in hazing behaviors will most frequently be in the second and third stages of the theory. Kohlberg noted not everybody will reach the final stage, and rarely would a college aged student be in the last stage of development. This theoretical framework can be used to better understand where students are on a moral scale when they engage in hazing behaviors. Understanding this helps advisors to better understand how to support students as they transition through these stages and assist students on their path towards moral development.

### **Summary**

The literature that has been reviewed provides valuable information that will be used to conduct this study. The theories provided by Chin et al. (2020) suggest that hazing occurs most frequently in fraternities due to new or young members seeking membership and acceptance, members feeling that they have or do not have the freedom to opt out of an activity, and the lack of necessary change being made by university staff. Alcohol is a constant discussion point for nearly all research conducted on hazing in these organizations. There is no concrete explanation of the perceptions that students have of hazing. Students' perceptions varied by gender, organization, type of hazing, and the component of rituals and initiations. However, as indicated by this literature review, there is little research on fraternity advisors and the role that they play in the prevention of hazing. It is possible that with the proper education and training fraternity advisors can better educate their members. This could lead to an overall reduction in hazing among fraternities, and on college campuses as a whole.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **Methodology**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the role that fraternity chapter advisors play in the prevention and education of hazing, while also looking at fraternity advisors' overall perceptions and understanding of their role as an advisor. It also served to gain insight in to the training advisors have received as well as what is still needed. This chapter provides a detailed description of the methodology used including the design of the study, participants, instrumentation, research site, the data collection and analysis processes, and the treatment of data.

#### **Design of the Study**

The focus of this phenomenological study was to explore the relationship between chapter advisors and hazing prevention, while also looking at advisors' roles as a whole. According to Creswell (2007) a phenomenological study describes the meaning several individuals have of their lived experiences around a concept. Creswell described the purpose of a phenomenology study as, "...to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of a universal essence" (p. 58). This design has been chosen because it allows multiple fraternity advisors to share their experiences, which will provide applicable insights to the field as a whole. This study consisted of interviews conducted in a virtual format via Zoom. The interview structure allowed for participants to provide detailed responses to questions, and this allowed for better findings, conclusions, and recommendations for future research.

## Participants

Participants of this study were four fraternity chapter advisors who work with fraternities at institutions in the Midwest region of the United States. To recruit participants several professionals serving in fraternity life director roles at various institutions were contacted and asked to send out an email (Appendix A) to fraternity advisors who have served in their role for at least three years. The email directed individuals interested in participating to reach out to myself to schedule an interview. Once they committed and identified a time they were coded as participants and sent the Informed Consent (Appendix B) document to review prior to the interview. These advisors are faculty, staff, and alumni advisors who have been in their role for a minimum of three years. Participants were informed that there would be no identifiable information in the results of the study. Names, organizations, and institutions were removed, and pseudonyms are used to maintain confidentiality. The participants were given the pseudonyms Betty, Bruce, Noah, and Jeffrey.

Betty works at a mid-size public institution in the Midwest and was never a member of a fraternal organization while in college. She is a faculty advisor who is a professor at the university. Betty previously advised a different fraternal organization for nine years before stepping down for personal reasons. She currently is in her eighth year as the chapter advisor for a fraternity at her institution. The chapter has approximately 50 members.

Bruce is in his fifth year of advising; he is an alumni chapter advisor which means he is an advisor to a chapter he was an active member of as an undergraduate. He advises a chapter at a public mid-size institution in the Midwest. Bruce is employed as the

Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life at another institution that has no relation to the chapter he advises. The chapter he advises has approximately 100 members.

Noah is an alumni chapter advisor at a mid-size public institution in the Midwest. He graduated ten years ago from the same institution that he now serves as an advisor with and does not work at the institution. He is in his fifth year as a chapter advisor and his chapter has approximately 30 members.

The final participant, Jeffrey, is a faculty advisor who is an associate professor at a mid-size public institution in the Midwest. Jeffrey has been the chapter advisor for six years for the fraternity he advises. The fraternity he advises has approximately 70 members. He is a member of another fraternal organization and was offered membership in the one he advises as an alum but declined that offer. Jeffrey is also an advisor for another non-Greek organization.

### **Research Site**

The purpose of this study is to gain insight from various advisors and seeking them out from different institutions with no intention on fraternal organization or role at the institution. This meant that participants were from a variety of different institutions and setting up interviews with each needed to be done virtually. The interviews took place via Zoom to provide the best format for conducting the interview. Participants were instructed to identify a quiet private location to conduct the interview so that they can speak freely. The researcher also conducted the interviews in a private location as well.

**Instrument**

An interview protocol was used to guide the one-on-one interviews with participants (Appendix C). This was done to ensure that participants were asked the same general questions. Follow-up questions were asked as needed throughout the interview. The questions were designed to gain a better understanding of fraternity advisors' perceptions of their roles, and how they help in the prevention of fraternity hazing. This structure provided participants with a way to provide open honest answers of their own experiences.

