

**ANTI-DISCRIMINATION IN A CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN FRATERNITY:  
A CASE STUDY**

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# **ANTI-DISCRIMINATION IN A CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN FRATERNITY: A CASE STUDY**

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University of Pittsburgh, 2013

This doctoral dissertation is an empirical study employing the case study research design and aims at gathering the perspectives of fraternity men concerning the utility of anti-discrimination clauses in protecting minority members' interests and contributing to a sense of belonging. The case includes a mixed methodology of a survey, focus group interviews, document review, and one on one interviews in terms of data collection. The participants in this study are active and alumni fraternity men affiliated with a social fraternity in the North American Interfraternity Conference. The active member sample comes from a single chapter of the organization at a large, research, public institution in the northeastern region of the United States. The alumni were selected based in consultation with the leadership of the organization. The data indicates that the sampled chapter of the organization has a generally welcoming environment to men of different races, religions, and sexual orientations, but that fraternity bylaws and anti-discrimination clauses are not credited by members for this. Instead, a welcoming organizational climate as promoted within the given chapter allows for this appreciation of diversity to continue.

“Diversity is not about counting heads, but making heads count.”

- *Lee A. Gill, J.D., The University of Akron*

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May God continue to bless every person—and may we celebrate the diversities in our neighbors that He has made, Himself.

So mote it be.



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

When giving a presentation to a crowd of active fraternity men at Kent State University in 2010, I asked a question which seemed to stir the group and cause commotion. “Gentlemen,” I began, “in your own words, what is a definition for *diversity*?” What I thought was a simple question yielded complications greater than any I could have suspected. After twenty awkward seconds of silence, a young African-American student raised his hand and stated that “*diversity* is a bunch of differences that make us who we are.” After thanking him for his participation, I asked again. “Does anyone else have any opinions on what diversity is?” Forego another fifteen seconds of silence, and finally, speaking with great parrhesia, a Caucasian student rose and said “Yeah, anything but white.” My greatest hesitation about studying diversity was justified that very moment. Has the topic become so polarized that it has invoked dissention amongst the races? What implication does this hold not only for fraternity life, but society as a whole? For the past several years, these questions have guided my work in graduate study. This doctoral dissertation is an original study, informed by scholar-practitioners and historians, that explores the effectiveness of a college fraternity in protecting the interests of minority populations. Specifically, this document contains a mixed-methods case study examining a single fraternity chapter at a top-tier research university in the northeastern region of the United States. Through the use of a survey, a focus group, document review, and interviews, the study aims at identifying the perceptions of active and alumni fraternity men concerning the utility of anti-

discrimination clauses in protecting minority men and contributing to a sense of belonging. The following sections will better define what is meant by *minority* men and *diversity* in general.

Interestingly, this study is unique in the field of student affairs research; a comprehensive review of relevant literature yielded no like study. As such, the findings of this research may prove to be useful for educators to provide intervention where needed. As Rhoades (1994) affirms, a goal in educational research is “to reestablish the relationship between research and praxis by invoking our reflective nature” (p. 33). As a practitioner in student affairs, it is my hope that this culminating activity be comprehensive, informative, reflective, and useful in future practices.

## **1.1 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

The typical American college fraternity is steeped in history, rituals, and languages that constitute a culture all to its own (Rhoades, 1994). A reader of this dissertation would benefit from a glossary of terms that may be useful in understanding the context of the college social fraternity. Appendix A includes a table of commonly used terms in Greek life, organized by specific categories and definitions. However, this section will address how the topic of diversity will be defined in the context of this study.

### **1.1.1 Diversity defined**

The term *diversity* remains a vague term that holds various connotations. Where some believe the term to be referencing *inclusion*, where all varying aspects of human life including race,

religion, sexual orientation, personal experiences, political affiliation, and socioeconomic status are emphasized and explored, the discourse surrounding the value of diversity is not as clear.

Multicultural competency is a framework often promoted in the field of student affairs (Talbot, 2003) and a critical piece of this is the appreciation of what makes people *diverse*. Whereas some scholars, such as Talbot (2003) and Sue and Sue (2007) accept a broader definition of *diversity* as referenced above, many delineate the definition of diversity to better frame their research. For example, Hughey (2008) focuses specifically on the diversity of race in studying black students in historically black Greek lettered organizations. Similarly, Windmeyer (2005) studies issues related to the sexual identity expression of fraternity men.

Although I believe *diversity* to be a term that is evolving in its scope and inclusive nature, I will follow the trends put forth by previous research (Hughey, 2008; Hesp, 2006) and delineate the definition of diversity as a collection of societal classifications, specifically along the lines of race, religion, and sexual orientation.

## **1.2 A BRIEF HISTORY OF COLLEGE FRATERNITIES**

Since its inception in 1750, the American fraternity movement has afforded college men vast opportunities of academic, social, and professional growth, while instilling a sense of companionship arguably unparalleled by any other collegiate experience (Lord, 1987; Syrett, 2009). However, certain stereotypes have emerged, such as fraternity men as hazers and drunkards, causing the image of Greek-lettered organizations to shift from a respectful entity to a purely social phenomenon emphasizing impulsive behavior. Though public opinion concerning

college fraternities may currently range from positive and useful, to negative and sophomoric, Greek life remains an impactful experience on college students today (Pike, 2000).

Specifically, fraternities are consistently bringing in new members who may seem non-traditional from the white, Christian, and heterosexual norm in which most Greek-lettered organizations were founded due to the ever-increasing levels of access to higher education for such students (Boschini & Thompson, 1998). It is important to understand the experience of diverse students in these organizations, so that proper educational intervention or reward can commence to maintain the effectiveness of the organization on retention and student success.

In response to an ever-changing sociopolitical climate in the United States, college fraternities are incorporating anti-discrimination clauses into their organizational policies, laws, and standards for membership for various reasons. One of these reasons rests with organizational compliance to federal law (Syrett, 2009).

### **1.2.1 Historical background**

The contemporary college social fraternity finds its routes leading back to 1750 in Williamsburg, Virginia, where a group of college men met in the Apollo Room of the Raleigh Tavern to form a social society intended to debate literature and reflect on society in general (Syrett, 2009; Lord, 1987; Anson & Marchesani, 1991). The next few hundred years would afford periods of hardship and prosperity for college fraternities, as the influx of war, industrialization, and a shift in American formal education all motivated college attendance in various ways (Syrett, 2009).

Mirroring society, the American institution of higher learning existed initially to serve the societal elite, and train future members of the clergy (Thelin, 2004). Exclusiveness stemmed from the notion that only elite white males could enter the clergy, thus reserving higher

education for like people. Notably, however, is the historical trend of regional differences in American higher education. As time progressed, industrialization would evolve the South, shifting its focus for the value of higher education, and lead to the establishment of the agricultural and mechanical university (Thelin, 2004). The northeastern region of the United States would maintain its focus on traditional liberal arts education, while slowly integrating the more vocational trades.

The evolution of the American college and university is significant because the historical accounts of campus life directly affect the history of the American college and university. Much like the stigma surrounding fraternities today, the notion of secret societies would spur a general sense of hysteria and skepticism across the nation throughout history. Organizations such as the Freemasons and the Order of Odd Fellows were at the center of various conspiracy theories complete with accusations based solely on speculation. MacDill and Blanchard (1878/2008) cite the notion of fraternal secrecy as a blanket to blind outsiders from *unholy* worshipping and attempts to seize political control. Similar criticisms were rooted at the American college and university, especially at institutions where *Protestant wholeness* was emphasized (Thelin, 2004). It is here where college fraternities faced opposition with the administration, often resulting in further exclusion from campus, and consequent exclusion within the organization. The more secret an organization became, the more exclusive its selection process for membership would be.

Questions of loyalty would plague fraternity membership from non-members, especially during war time. During the Civil War, many fraternities would close because chapters in the north and south were unable to reach consensus on governance and values issues (Syrett, 2009). Mixed with the significant decrease in college enrollment during the Civil War Era, a large

number of national organizations would perish, dealing a significant impact to the American Fraternity Movement in terms of expansion. Yet, as in the case with their founding, post Civil War society hung tightly to fraternal organizations as a need for unity swept the nation (Thelin, 2004; Syrett, 2009). More college fraternities formed across the country citing unity, patriotism, and individual freedom as integral organizational values. Similar periods of success and hardship would befall college fraternities, specifically during wartime and the Great Depression. However, the philanthropic nature of fraternities would place them as key stakeholders in helping assist their fellow man during times of need. While many fraternities have faced challenges, the organizations continue impacting college campuses and the surrounding communities, and are alive and well today. Iconic fraternity symbols such as the presence of *Greek Week*, fraternity row, philanthropy, and *Greek Carnivals* continue to be a part of the American college and University. Nonetheless, more contemporary issues facing fraternities await.

Existing as traditionally white, Christian, and heterosexual organizations, college fraternities historically represented the student body on the campuses that they were operating. Growing accustomed to this norm of collegiate males between 1750 and 1860, fraternities had little mind to explore topics of multiculturalism or combating homogeneity (Syrett, 2009). Yet, with the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1866, the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment in 1868, and the *Plessy v. Ferguson* (163 US 537) Supreme Court decision in 1893, it was obvious that issues of civil rights and social progress would affect institutions of higher education and the organizations within it (Syrett, 2009; Lord, 1987; Kaplin & Lee, 2007).

As both public and private institutions of higher learning began complying with new state and federal laws, institutional leadership demanded similar compliance of college social

fraternities (Lee, 1970). Failure to do so would often result in the suspension of the organization from formal institutional recognition, ultimately barring the intake of potential members and disbanding the organization.

In a more contemporary setting, it is important to know that many college social fraternities are considered 501(c)(3) organizations and are given tax-exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service due to their philanthropic and educational nature (Lieber & Friedlander, 2003). To maintain this status, college fraternities must comply with federal laws and statutes, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits the receipt of federal support or funds to organizations that discriminate. This is relevant because as most college fraternities are considered *not-for-profit*, they rely heavily on financial donations and dues received by active and alumni members. Receiving tax breaks is an essential benefit for (inter)national organizations, and an inability to comply with federal law runs the risk of losing this status.

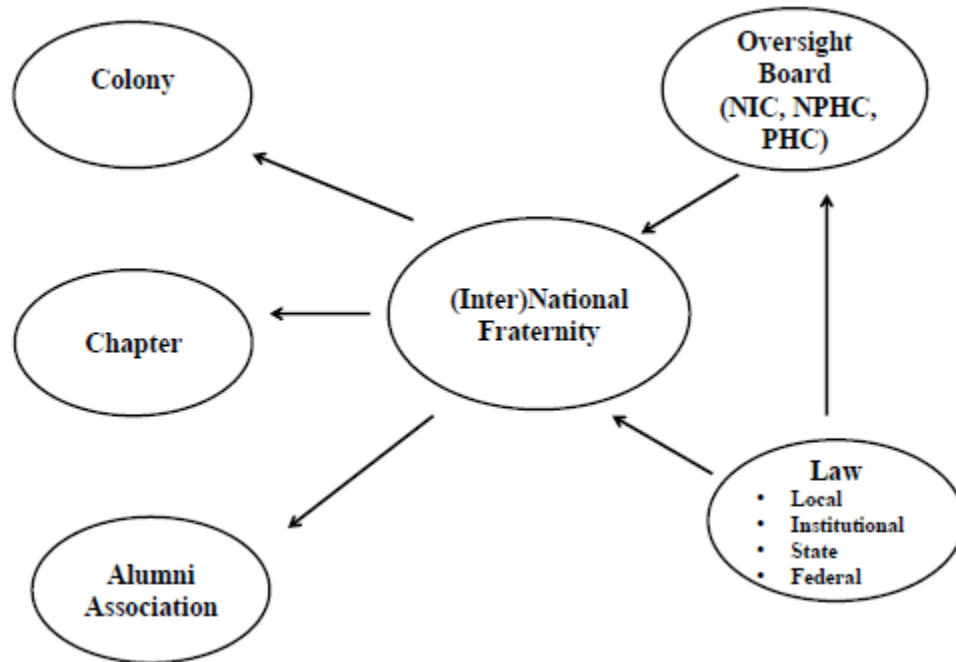
In essence, there is a substantial financial rationale to comply with statutes regarding diversity. To survive, organizations must comply; however, the level of social progress the organization is making is still up for review.

### **1.2.2 Governance structures**

College fraternities, though often culturally and organizationally unique, are governed in similar ways. Though there are other types of fraternities in existence today, this study is focused on social fraternities, which are defined as organizations that do not require a male student to be of a particular academic major or professional affiliation (Anson & Marchesani, 1991). Yet, like a traditional honor society, most fraternities require a minimum grade-point-average per semester

for individual members to be in good standing with the fraternity and for initiation as a member. Such policy decisions are determined either (inter)nationally and/or at the local level.

Figure 1. highlights a typical governance structure for a college social fraternity.