**Data Collection**

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. The interviews were recorded, so that the responses could be transcribed, and therefore, analyzed more efficiently. After the responses were transcribed the data was coded to later be able to identify common themes and patterns in the responses. In the data collection process all identifiable information was removed and labeled in a way to connect the participant to their specific data. This was one way to maintain consistency and confidentiality throughout the process.

**Data Analysis**

Interviews were transcribed and coded as part of the analysis process. Descriptive coding was used in the analysis and this was done by giving a word or phrase to each highlighted section of the transcription to summarize it (Saldana, 2013). Coding is one way to organize comments and parts of the transcription toward analyzing the information for the study. Some codes were combined to include a wider summary. Peer examination was used to make sure data was correctly analyzed and themes are

appropriate. Krefting (1991) explained peer examination as the process of examining findings with an impartial colleague who has qualitative experience. This was done to increase validity of the study.

### **Treatment of Data**

Pseudonyms were used to maintain confidentiality for individuals and institutions. All identifiable information was renamed to be consistent. All data was stored on a flash drive that is password protected and that only I have access to. Data will be kept for three years after the completion of the study, per IRB policy, and then the flash drive will be destroyed.

### **Summary**

A qualitative study was conducted virtually via zoom to examine fraternity advisors in relation to hazing. Interviews were recorded and transcribed. After the transcription process all identifiable information was removed from the data and stored in a separate file that only the researcher will have access to. Participants of this study were fraternity advisors consisting of both faculty and alumni from various organizations and institutions. The data was coded and categorized to identify themes and patterns between respondents. Chapter Four will provide the findings from the study participants.

## CHAPTER IV

### Analysis

This chapter will focus on analyzing the four semi-structured interviews that were conducted and reporting the themes found that help to better understand fraternity advisors' perceptions of their roles regarding hazing, as well as the training and resources they receive to help them serve as fraternity advisors. The results are presented based on the research questions; 1) How do fraternity advisors define hazing, 2) What training and tools do advisors receive to help them serve as fraternity advisors, and 3) How do advisors perceive their roles in educating and preventing hazing.

#### **Fraternity Advisors Definitions of Hazing**

The participants in this study were asked specifically to define hazing in their own terms. From this there were two overall themes that emerged when the advisors were defining hazing. The first theme is hazing as abusive behavior and containing a power dynamic; while the second theme concerned alcohol and alumni influence/involvement. The participants shared that they were not provided a definition in their role as an advisor but were defining it from past experience and knowledge. Each of them took time to think before providing their own definition.

#### ***Abusive and Power Dynamic***

There were two participants, when asked to define hazing, who spoke about the abuse or act of influence. Betty, who is a faculty advisor with 17 years of advising experience stated, "probably requiring any person to do something that is abusive in nature." After a long pause she continued and said, "I guess that's a simple statement of it. That's a hard thing to really define. It could be anything physically, mentally, or

emotionally abusive.” Bruce, an alumni chapter advisor in his fifth year, is also a director of fraternity and sorority life at a different institution; defined hazing as

directly tied to a perceived coercion of power of members to complete acts that are not required of membership. That piece regards anything from buffoonery to alcohol consumption to physical labor. But, specifically it is about that coercion of perceived power dynamic.

Betty later provided examples including errand running and making new members clean the chapter house and she also identified that these were acts of hazing. She shared this because the new members felt obligated to do these types of things due to the power dynamic that the initiated members had over them. Jeffrey, who is a faculty chapter advisor in his sixth year also talked about cleaning and errand running when describing hazing. He defined hazing as “any action taken that diminishes a prospective or current member,” and after a long pause went on to say, “I mean it’s bullying for membership is really how I would view it.”

Jeffrey later discussed a time when he had to handle a possible hazing scenario. He was informed that a new member was being forced to get up early and do intense workouts with an initiated member. His executive board reached out to ask if that was hazing, and he felt that it could be, so he addressed the situation. Based on his separate conversations with the new member and the initiated member Jeffrey stated, “I determined it was not hazing because the new member knew he could say no at any time. He knew his membership was not on the line if he said no. But, this was definitely a scenario that could have been hazing under different circumstances.”

Noah, an alumni advisor in his fifth year, took a long time to think about how he would answer this question and after starting to and stopping a few times he responded with, "Geez, I mean loosely, I have a pretty broad definition of hazing. I think it's just forcing anyone to do anything they don't want to do, that you wouldn't consider a general responsibility." He went on to say, "hazing isn't always black and white and slaps you in the face. There are times conversations have to be had about other things that could raise an eyebrow from a different perspective."

The definitions provided by the participants related to the idea of power dynamics and the influence that older members may have over newer members. With this power they also spoke about using it in a way that could be abusive, making participants engage in unnecessary tasks that could be harmful.

### *Alcohol and Alumni*

In defining hazing the participants also spoke about the impact of alumni involvement and the influence they have on the activities of the organization. Along with this they also spoke about the role alcohol plays in all of this. This use of alcohol was described to come from both the current members as well as alumni.