**Figure 1.** General Fraternity Governance Structure

In this model, the (inter)national fraternity is at the center. A fraternity is considered *international* or *national* depending on whether or not there is an established colony or chapter in a country other than the United States (Anson & Marchesani, 1991). The (inter)national fraternity has alumni leaders that serve as its president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer, depending on organizational culture. These men are voted in by the convention, which is an annual or biannual conference where each chapter, colony, and alumni association sends delegates to meet, discuss, and vote on (inter)national policy or changes to the fraternity's rituals, or other ceremonies. In this sense, most of the legislative power is afforded to the undergraduate

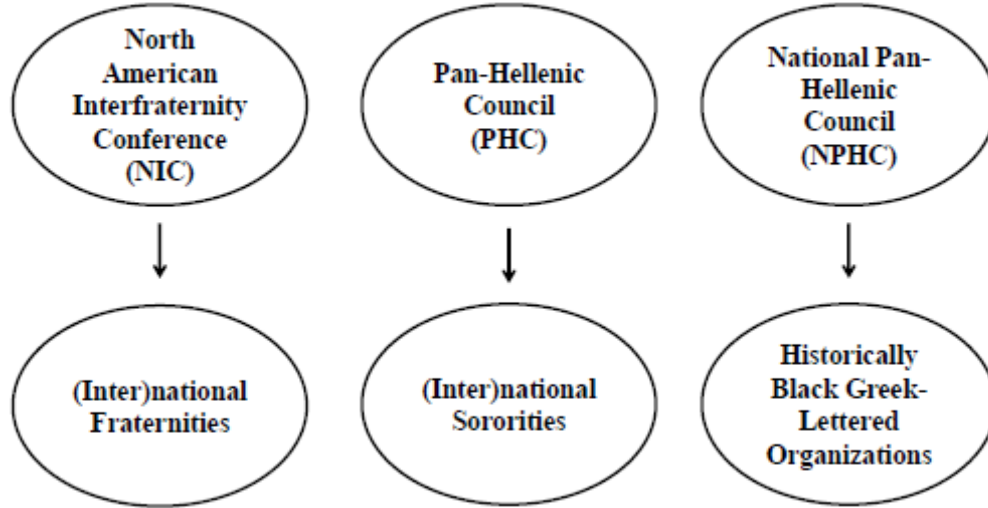


chapters, and the number of votes is often determined by chapter size (Anson & Marchesani, 1991).

It should be noted that aside from the elected officers of an organization, almost all organizations have an Executive Director, or Chief Operating Officer, that runs the organization on a day-to-day basis. This person is often stationed at the organization's headquarters, and handles all risk management, expansion, and chapter/colony related issues (Anson & Marchesani, 1991).

The model also depicts the two driving forces behind the shaping of certain organizational policies: organizational oversight boards and law. College fraternities are often viewed as autonomous, but to exist on campuses they must adhere to local laws and statutes. For example, Alpha Fraternity may have two chapters in the State of New York, and the members of those chapters must not only comply with Alpha's laws and regulations, but also the policies of the college or university, the city ordinances in which the campus resides, state law, and federal law. This is often codified in supremacy clauses in local and (inter)national bylaws, which incorporates each section of law in hierarchical fashion (Kaplin & Lee, 2007).

Likewise, organizational oversight boards are collections of like fraternities that set guidelines and take official positions on contemporary issues facing social fraternities. Figure 2. highlights the various oversight boards in the contemporary American fraternity movement.



**Figure 2.** Organizational Oversight Boards

For the focus of this study, the North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC) is the relevant organizational oversight board, which will be explained in further detail.

Founded in 1909 in New York City, the NIC is concerned with advancing the American fraternity movement in terms of enriching members’ experiences, promoting intellectual and social development, and enhancing the mission of host institutions (NIC, 2012). Member organizations maintain their own governance, and adhere to the standards and mandates put forth by the NIC. For example, the following statement is an excerpt from a resolution passed and reaffirmed in 2009 concerning expansion of NIC fraternities:

Further, as part of the Standards of the NIC, member fraternities and local chapters, councils, and communities are expected to support those groups seeking to form a fraternity on a given campus. Specifically, the expectation is that the host institution IFC will not deter expansion by withholding membership in the IFC of any NIC member organization (NIC Resolutions, 2012).

Such mandates and resolutions become standing requirements of member organizations. Those fraternities who do not wish to abide by NIC regulations, such as Phi Delta Theta ( $\Phi\Delta\Theta$ ) and

Kappa Sigma (ΚΣ), can choose not to belong to the Conference and function independently. However, they are still expected to adhere to local, state, and federal policy as required by the institution and federal tax code.

### **1.2.3 Institutions, fraternities, and promoting civil rights**

As the people of the United States continued life around the time of the 1960's Civil Rights Movement, racism and prejudice would emerge throughout the country. Again, the American Fraternity Movement would follow suit. Lee (1970) gives a detailed account of the various institutional policies that existed at the typical American college and university regarding Greek organizations and their intake of new members. For example, at the Carnegie Institute of Technology (now known as Carnegie Mellon University) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, a student-life policy once stated that "a purely social organization, whether academic, professional, or general in scope, is free to select members on whatever basis of social compatibility it desires" (Woodward, 1953, as cited in Lee, 1970). It would not be until 1966 that most institutions of higher learning would alter their policies regarding discrimination because Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 threatened their intake of federal revenue. However, specific attention to fraternity policy was spearheaded by certain progressive state institutions well before the early 1960's. Lee (1970) describes one incident at the University of Connecticut where the University recognized and addressed the issue of discrimination in 1949. The University "decreed immediate discontinuance of discriminatory fraternities and sororities on land owned by the people of the State" (Lee, 1970, p. 74). Recognizing the institution as a branch of the state government, the administration at the University of Connecticut established the importance of the public, state institution to comply with the laws of the land. At that particular time, anti-

discriminatory laws were enforced under state law, assuming that a state had such laws in place. Before the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, enforcement of anti-discrimination policy found itself resting on the *honor system* at the college or university level (DeSantis, 2007).

Many look to institutions of higher learning to be role models in progressive thinking and behavior (Bess & Dee, 2008). The reputation of college campuses as places of acceptance and liberal thought is often viewed as an advantage because it promotes free expression, innovative thought, and a nurturing atmosphere to diverse people. Yet, the college fraternity is often stigmatized, as outsiders accept stereotypes of fraternity men as narrow--minded and homogenized party boys (DeSantis, 2007). A commitment to diversity, regardless of how outwardly expressed, has little effect on combating the views of the uninformed. While combating stereotypes, college fraternity members and alumni are called upon to identify their own biases and reflect on how they can help promote themselves through interaction with diverse populations.

#### **1.2.4 The shift to diversity in fraternity life**

As stated previously, the populace looks to American institutions of higher learning to be role models in dealing with socially sensitive issues. The same is true for many stakeholders in the American Fraternity Movement. There is little doubt that a large number of organizations have proven to be exclusive, even under the guise of inclusiveness. The reason for this rests with the idea that fraternity chapters vary from region to region, and campus to campus. Therefore, taking an (inter)national stand is effective only if the organization makes strides to educate its members across borders.

Pi Lambda Phi (ΠΛΦ) Fraternity is typically credited as being the first fully integrated fraternity, in that it was founded with provisions for religious and racial inclusion (Pi Lambda Phi, 2012). Founded at Yale University in 1895, the organization continues to pride itself for its non-sectarian values, often citing similar rationale for turning a blind eye to a man's religious or political views as the Freemasons; that politics and religion are the two driving forces that divide neighbors and put men at odds (Holdup, 2011).