After Noah gave his initial definition of hazing he paused and then said,

The thing I probably spend more time fighting against when it comes to hazing is our alumni. You get guys coming back from the sixties, seventies, and eighties and the definition of hazing didn't exist back then. So, alumni come back, and they tell all these stories and kind of glorify it a little bit, and I find that I have to spend a decent amount of time working with the chapter to walk back those glory days stories and explain why and how times have changed.

Betty also spoke of alumni involvement and the impact it can have on members related to hazing. She stated, “if alumni are involved they're thinking they want them to experience the same things they experienced and since they lived it they don't believe it is hurtful or harmful.”

Jeffrey discussed the excessive binge drinking norm that is the culture for many college students. He stated that “alcohol consumption is a little harder to regulate, because I think that's such a normative part of the college experience. College kids egg each other on to bad drinking behaviors.” The other participants also provided examples related to alcohol including purchasing alcohol for new members, encouraging or forcing members to consume alcohol, and throwing parties on initiation night or other celebratory occasions.

These were the major themes that were presented when the advisors were defining and discussing hazing. They gave examples of hazing activities that included cleaning, requiring new members to do excessive workouts, running errands, and drinking. Alumni along with the use of alcohol were two topics that participants felt had an impact on hazing.

### **Training and Resources Provided to Fraternity Advisors**

The second research question addressed the training and tools advisors receive to help them serve as fraternity advisors. The participants were asked what training and resources they received when they became advisors from both the national organizations and the institutions where they advise. They were also asked to talk about the ongoing training and resources available from nationals and the institutions. There were three themes identified from the participants' responses. The first theme is the lack of

preparedness advisors felt when stepping into their roles, the second theme relates to the low level of institutional involvement compared to national involvement, and final theme is the desire for more required training and educational sessions.

### *Preparedness*

All of the participants stated that they received very little training when they began advising. When Betty was asked what training and resources she received when she first became an advisor she stated, “it was like you were thrown to the wolves and you had to learn as you go. There was a handbook you were given with a list of things you're supposed to do, but that was pretty much it.” Jeffrey paused to think about the question for a few minutes and then said, “well to be frank, I received virtually nothing. I received a checklist from the university of forms to turn in throughout the year and a handbook, that’s it.”

Noah gave a chuckle when asked this question and answered with “As far as training goes I received very little to none, honestly pretty much nothing. I think I was given a manual, maybe.” After pausing for a moment, he continued with “I really had no idea what was going on, it was pretty much just figure it out as you go.” Bruce stated, “I was provided a manual when I began advising and that is all.” As he continued to talk about his level of preparedness he shared that “honestly when I was serving on the advisory board for my chapter right after graduating, I knew none of this information. I didn't even know there was a manual for advisors available.”

The participants all shared that they received very little training, which led to an overall feeling of unpreparedness when they began advising. They mentioned manuals, handbooks, and checklists were the resources they were provided with no direction on

how to use them or what to do. They also discussed how it was a position where they had to learn how to be an advisor while in the role.

### ***Institutional and National Involvement***

Participants identified that the level of support and involvement they receive from their institutions and their national organizations are fairly different. Jeffrey spoke about the differences in involvement between his institution and the national office (often referred to as ‘nationals’). He commented, “I felt much better prepared through nationals than I was through my institution for being an advisor.” He discussed the ongoing training and information from both areas and stated,

National’s has opportunities available that we are encouraged to attend, but not required. I would say there has not been a great deal of training from either area, but I will say nationals has very much tried to keep us abreast of what changes are happening.

Betty also spoke to the level of support from nationals when she stated, “I do feel like I get enough support from nationals. They send out monthly newsletters, updates to policies, information on hazing, and really anything that they think we need to pass on to our members.” Bruce discussed support from his national organization as well. He said, “nationals does provide regular communication on hazing and hazing updates of concern. There's a lot of information that gets put out on a regular basis from nationals.”

Jeffrey later discussed more on his institutional involvement when he said, for many years, my institution did not support the Greek community in any meaningful way. I get the same amount of credit for being a Greek advisor that I do for serving on a committee that meets once a year.

He continued and provided an example of a time when he felt a lack of university involvement,

At the institution there is an anti-hazing month that as advisors we have no idea what's going on or that it's even going on. We get an email telling us about it a couple days in advance saying a certain percentage of our men must attend and complete a module, but that's it.

Noah indicated that he felt adequate support from nationals but became frustrated when discussing his institutions involvement. When asked if he received the support he needed from his institution he responded,

I'm going to be honest with you, the only situations where I hear from my university are when they give me the Dean's list, questions about housing, or if someone did something wrong. They've never reached out to me about any kind of training. They've never reached out to me about any kind of relationship building. I don't think I have ever even really gotten a thank you, which would be nice.

He paused and then concluded his response by adding, "it would be nice to have more official contact with the university and have them offer resources, because I really don't feel like they offer any resources to advisors."

The participants discussed how the level of support and involvement seemed greater from nationals than it did from their institutions. They showed emotions such as frustration and unhappiness when talking about their institutions. The participants spoke about how they were not receiving the support they needed to be successful in their positions.