Still, fraternities maintained exclusionary practices and operated within similar *ivory towers* as their home campuses (Thelin, 2004; Syrett, 2009). One campus, however, would soon become known as revolutionary in terms of extra-curricular activities. Cornell University, now an Ivy League institution, was founded shortly after the Civil War by Ezra Cornell. The institution was radically different from its northeastern counterparts as it welcomed college athletics, student organizations, secret societies, and equal opportunities for women and African-American men (Thelin, 2004). With the successful founding of Alpha Phi Alpha (ΑΦΑ) Fraternity, INC. at Cornell University in 1906, African-American men would soon have organizations that cheered diversity, and were inclusive in their nature, as opposed to their exclusive white counterparts. The significance here is that the institution held a culture of progressive thought that helped provide longevity and support to the black fraternity's founding. A lack of such support may have lead to a different outcome in the diversity movement. A more complete history of diverse Greek lettered organizations can be found in Chapter 2 of this dissertation.

A study conducted by student affairs professionals at the University of Missouri-Kansas City in 2011 found that 71% of Greek students graduated across the United States and Canada, as opposed to only 50% of non-members (UMKC, 2011). Likewise, the study found that 85% of

the student leaders on a sampled 730 campuses were affiliated with a Greek lettered organization. The study also showed that Greek students perform an average of 10 million hours of community service a year across college campuses. Greek communities use statistics like these to attract new members each semester. The potential for leadership, coupled with statistics concerning philanthropy and academic achievement, provide a substantial argument in favor of affiliation. However, very few studies discuss statistics that quantify a continued commitment to diversity, or at the very least an understanding of its principles. With such a large problem space, studying a single organization more intensely may provide generalizable data to similar organizations, and possibly provide enough insight to continue the diversity movement in fraternity life.

### **1.3 GAMMA FRATERNITY**

This study focused on a single chapter of an (inter)national fraternity that belongs to the North American Interfraternity Conference. Although more specific information is outlined in Chapter Three of this dissertation, it is important to be aware of some certain characteristics of the organization that will help provide a context for the study.

The organization I am studying is a medium-sized social fraternity that has over 100 chapters in the United States. After speaking with the Executive Director of the fraternity, it was his specific request that this study provide anonymity and confidentiality in terms of the organization itself and its members. For the purposes of this study, the organization is referred to as “Gamma Fraternity,” or “Gamma” for short.

I am familiar with this organization because I am a fraternity man. Holding membership in a Greek-lettered organization assisted me in securing successful data collection, as well as providing the reader a well-informed understanding of organizational make up.

Originally founded as a professional organization that has subsequently decided to become a general social fraternity, the organization is typically referred to as one of the most progressive organizations in the NIC because of the extensive list of protected classes in its national anti-discrimination clause. Table 1. identifies what class is protected and by what means within the organization, as well as whether or not the class is a protected class as dictated by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (updated as of September 2012).

**Table 1.** Gamma Fraternity’s Protected Classes Compared to EEO Compliance Policy

<b>Protected Class</b>	<b>Fraternity Code</b>	<b>Equal Employment Opportunity Compliance</b>
Race	Constitution	Yes
Color	Constitution	Yes
Creed	Constitution	Yes
Religion	Constitution	Yes
Marital Status	Constitution	No
Age	Constitution	Yes
Disability	Constitution	Yes
Sexual Orientation	Constitution	No
Citizenship	Constitution	Yes
National Origin	Constitution	Yes

The organization protects two classes beyond what is mandated by federal law. These include marital status and sexual orientation. This infers that the organization has been motivated by its members internally to protect these classes, as the NIC only resolved to protect membership based on race, creed, and national origin (NIC, 2012).

Moreover, the fraternity emphasizes equity in terms of its culture, creed, and standards of membership. Besides having an anti-discrimination clause in its (inter)national constitution, Gamma Fraternity also has a posted expectation of members to provide common courtesy and

respect to human dignity through their interactions and commitment to service. Consequently, members are supposed to be educated on how they can better promote social justice and equity with their fellow man.

Finally, the organization is secular in that it was not founded on religious premises. Although some religious artifacts remain in the organization, such as an acknowledgment of God, there is no mandate for members to be theistic in any capacity. This may be linked to the organization's founders close ties with Freemasonry, as several founding men of Gamma Fraternity were also active in that particular society.

This organization was selected because of my familiarity with its core values and legislative processes, as well as the reputation it holds among other (inter)national fraternities—notably known as progressive and mission-driven.

#### **1.4 A STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

As college campuses become increasingly diverse, minority students seek membership into student organizations, including college social fraternities (Pike, 2000; Boschini & Thompson, 1998; Rhoades, 1994). In order to protect the interests and rights of minority populations, social fraternities have published into law policies and standards that promote equal treatment from undergraduate members. Although indicative of a commitment of inclusiveness, many fraternity men are not aware of organizational policy or familiar with local and national bylaws. Foundationally, a policy or standard is effective only to the level in which relevant stakeholders understand and execute them.



It should be noted that for this study, I will be defining diversity along non-white, non-Christian, and non-heterosexual identities as highlighted by Rhoades (1995) and Syrett (2009). The term *diversity* is nebulous and can insinuate both positive and negative connotations. However, after reading various pieces of literature on diversity in Greek life, it is obvious that the topic *is* vague, and incorporates several factors such as discrimination, assimilation, profiling, self-worth, and normalizing (Hughey, 2008; Talbot, 2003). Because of the elusiveness of what is meant by *diversity*, I have intentionally decided to focus on specific societal classifications to better manage and focus this study. Therefore, the study will address matters of race, religion, and sexual orientation.

## **1.5 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of my case study is to examine how active fraternity men (undergraduate and/or graduate students) perceive the effectiveness of anti-discrimination clauses in their respective fraternity's codes, laws, and policies in regards to the protection of diverse populations and the contribution to a sense of belonging within a particular chapter. The study will reference the *rights* and *interests* of minority populations, which alludes to their equal treatment in their organization, their feelings of being welcome, and their ability to have their diversity respected by fraternity members.

It is my hope that this study will supplement a working collection of references that will help inform student affairs practice and policy as well as offer insights into how to serve diverse students effectively.

## 1.6 STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are Gamma Fraternity's policies and/or standards regarding anti-discrimination or other diversity-related statutes at both local and (inter)national levels?
2. How have fraternities historically reacted to non-white, non-Christian, and non-heterosexual men seeking membership at the local/institutional and national/international levels?
3. What are active fraternity men's perspectives on the effectiveness of anti-discrimination clauses in fraternal legislation in protecting the interests of diverse members?
4. What are active fraternity men's perspectives on the effectiveness of anti-discrimination clauses in fraternal legislation in contributing to a sense of belonging among chapter members?

## **1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM**

The genesis of higher education has included various eras of new wave technology, pedagogy, and populations. Whereas higher education was once reserved for the societal elite, the progression of time has led to an increase in access and inclusion on college campuses (Thelin, 2004). Student bodies are becoming increasingly diverse, including students hailing from various nationalities, ethnicities, religions, races, and sexual orientations. The image of the model college student has evolved, leaving the traditional white, Christian, and heterosexual norm to a more multicultural identity, where all aspects of what make a student unique are celebrated (Sue & Sue, 2003; Talbot, 2003).