### *Desire for Ongoing Required Training*

The participants shared a common desire for more training sessions that are required as opposed to optional. Bruce, who works as a director for fraternity and sorority life was an advocate for required training. He responded, “I think honestly there should be education for every chapter advisor yearly, because there is so much thrown our way that it's hard to keep track of it.” After thinking for a moment, he continued,

Something needs to happen. There needs to be regular consistent educational sessions or trainings that are required for individuals to attend. Otherwise you're leaving advisors that don't have any idea of what they're actually supposed to be accomplishing in those roles.

Noah and Jeffrey discussed the need for training that focuses more on crisis management and the emotional health of the men. Noah said, “I’ve never received training on how to handle crisis management or situations that involve emotional distress, I think those are areas where we really need more education as advisors.” When Jeffrey was asked about the need for ongoing trainings he responded, “I think nationals could do a better job if they focus on working with me on the sort of emotional health of the men more so than rules and regulations.” His final comment on the topic of training was

I do think more training is necessary that focuses education around good decision making and ethical behaviors around their creed instead of alcohol and sexual assault prevention and the things that you're supposed to do to not have that situation.

The responses from participants showed that they felt unprepared when stepping into their roles. They have had minimal training, and most training sessions are not

required for advisors. The participants indicated they feel more support and involvement through nationals than they do from their institutions. Their responses showed they have a need for required trainings that not only focus on policies, but also focus on hazing, crisis management and the mental health of their members.

### **Fraternity Advisors Perceptions of Roles**

The final research question focused on how fraternity advisors perceive their roles as an advisor. Participants were asked questions about how they see their role as advisor from a very general perspective as well as regarding hazing prevention and education. The participants were asked what they see as their responsibilities to their organizations as advisors. There were two themes presented from the participants' responses. The first theme relates to mentorship and support, and the second theme focuses on the importance of communication.

#### ***Mentorship and Support***

Each participant identified that their main responsibility was to mentor and support their men. They also talked about how part of their job is to be actively involved with their organizations and help the members understand different policies and procedures as well as how to work with one another. Betty described it this way,

I feel like it's my responsibility to mentor and advise the members. I'm there to help them goal set and make decisions. I go to weekly chapter meetings and give my report. If I'm not there for some reason I will get the meeting minutes, so I can stay in the loop. I think it's important that I show up and know what is going on with the chapter.

Bruce shared,

overall, you are an advisor, so you are there to coach is the most important part. I also actively sit in on executive board meetings as well as chapter meetings to stay involved and be aware of what's going on.

As Noah reflected on this question he shared how he sees this relationship as a mentoring one;

I have a very mentoring relationship with my men. A lot of my role is helping them with planning, decision making, and goal setting. I may not keep up with the day to day operations as frequently, but I am always involved with what is going on in the chapter.

He continued and shared, "I do everything I can to support my men and make sure they know that I am a safe resource that they can always come to."

The participants also talked about the need to be involved but not make the decisions for the group. Rather, they work to help them be knowledgeable so the men can make better decisions for their organization. Betty shared her perspective,

I try to support my men however I can. I know they don't always see eye to eye with the rules, so it's my job to help explain and educate them on why this is a policy or why they shouldn't act in a certain way. But, while doing this I try to remain as supportive and understanding as possible.

Bruce defined the advising role in this way,

I conceptualize my role primarily in a mentoring capacity. I will tell you there's a balance that I think is hard to achieve for fraternity advisors of mentoring them without taking control of what they're doing. Ultimately you aren't the person who should be making their decisions for them.

The participants also talked about the level of accountability they need to hold the members to and how they emphasize developing members' responsibility awareness.

Bruce described his role goes beyond just mentoring to include accountability, explaining his role is "to educate, support, answer questions, and then most importantly if anything is reported that's concerning to address it and make sure everyone is updated."

Bruce went on to explain,

My role is to support them and help them make decisions that are best for the organization. I advise them when they ask, but they have to make the decisions they make. You should always make sure at no point they feel pressured to take your advice or make decisions based on it.

Jeffrey was the only participant to directly address the topic of hazing as he spoke about his role. He shared his standpoint on his role in hazing prevention explaining,

My role regarding hazing is to stop it immediately. Even jokes about it, I will shut them down right off the bat. I think that's an important component to being an advisor, we set the tone that that's not okay and never going to be okay.

The participants shared that they perceived their roles to be mentoring, supporting, and giving advice. They also added that although they can provide guidance, the men in the organizations are ultimately responsible for the decisions they make, and the advisors should not be making those decisions. The participants described the importance of being present which means they attend meetings and stay involved with what is going on in their chapters.

### *Communication*

All of the participants stressed the importance of communication when discussing their role as advisor in helping reduce incidents of hazing. The types of communication they were having with members varied, but they all referenced it as a necessary component in their roles. Bruce explained his approach to reducing hazing as “when there's events being brought up or discussions being had I ask specific questions to help find out if there are potential elements of hazing. I want to know all the details before anything is approved or carried out.” After pausing to think he continued and shared, “there may be stuff happening small or low-level, but nothing past what you would gauge as a 2 or 3, just because I am checking in with them and having honest conversations.”