Student affairs professionals, faculty, and institutional leaders must respond to the changing demographics of the American college student in a positive and inclusive way. With each semester, new students are joining organizations that preach acceptance, tolerance, and a celebration of fraternalism on campus. The policies in place that prohibit discrimination against these students have espoused intentions as outlined in organizational code. How the policies are enacted becomes an issue of practice. A study of this nature is intended to offer an investigation behind the behaviors, actions, and thoughts of a specific group of stakeholders in fraternity life (undergraduate and alumni men) in terms of identifying discrepancies between the espoused and the enacted values of a policy.

## **2.0 A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

In the following section, I critically analyze relevant literature in regards to diversity issues in collegiate fraternity life. This review evaluates the characteristics of the American college student from various decades, the public's view on Greek life, as well as growing opinions on race, religion, and sexual orientation from the viewpoint of individual Greek students, and more indirectly, society-at-large. The purpose of this literature review is to supplement a working collection of literature on the issue of diversity affairs in Greek life, as well as provide a frame of reference for practitioners who come into contact with diverse Greek students.

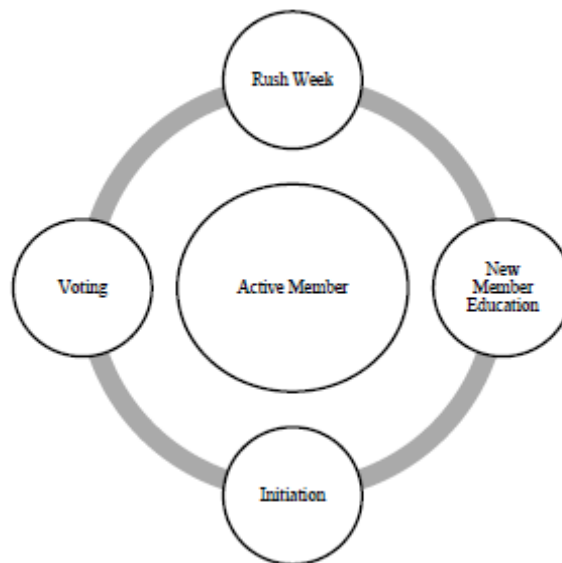
As indicated earlier, the entity that is Greek Life exists as a historically white, Christian, and heterosexual institution, spanning centuries of reform at the American college and university (Lee, 1970). The founding of the American college fraternity is credited to a group of white, Christian men at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia (Lee, 1970). Their intentions of organizing were purely social, and incorporated academic discourse through discussions of current events, as well as classic literature. The genesis of the American college fraternity to what is commonplace today includes periods of segregation, elitism, exclusion, and attention to ritual.

Periods of hardship in American higher education (such as declining enrollment rates in the Civil War Era), have caused periods of negative effects on various aspects of campus life (Thelin, 2004). Though some fraternities have closed due to war and financial factors (Anson &

Marchesani, 1990), it seems as if fraternities have withstood the test of time, and will continue to be an influential factor on student life for years to come. It is no surprise as society progresses in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century that student bodies throughout the nation are growing increasingly diverse in age, sexual orientation, race, religion, national origin, and gender (Manning, Kinzie, & Shah, 2006; Coomes & DeBard, 2004).

Boschini and Thompson (1998) call on all Greek stakeholders to take an active role in appreciating diversity across organizational lines, and to make such appreciation a unifying action for the Greek community. It is suggested that Greeks should place value on the individual diversities of its members because the “traditional-aged white student will become the minority on campuses in the next fifteen years” (Redon & Hope, 1996, as cited in Boschini & Thompson, 1998). The basis for this prediction rested with the influx of non-traditional learners and a national movement to increase accessibility for all students. Although the prediction may not have come to fruition since 1998, it is undeniable that as society progresses, more diverse populations are becoming represented on campus (Thelin, 2004; Talbot, 2003; Manning, et al., 2006).

Moreover, there is an emerging notion of self-perpetuating discrimination in the American fraternity movement due to the method in which new members affiliate with the organization. Figure 3. highlights the general process of recruitment as informed by Anson and Marchesani (1991).



**Figure 3.** Recruitment Cycle

At the center of the model is the active member of the fraternity, who participates in rush week, or a period of formal recruitment events where potential new members meet with current fraternity brothers. The new members will be voted upon at a chapter meeting where the active members will each have a *yes* or *no* ballot. Typically, the executive board member chairing the meeting will allow for members to speak in favor or against a potential new member. However, not everyone is required to speak, and a rationale behind their particular vote is typically not mandated. This is where the issue of discrimination may become relevant—if members are not accountable for the way in which they vote, how can one be sure that they are voting with a sense of equity? To combat this notion, many fraternities have emphasized values-based recruitment, where members vote based on the character of a man, and not his external diversities (Syrett, 2009).

After the period known as new member education, or pledging, a student is initiated into membership and is granted suffrage after being approved by a majority of the membership, as

noted above.. The student will then hold the right to vote on members as previously mentioned. If issues of inherent discrimination are not addressed, the self-perpetuating process of new member intake and recruitment may promote negative outcomes whereby new members reflect the values and benefits of their peers; in essence, becoming *closer*. It is, therefore, crucial that practitioners are not only aware of the cultural roots of fraternities, but are able to address issues of diversity that develop amongst members, recruits, alumni, and other stakeholders in Greek life.

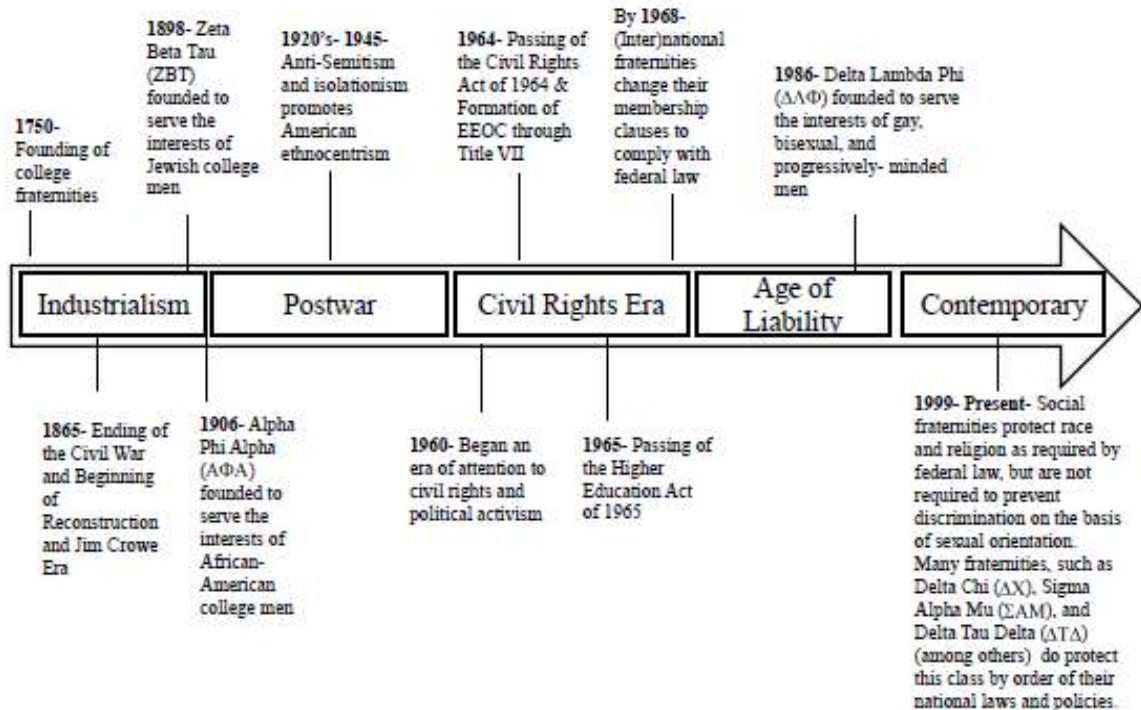
## 2.1 QUESTIONS FOR THE LITERATURE

To enhance my understanding of exactly how issues of diversity are affecting the American fraternity movement and its students, I divided the question into two main sub-questions:

1. What are the experiences of diverse students joining fraternities?
2. How have college fraternities reacted to members outside of the white, Christian, and heterosexual norm at the local and (inter)national levels?

By examining both interpersonal and intra-organizational contexts, the review aims at providing context for this study. The review is structured in the following way: the next two sections provide relevant literature, spanning historical and contemporary periods that answer the sub-questions. After each section, a general summary of findings is provided to better organize the discourse. It should be noted that the literature reviewed includes discourse centered around time-specific fraternity eras, namely the Era of Industrialism after the Civil War, the Postwar (World Wars I & II) Years, the Civil Rights Era of the 1960's, the Age of Liability (1970-1998), and the Contemporary Period (1999-Present) as labeled by Sauna (1998). Figure 4. (below) aims

at organizing the time frame in which many of the scholars explore the relationship between student and organizational experience and the political climate of the United States.



**Figure 4.** Timeline of Significant Events

Beginning in 1750 with the founding of the first contemporary collegiate social fraternities, the timeline highlights significant landmarks in time relevant to diverse fraternity men. After the Civil War, the United States entered a period of reconstruction where Jim Crow laws in many states emphasized the inequality of the races, and other forms of discrimination. As society progressed, Theodore Roosevelt’s concept of *rugged individualism* would cause an increased sense of nationalism and ethnocentrism (Thelin, 2004). From there, the Great Depression and World Wars would shape the frame of mind of American politics, culture, and education, specifically through the promotion of patriotism. As society moved towards the Civil Rights Era, attention to equality and community became the central foci of political activists. As



society progressed, the academy of American higher education, and its students, shifted with it (Thelin, 2004).

Finally, the *Age of Liability* is a title given by Sanua (1998) that references a period of fraternity history where hazing, drug and alcohol abuse, and sexual aggression emerged as normative behavior. The movie *Animal House* is often referenced as the embodiment of this Era, where the fraternity man was homogenized as a drunkard and sexual deviant, and the sorority woman was a seemingly innocent co-ed with vixen-like motives. It is here where fraternities developed their contemporary *gentlemen club* label and stereotype. The significance of this is that the work of the Civil Rights Movement resulted in federal laws and statutes, but did not ultimately change the social climate of the United States. Most relevant to this case is that though race and religion are protected classes under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, gay and bisexual men often face discrimination as an unprotected class. As such, the protection of the rights and interests of these fraternity men is found at an organizational level, without the comfort of federal oversight.

## **2.2 THE EXPERIENCE OF DIVERSE MEN IN COLLEGE FRATERNITIES**

The first sub-question posed is “what are the experiences of diverse Greek students?” Understanding the experiences of students can provide a context for reform or promotion. Although a quantity of this information can come from personal communication with individual students, including it in scholarly discourse can provide a frame of reference for stakeholders that can be valuable in developing multicultural competency. This review will categorize the findings of this sub-question based on the lines of race, religion, and sexual orientation.

### **2.2.1 Matters of race**

This section includes various resources where scholars examine the relationship that race has had in shaping the experience of diverse fraternity men. Notably, racial issues in Greek life seem to be the most prevalent in the discourse, as the study of African American issues is authentic to the United States. This part of the review aims at setting up historical and contemporary context for African American fraternity men.

Since their founding in 1906, black Greek lettered organizations have existed to integrate black men and women into collegiate life as well as prepare members for active roles in their society (Harper-Dickson, 2005). As the 20th Century progressed, other organizations such as Alpha Psi Lambda (ΑΨΛ) Latino Fraternity, and Theta Nu Xi (ΘΝΞ) Multicultural Sorority have emerged to represent other races of students. Although many of these organizations have been founded at historically race-specific institutions such as Howard University, many college campuses from various classifications have active chapters of these organizations today. Understanding the climate of Greek racial awareness is essential to provide more informed service for said students.

The importance of the historically black fraternity goes beyond foundational levels of inclusiveness. As Hughey (2010) describes, black men in Greek-lettered organizations were living members of the Talented Tenth, which was civil rights leader W.E.B DuBois' term for the select few of African-Americans who would infiltrate the societal elite and be exemplars of black intelligentsia, ultimately proving the worth of black people. Membership in the organization thus became an affiliation of prestige and great responsibility. The discourse identifies an evolution that has caused a rift between the espoused intention of black fraternities and contemporary enacted values.

With such a frame as presented by Hughey (2010), it is interesting to track the genesis of enacted values as they pertain to black fraternity men. Hughey (2008) presents an analysis of the term *educated gang*, which is used as slander against a black Greek lettered organization. He states that the term was derived from the ignorance of non-members, and that some black organizations have attempted to reclaim the term by utilizing it as their own. He warns that the attempt to reclaim this term can be damaging the overall mission of black organizations. This example is indicative of the power of language, as well as cultural *outsiders* setting the tone for the utility and value of an organization.

Moreover, Strayhorn and McCall (2011) utilized Weidman, Twale, and Stein's (2001) theoretical framework of socialization to identify how membership in historically black Greek-lettered organizations aid in the holistic development of members. According to Weidman et al (2001), socialization occurs in a tripartite fashion, including knowledge acquisition, investment, and involvement. The study utilized a qualitative interview methodology to identify what intrinsic and extrinsic factors influenced affiliation. According to participants, mentor/mentee relationships and a sense of belonging were credited to men and women deciding to join organizations. Through this, an appreciation of black identity and culture could be fostered in the *socializing* (acquiring knowledge to be effective in society) of black Greek students.

In terms of culture, black Greek lettered organizations are known for their rich traditions that date back to ancient Egypt. Harper-Dickson (2005) highlights initiation rituals that mirror celebratory rituals from the Egyptians. Such imagery and behaviors were adopted by the founders of black organizations as a way to glorify Africa as a motherland, and emphasize their service "for the good of the race" (Harper-Dickson, 2005, p. 12). For example, new members learn a new language that is unique only to their particular organization and is held with

confidence and secrecy. Even the colors of the organizations symbolize African imagery, such as Alpha Phi Alpha's (ΑΦΑ) black symbolizing the "Kmt, or black land (Egypt), the fertile Nile Soil, and regeneration" (Harper-Dickson, 2005, p. 27). As these organizations have strong cultural roots, their members experience an influx of heritage and develop pride in their race. In some instances, as described below, this sense of pride is taken to a heightened level.