Noah shared the importance of communication when he stated, “I have many conversations with my men. Talking to them to make sure that they are examining their actions from a perspective other than their own.” He later added,

I think there needs to be an appropriate amount of critical thinking going on. Such as, making sure they are looking at their actions from a perspective of someone other than themselves. It may not sound or look like hazing to them, but it's part of my job to have these conversations and explain to them how someone on the outside can view a behavior differently and consider it hazing.

Betty shared her approach to stopping hazing stating,

If I notice anyone is joking about hazing or acting a way they shouldn't I'll call them out and talk to them about it. If I ever do hear of anything going on that I even thought could be hazing or inappropriate behavior I wouldn't hesitate to call that person out.

As she continued she added, “as advisors it starts with us. We have to have those conversations that put a stop to it immediately. No matter how small or insignificant the act may seem, we got to shut it down.” When Jeffrey was discussing his role in hazing prevention he stated, “I have learned for the good of the chapter that calling a man out in front of the entire chapter is far more beneficial than setting up an individual meeting.” He paused and then added,

It doesn't always have to turn into a long conversation about hazing, but I think in that moment when something raises a red flag it needs to be addressed and explained with logic so the whole chapter understands and is on the same page.

Jeffrey’s final thoughts on the topic of hazing prevention and education were,

I've found that teaching them a rule or a policy is not the same as teaching them to make good decisions about hazing and about alcohol or other topics of concern. So, having those honest education conversations about good decision making has been far more effective than just telling them the rules.

The participants identified that communication was the most important tool for preventing hazing. The type of communication varied and was often based on the type of relationship they had with a member or the group. And, this communication ranged from having an honest conversation to calling men out in front of their chapters. The advisors shared that they understood their roles to include stopping hazing. They felt it was part of their responsibility to make sure it was never talked about lightly, including jokes. They also shared that they felt they were the main people responsible for making sure hazing did not occur.

## **Summary**

There were multiple themes identified for each of the three research questions. The participants defined hazing differently but overall understood it as containing a power dynamic and being abusive in nature. They also identified the use of alcohol and alumni involvement may play into hazing experiences. The advisors were provided manuals at the start of their positions with no additional training. This led to an overall feeling of unpreparedness when stepping into their roles. They have received very little additional training while being in these positions and feel that there is a need for required training to be mandatory for all advisors. The participants perceived their roles as primarily mentoring, supporting, and advising their members. They felt that they play a large role in hazing prevention, with communication being the most important aspect in stopping hazing.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **Discussion**

This qualitative research study used semi-structured interviews to examine how fraternity chapter advisors define hazing and how they perceive their roles in the education and prevention of hazing. It also looked at the training and resources advisors are provided to help them serve in their positions. Four chapter advisors with varying experiences were asked a series of questions (Appendix C) around the following research questions; 1) How do fraternity advisors define hazing, 2) What training and tools do advisors receive to help them serve as fraternity advisors, and 3) How do advisors perceive their roles in educating and preventing hazing. This chapter discusses the findings of the study, implications for fraternity and sorority life directors and national organizations, and recommendations for future research.

#### **Defining Hazing**

The participants in this study defined hazing fairly differently, but all four recognized and understood hazing as a negative concept. There was confusion and hesitation among all four participants' answers and they each indicated these were their own definitions and not a definition that they were provided. Bruce, who works at an institution as a fraternity and sorority life director was the most confident out of the participants when defining hazing. His answer was the best developed due to the training and experience he has received in his job outside of being a chapter advisor. While there was evidence that the participants found it challenging to define hazing, they were able to provide examples and share experiences of hazing which included alcohol use, alumni influence, and so forth (Alexander, 2018; Allen and Madden, 2012). Examples that the

participants identified as hazing behaviors included errand running, making new members clean, excessive workouts, and forcing members to consume alcohol. Although, participants did not identify physical or mental abuse, as described by Alexander (2018), they did speak to new member commitment. The confusion is consistent among chapter advisors and members because advisors are not receiving enough education on hazing prevention. If advisors are going to aid in stopping hazing within their chapters, it is critical that they are better prepared and feel confident discussing hazing.

The participants talked about the role alcohol plays in their organizations. All of the advisors recognized and acknowledged that the college drinking culture can play a part in hazing behaviors. The way that alcohol was discussed presented it as a normalized part of the fraternal experience. These findings are consistent with Chin et al.'s (2020) research on alcohol in student organizations. Allen and Madden (2012) also identified that alcohol is often associated with hazing.

Negative alumni involvement is something the advisors noted that they often deal with in relation to hazing. Alumni members return to their organizations for years after graduating for celebrations and alumni events, where they share experiences and stories of their time as active members. A lot has changed in fraternities over the years, and these members tend to glorify hazing and what they were able to get away with. Alumni members often feel that the hazing they went through brought them closer to their brothers and helped them bond (Chin et al., 2020). When active members hear these glorified stories of the past, they may be more likely to want to engage in hazing activities (Chambers et al., 2018). Greek life has evolved greatly in terms of stopping hazing and holding members accountable for their actions. Although there is little

research looking at the role alumni play, it was evident in this study that the advisors saw this as a concern and this may be due in part to the new fraternity member wanting their approval and conforming to group thinking and actions to be accepted (Chambers et al., 2018). This is where we see Kohlberg's (1958) theory of moral development, because active members are hearing these glorified stories from alumni and may believe that hazing is for the good of the organization. According to Kohlberg's (1958) theory, many college age students are in the stages of rewards and good intentions. These are the stages where hazing is most likely going to occur. Advisors who serve several years, even decades, with an organization will establish long lasting relationships with the students who then become alumni. Advisors can capitalize on these relationships by reaching out to the alumni and identifying positive ways to get them engaged with the organization and also reach out to them when their actions are less than appropriate. This means that directors of fraternity programs should work to develop individuals who serve as advisors, so they feel supported in maintaining their position for years.

### **Training and Resources**

The participants' responses regarding training and resources shows that there is an overwhelming need for more advisor training. There is very little preparation that advisors receive when starting in their positions (Dunkel & Schuh, 1998). Micek's (2013) also found that advisors of most college student organizations do not feel prepared to enforce policies and support their students. The participants shared that the only resources received when they began advising were manuals and handbooks. There was no follow up to see if they had questions or needed additional support. They were expected to read the manual and begin advising. Many of the participants shared that they

felt unprepared and received very little guidance when stepping into their roles. This aligns with the research by Dunkel and Schuh (1998) that spoke mainly about resources given to advisors but no formal training and little support.

Along with the lack of training at the beginning, the advisors felt they do not receive much ongoing guidance in their roles. There was a significant difference in levels of support between the institutions and the national organizations. The participants indicated that they felt more supported and received more resources from their national organizations than they did from their institutions. They shared that their national organizations provide frequent communication on various topics happening within their chapters. When talking about institutional support the advisors indicated that they receive virtually nothing. There was apparent frustration displayed by multiple participants when they were discussing their thoughts on institutional support. The participants shared that they rarely received any support, resources, or communication from the fraternity and sorority life directors. The advisors portrayed different attitudes towards their national organizations than they did towards their institutions. While it is apparent that there is a large need for better support from both areas, it was clear that the participants felt better supported by nationals than they did their institutions.

The participants' responses, along with the previous research show that there is a need and a desire for more training for advisors. Not only do they want more training, they believe that this training needs to be required by all chapter advisors. The advisors stated that there is a need for required training at the start of the advising as well as ongoing required training that takes place multiple times during the length of being an advisor. While the participants shared the common desire for required training, they all

shared the need for training that specifically dealt with crisis management and the mental health of the men in their organizations. The minimal training that advisors receive typically relates to policies and procedures, and there is no education given to advisors on how to handle emergencies or mental health issues. If more frequent training sessions were established, advisors would be better educated and better prepared to serve in their roles. Having chapter advisors who are better prepared and supported, know how to best advise their organizations, and know how to handle emergency situations is an important step that fraternal organizations need to take if they aim to stop hazing.

### **Perceptions of Roles**

The participants defined their roles in different terms, but the main responsibilities were to mentor, support, advise, coach, and educate their members. In 1962 Bloland defined the key roles for advisors to include maintaining the organization, helping the organization grow, and the supporting program content objectives. The advisors shared that they could provide guidance and support, but they were not the ones who were making the decisions. They stressed the importance of educating the men that they are responsible for their decisions and the consequences of their actions. There was a consensus among the participants that involvement was important. These are the same findings that Bloland (1962) reported. The advisors shared that they felt it was part of their responsibilities to attend meetings, read minutes, and be involved with what was happening in their chapters. Micek's (2013) study also found that advisors viewed their responsibilities in the same way. Attending meetings, reading minutes, and general involvement in the chapters align with Bloland's (1962) idea of maintaining the organization.

Only one participant mentioned hazing when talking about their responsibilities. Jeffrey expressed part of his role included stopping hazing immediately. The other participants did not mention hazing prevention as a responsibility. Boland's (1962) idea of helping the chapter grow would include hazing prevention. Chapter growth is dependent upon recruiting new members and retaining current members. Chapters that engage in hazing behaviors may struggle to recruit and keep members. Chapter advisors should be more inclined to view this as part of their role. They are the person who works closest to the chapter, and ultimately are in the best position to provide education to members on hazing prevention. This leads back to the need for better training for chapter advisors, so that they are confident and view it as one of their duties to provide education on hazing and hazing prevention.