Mizumoto-Posey (2005) presents a historical review of the act of skin branding in black Greek lettered organizations. This practice stemmed from an overt pride and act of loyalty to a way "to communicate with the self and with others" (Mizumoto-Posey, 2005, p. 270). Without agreeing with the act itself, Mizumoto-Posey (2005) indicates that branding and tattooing the body is a practice done throughout the world, and even cites Delta Chi (ΔΧ) members tattooing their letters onto their ankle. The writer goes on to identify various symbols and indicate their significance to each organization. For example, the elephant of Delta Sigma Theta (ΔΣΘ) Sorority, INC, represents intelligence, power, and influence (McCoy, 2005). Powerfully, Mizumoto-Posey (2005) ends with the following statement: "In a society where definitions of our selves are enforced from without, asserting our individual identities and convictions can be a continual struggle" (p. 289). In this context, Greek identity may be an outlet for some to match their external identity with what they feel inside.

Along the lines of external and internal identity, McClure (2006) presents a study highlighting why certain feelings of masculinity and identity are formed through black Greek affiliation. Interview data from the respondents of the study suggests that there is an ideal vision of educated black intelligentsia, and that *true manhood* includes development along social and cognitive lines. Greek affiliation, therefore, aims at promoting this notion. Yet, McClure (2006) identifies the difference between the espoused and enacted intentions of Greek affiliation versus

individual motivations as highlighted in behavioral matters. For example, McClure (2006) suggests that the influx of public hazing and alcohol abuse are inherently against the values of an organization, but that chapter-specific culture and tradition are glorified by chapter members. This creates a significant disconnect between the fraternity man and his feelings of loyalty towards the organization as a whole. As such, how effective can organizational policy at the national level be when members hold devotion to local chapters?

One of the common instances highlighted by Hughey (2008; 2010) and McClure (2006) is the emergence of a hazing culture that is prevalent in historically black fraternities. Rationale for the thoughts behind such hazing is explored specifically in discourse. Jones (2000) presents a detailed overview of the metamorphosis of violent hazing in the pledging process of black Greek letter organizations. Connecting the practice to ancient Egyptian masculinity tests and cultural initiation, Jones (2000) argues that though there is little room for violence at the American college or university, one must understand the cultural roots from where such violence comes from. To members of black organizations, “physical hardships speak much more thunderously than intellectual challenge, for these hardships are thought to instill fraternal love and also serve as mechanisms which supposedly afford the pledge opportunities to prove his worth” (Jones, 2000, p. 121). A great challenge for Greek professionals is to find the balance where pledges are protected from harm, but also instilled with a sense of loyalty to the organization.

Likewise, McCoy (2005) identifies various instances of black membership defying protocol and engaging in violence over turf. In black Greek culture, the wearing of colors and symbols, and the engaging in step shows and calls are unique to each organization. McCoy (2005) suggests that outsiders using another organizations colors or calls are vehemently frowned upon, and that such behavior is often answered with violence. The “yard” is considered

the turf of an organization, and often relates to an entire campus. To assert dominance, a group may claim its dominance over another through a yell or a cheer. McCoy (2005) gives the example of a Delta Sigma Theta ( $\Delta\Sigma\Theta$ ) Sorority chant: “But the deltas run this yard! You’d better look, look ‘fore you get your man took” (p. 296). Although generally playful, strict rivalries have developed between the nine historically black Greek lettered organizations at local and national levels. Some criticize the rivalries, indicating that black Greeks must stick together to fight off the implications of racism and prejudice (McCoy, 2005). The significance here is that the foundation for historically black Greek organizations exists to unite African American students under a common purpose; yet, rivalries and pride seem to be working counterproductively to this notion.

Moreover, Harper, Byars, and Jelke (2005) present a study that highlights positive effects of Greek affiliation on black men. They indicate that among the various benefits of Greek life, social integration is integral to “adjustment factors as academic success, satisfaction with college, persistence, and graduation” (Harper, et al., 2005, p. 395). At predominately-white institutions, black Greek lettered organizations provide outlets for cultural expression and pride, and help connect a student to the campus environment (Harper, et al., 2005). Ultimately, the experience of black Greeks leads to advancement in cognitive and social development in terms of sharpening leadership skills, practical competencies (time management, communication), and a positive shift in racial identity formation (Harper, et al., 2005).

Comparatively, Ray and Rosow (2012) conducted an empirical study using interview methods to measure the sense of privilege and levels of accountability on white and black fraternity men. The study included members of three historically white and four historically black fraternities on a predominately white university campus. The study ultimately showed that

the sheer larger size and centralization of the white fraternities caused an increase in privilege through visibility, and that students and administrators viewed the smaller black Greek community through different lenses (Ray & Rosow, 2012). As such, the black fraternity men, though not necessarily tokenized, indicated that they felt as if there was a pressure for them to represent their race in positive ways. For example, Ray and Rosow (2012) report the qualitative findings of an interview with a respondent that speaks to this concept of representing a race: “‘Because there’s only seven [black Greek] organizations on campus, we have a huge impact on the black race here. Where there’s like 750 different [white] organizations, their impact is not as severe. It’s not as deep, especially ‘cause they have more people than our race’” (*Brian*, as cited in Ray & Rosow, 2012, p. 81). As such, the black experience is often affected through their organization’s lack of visibility, unexpected expectation to represent their race, and a minute sense of influence in student life.

Finally, Lord (1987) presents findings of investigative journalism in terms of the black fraternity man experience. The journalist covered a story on exclusion in Greek life at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. Several members of Alpha Phi Alpha (ΑΦΑ) Fraternity, INC., a historically black fraternity, reported that intramural games were normally officiated by staff, and that they are bias towards their white opponents. For example, one Brother stated that when the fraternity plays a white fraternity, the officiators call all rule infractions. When the organization plays another black organization, however, no calls are made. This exhibits racial inequality in regards to enforcement of rules. At a foundational level, it is obvious that inequity exists and that certain nuances affect the experiences of African American fraternity men in various ways.

This section aimed at providing background and context that attribute to the experience of African-American fraternity men. Through the review, it is obvious that there is contention amongst espoused versus enacted values expressed by black fraternity men in historically black fraternities. Likewise, cultural and historical artifacts are prevalent in African American fraternities, and the organization's use of symbols and imagery attributes to black identity formation (McCoy, 2005; McClure, 2006; Mizumoto-Posey, 2005; Harper, Byars, & Jelke, 2005). However, black fraternities share common problems with alcohol abuse and hazing with their *white* counterparts. Perhaps a focus on similarities rather than a focus on overt differences may assist educators and fraternity men in improving the experience of diverse students on campus.