In addition to mentorship and support, communication was the third aspect the advisors focused on when discussing their roles. They had different approaches to communication. Some of the advisors preferred calling men out in front of everyone, while others took a more discrete approach in setting up a meeting. But, ultimately, they all addressed the need for open communication with members. All of the participants shared that if they did not understand something or saw anything that raised concerns, they would not hesitate to ask questions and address it. There needs to be a certain level of trust between the members and the chapter advisors to be able to have honest conversations. Having these conversations, that at times may be tough or uncomfortable leads the members to a greater sense of awareness and accountability. This also stems from the involvement level the advisor has with their chapter. An involved advisor who makes the effort to attend meetings and stay up to date on what is going on within the

chapter, has a greater chance of building trust and rapport with members making it easier to have honest conversations.

### **Implications for Curbing Hazing in the Fraternity Community**

We know from previous research that hazing continues to be a problem within the fraternal community (Allan and Madden, 2008; 2012; Alexander, 2018; Ellsworth, 2006). It is also common knowledge that many methods have been employed to curb this behavior, usually from the perspective of the institution or the fraternity itself (stophazing.org); however, advisors can play a key role in this process, but this study shows that they are not properly trained to serve in this capacity. The participants' responses indicate that there is an immense lack of support and resources provided to fraternal chapter advisors from institutions and national chapters.

### ***Implications for Fraternity and Sorority Life Directors***

Fraternity and sorority life directors need to do more in terms of giving advisors the support they need to be successful. It is unacceptable for directors to require paperwork be filled out, grade checks reported, and an occasional advisor meeting held and consider that adequate support. Directors should hold multiple advisor meetings a semester to be kept up to date on chapters and provide them with information. These meetings should be check in meetings for updates but should also be used as a time to provide educational training and information to advisors. The topics should include a variety of areas such as hazing prevention, crisis management, and mental health. Sending out newsletters or email updates to advisors is another recommendation. This would keep advisors informed and allow them to relay information to their members. Including information on what is going on at the institution, what is going on in Greek

life nationally, along with a variety of other resources would be helpful for chapter advisors.

It was clear from this study that mental health is prevalent in the fraternity community. These advisors are expected to be front line people supporting the members of an organization, many of whom have had little to no training related to mental health. Providing this training and support would help these advisors better serve their organizations. That training should be about resources available on and off campus and not the expectation that they serve in a counseling capacity. Having one more person for these men to turn to for support and guidance toward the proper support benefits the whole community.

An additional step directors need to take is acknowledging and appreciating the hard work that chapter advisors do. Without these men and women fraternal organizations would not exist. Chapter advisors do not feel that the work and effort they put in is recognized. For advisors who are involved and active in their chapters, there can be a large time commitment. If advisors do not feel appreciated they may experience burnout quicker and feel less inclined to be an involved advisor. This can be as simple as sending out a “thank you” email to advisors or hosting an advisor appreciation event. It does not need to be a huge time commitment but making the effort to acknowledge the work chapter advisors do would make them feel more appreciated and better supported. Having a faculty advising committee might also be helpful, this could be a committee of advisors from different groups who come together under the direction of the fraternity and sorority director. Their role might be to discuss issues and concerns from within the

fraternal community, develop training opportunities, seek support, and offer guidance to the system as a whole.

### ***Implications for National Organizations***

There is a clear need for better training and resources to be provided by national organizations. Chapter advisors are stepping into their positions with very little training leaving them feeling unprepared and uncertain of their responsibilities. Not only is there a need for additional training, this training should be required. Required training ensures all chapter advisors are receiving the proper education they need to feel prepared and be successful as advisors. Annual required training would be a great first step in establishing better resources for advisors. Annual training is a great opportunity to incorporate sessions on crisis management and mental health. These are two areas where advisors feel additional training is necessary.

National organizations do a nice job of sending out information and updates via email. In addition to sending out updates on what is going on with their chapters, they could easily include some tools and resources to aid advisors. They should send out resources in a monthly newsletter format to advisors. These should tackle a different topic of fraternity and sorority life every month. While there is some form of communication, there is still a need for national organizations to do more to support chapter advisors.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The research conducted on chapter advisors and hazing prevention has been minimal. This study aimed to add to the existing research and provide new insight toward chapter advisor's education and how they perceive their roles in hazing prevention. This

study had a small number of participants and should be duplicated with a larger number of participants. A second recommendation would be to replicate this study with sorority chapter advisors, as well as National Pan-Hellenic chapter advisors. This would allow insight on how chapter advisor's perceptions differ between councils. A final recommendation is to conduct this study with advisors who work outside of the Midwest. While the participants were all from different organizations, they all worked at institutions in the Midwest. Continued research on chapter advisors is necessary to better understand how advisors understand their roles and what areas they need better support in.

### **Conclusion**

Hazing continues to threaten the future of fraternities and sororities. There has been extensive research conducted on hazing in student organizations, but relatively none that examines it from a chapter advisor standpoint. This study aimed to expand on the minimal existing research on chapter advisors' perceptions of their roles and how they understand their responsibilities regarding hazing prevention.

Chapter advisors are interacting with their members on a regular basis, making them excellent candidates to educate and work with their members on hazing prevention. However, advisors are only able to do this if they receive adequate training and support to be confident and educated in their roles. This study, along with existing research found that chapter advisors are not prepared, receive very little training, and are forced to learn as they go by teaching themselves. A necessary change needs to be made at the institutional and national level to prepare and educate chapter advisors. They have immense responsibility working with their members and are in great positions to

positively impact students during their development, but only if they begin to receive the proper training, support, and resources to do so.

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## Appendix A

### Recruitment Email

Hello [Potential Participant Name],

My name is Gabby Hiller and I am a graduate student in the College Student Affairs program at Eastern Illinois University. For my thesis, I am conducting a study that looks at hazing in fraternities and sororities from an advisor perspective. I would like to express that all identifiable information will be removed through a coding process. I am interested in discussing this topic with you and gaining more insight to your experiences and thoughts.

If you are willing, this interview would be conducted through Zoom or Microsoft Teams and would be scheduled for approximately 1 hour. If you are interested in participating, please let me know by replying to this email and we can set up a time to meet.

Thank you for your time, I look forward to hearing back from you,

Gabby Hiller

## Appendix B

### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

#### *Hazing From an Advisor Perspective*

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by the Principal Investigator, Gabby Hiller under her thesis advisor, Dr. Dianne Timm as a requirement for the Master of Science in the College Student Affairs program 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 may contact the thesis advisor, Dr. Dianne Timm at [dtimm@eiu.edu](mailto:dtimm@eiu.edu) or the Principal Investigator, Gabby Hiller at [gehiller@eiu.edu](mailto:gehiller@eiu.edu)

- **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This study aims to examine the role that fraternity advisors play in the education and prevention of hazing. In addition to this, the study will look at the training and resources provided to advisors to assist in successfully overseeing fraternal organizations.

- **PROCEDURES**

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

Schedule a virtual interview with the principal investigator by replying to the recruitment email. The interviews will take approximately one hour and will be recorded.

Respond to interview questions regarding your advisor experience, hazing, and the training that you have received related to advising.

- **POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

There are no physical risks to participants within this study. There are minimal physiological risks/discomforts as some questions may be uncomfortable to answer within the topic of hazing. If you do not feel comfortable answering a question you are not required to.

- **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

The benefit of participating in this study is sharing your experiences and insight on hazing from your unique perspective. Sharing your responses will lead to findings that can be used to better understand advisor's perceptions of hazing. This research is critical if we aim to end the hazing epidemic in fraternity and sorority life.

- **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and 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 means of *the use of pseudonyms for your name, organization, and institution. The interview recordings and data will be stored on a password protected USB flash drive for approximately three years per IRB protocol, then destroyed. Only the principal investigator will have access to the flash drive and the data stored on it.*

- **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 the 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 or services to which you are otherwise entitled.

There is no penalty if you withdraw from the study and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer.

- **IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS**

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact:

**Principal Investigator:** Gabby Hiller

Email: [gehiller@eiu.edu](mailto:gehiller@eiu.edu)

Phone: 419-606-1409

**Faculty Sponsor:** Dr. Dianne Timm

Email: [dtimm@eiu.edu](mailto:dtimm@eiu.edu)

- **RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS**

If you have any questions or concerns 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: eiuirb@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.

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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.

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Printed Name of Participant

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Signature of Participant

Date

## Appendix C

### Interview Protocol

1. Tell me about your current position at the institution.
2. How long have you been an advisor? Tell me about your experiences?
  - a. What group or groups are you currently advisor for at your institution?
  - b. What groups have you previously been an advisor for?
3. Thinking specifically about the fraternity/sorority you advise, how would you describe your relationship to the organization?
4. How do you perceive your role as an advisor to the fraternity/sorority?
  - a. What is your responsibility as the advisor to the group?
  - b. What is your responsibility to the institution as the advisor to the group?
  - c. How does this advisor position differ from other organizations you are or have been an advisor for.
5. What training and resources did you receive when you started in working with this fraternity/sorority?
  - a. What training or resources have your received during your time as an advisor to this group?
  - b. How prepared did you feel when you began advising this organization?
  - c. What additional training or resources do you wish you would have received prior to starting this position?
6. As you may know hazing is often associated with fraternities and sororities. Given that, what is your definition of hazing?
  - a. Where does that definition come from?

- b. Was this part of your training with the organization as you stepped in to the role?
7. What kinds of conversations have you had with members of the organization you advise regarding hazing?
  - a. If no, why haven't you had these conversations?
  - b. What led to you having these conversations?
  - c. Have you developed or provided any training or development for members of the organization you advise?
8. Have there been any instances of hazing within your organization that you are aware of?
  - a. How were they handled?
  - b. Do you suspect that things are happening that you are not aware of?
9. What conversations have you had with other staff/administrators at the institution regarding hazing?
10. What conversations have you had with the national office for your fraternity/sorority regarding hazing?
11. What do you see as your role in the prevention of hazing with the fraternity/sorority you advise?
  - a. Where does your information come from?
  - b. What sort of training or support do you need?
  - c. What more could the college or national fraternity/sorority do to help you in this role?

12. As you were preparing for this interview did you anticipate me asking anything specific or did you prepare to share something that I have not asked?