### **2.2.2 Matters of religion**

There are several instances of non-Christian organizations forming to fulfill a need of community building for religious sects such as Jews and Hindus. I have chosen to focus on Jewish Greek lettered organizations, as they are more prevalent. Alpha Epsilon Pi (ΑΕΠ) Fraternity, Alpha Epsilon Phi (ΑΕΦ) Sorority, Zeta Beta Tau (ZBT) Fraternity, and Sigma Alpha Mu (ΣΑΜ) Fraternity are examples of historically Jewish organizations. An extensive search for relevant articles yielded few empirical sources, possibly indicating a lack of study on the specific topic.

Similarly to the experience of African-American fraternity men, Segal (1965) presents an empirical study of certain impacts of Jewish men that belong and do not belong to social fraternities. His findings show that 39% of Jewish fraternity men have a grade average of over B+, versus 28% of Jewish non-fraternity men. The study also shows that Jewish fraternity men



are more likely to be anti-Semitic in their evaluation of other Jews since their membership in a Jewish fraternity affords them a higher status. This finding is significant, because it creates the construct that Jewish fraternity men attain higher levels of Jewish identity through their membership in Jewish organizations. It also establishes the notion that there is separation among Jewish men who do not join Jewish fraternities.

Moreover, Sanua (2000) offers a historical review of the Jewish fraternity and sorority from the late 1800's to the 1960's. During certain harsh periods of anti-Semitism, Jewish organizations provided a safe haven for members and members' families. The article expresses that Jewish members provided a large network of various Jewish organizations that offered financial and emotional support to members. The members also increased their time in temple while active in the organization, and have typically felt a more interpersonal bond to the institution post-graduation.

Finally, Sanua (1998) provides a working history of Zeta Beta Tau (ZBT) Fraternity, the first Jewish fraternity founded in 1898. The significance of Zeta Beta Tau is rooted deeply in the Zionist movement of the late 1800's, as the organizations letters "Zeta" "Beta" and "Tau" came from the Hebrew *Zion bemishpat tipadeh*, or "Zion shall be redeemed with justice" (Sanua, 1998, p. 11). Although Zeta Beta Tau has had a rich history, various periods would prove to be challenging for the historically Jewish fraternity. In some instances, regardless that the organization has usually been open to non-Jewish members, the group was often known as *negatively Jewish* by anti-Semites on campus. Sanua (1998) highlights an incident at the University of California, Los Angeles where other fraternity men taunted Zeta Beta Tau members with "Hitler salutes or [by] playing 'Third Reich music'" (p. 277). Admittedly, Sanua (1998) indicates that such behavior is not the norm, but happened frequently enough to

significantly affect the organizations ability to recruit and retain members, as well as affect students' experiences negatively.

The obvious brevity of this particular section of the literature review may be indicative of the lack of discourse surrounding the Jewish fraternity man's experience. There is little doubt that religious issues are still prevalent in contemporary society, yet the focus of experience seems tied to historical reviews, versus empirical research. Regardless, there was enough information provided in the discourse to identify some very relevant facts that will inform the case study: namely, that Jewish-identity formation through Greek affiliation is a contested idea (Segal, 1965; Sanua, 2000), and that Jewish fraternity men face exclusion based on their diversity (Sanua, 1998).

### **2.2.3 Matters of sexual orientation**

In this section, various pieces of empirical research are identified to provide a working background of the experiences of gay and bisexual men in college fraternities. Though not as prevalent as discourse surrounding African-American fraternity men, much of the literature centers around the notion that gay and bisexual men have been increasingly discriminated against due to sociopolitical forces and prejudice.

Gays and lesbians have been members of fraternities and sororities for decades, even when national or local policy forbade their membership. Windmeyer (2005) and Windmeyer and Freeman (1998; 2001) offer three collections of personal accounts of gay, lesbian, and bisexual life in the American college fraternity. The accounts span decades, with some of the reflections dating back to the early 1940's. In a personal account from a college male in 1945, a sexual encounter with a fraternity brother occurred after a night of drinking and was never verbally

spoken of again. The exact same scenario played out for over five additional college men (as per their accounts) in the 1970s, 80s, 90s, and 2000s. There are also various stories of a fraternity man exposing his sexual orientation to another member and ultimately being shunned from the organization. For example, Brian Hawker, an author of a personal account, indicated that “most of [his] friends and ‘brothers’ turned their backs on [him]. They felt the ‘lifestyle’ was wrong or that it was sinful” (Hawker, 1998, as cited in Windmeyer and Freeman, 1998, p. 120). Conversely, there are accounts of a fraternity man exposing his sexual orientation to another member and then being embraced. In a story written by the editor, Shane Windmeyer, he explained how coming out was something that helped him be a better and more truthful person, and that that helped him in being a better brother:

My friends with the brothers continued to grow the following year after I had come out. Many of the brothers...would ask questions and would even joke with me about gay and straight stuff. One brother would joke, ‘Why did you join a fraternity? To get a date?’ I would smile and simply reply, “If that were the case, I would have joined another chapter on campus.’ Such jibing would be followed by laughs and another sly reply. I realize now that for some of these brothers, the bantering humor was their way to express their feelings and show support for me (Windmeyer, 1998, as cited in Windmeyer & Freeman, 1998, p. 217).

These accounts reflect real experiences that are crucial to a study on the experiences of gay students.

Subsequently, a very relevant phenomenon concerning sexual orientation and fraternities rests in a personal account told by Joe Bertolino in Windmeyer and Freeman’s (1998) aforementioned collection. In the story, Bertolino was serving as a Greek student leader in the 1990’s, and recalled a fraternity president giving a recruitment presentation to a number of potential new members. The president stated: “‘Welcome to our fraternity! We have a great house, great parties, we get the chicks and *there are no fags here!*’” (Bertolino, 1998, as cited in Windmeyer & Freeman, 1998, p. 167). The irony in this statement, Bertolino suggests, is that

the same president giving this speech was privately seeking his care, as he was in a relationship with another Greek male student. This example, though ironic, highlights a sense of fear in acceptance, even by gay men themselves. The example also shows that fraternity leaders hold their own biases, and can create hostile environments for gay members.

Next, Yueng and Stompler (2000) and Yeung, Stompler, and Wharton (2006) discuss masculinity in gay fraternities. The origination of the gay fraternity movement is credited to Delta Lambda Phi ( $\Delta\Lambda\Phi$ ) as a group of gay, bisexual, and progressively-minded men came together to integrate men like them into the homogenous institution that was Greek life. In a time where the AIDS epidemic provided negative stigma to gay men, the men of the 1980's felt the need to bond together to integrate gay students through the Greek experiences. The studies indicate that over time, motivations have changed and that contemporary members of these organizations are critiquing gender and sexuality norms by over emphasizing femininity in males. This includes organization-wide drag shows, outward displays of same-sex affection, and other effeminate behaviors. By glorifying such behaviors, the members make a statement to straight fraternities that they are proud of being who they are. The findings also suggest that some members oppose this kind of behavior and wish to return to the original roots of integration through preaching equality, values, and temperance. Regardless how the cultural *other* may take self-expression, it is obvious that certain behaviors and heteronormativity yield relatively hostile environments for gay and bisexual men.

In his doctoral dissertation, Hesp (2006) interviewed several openly gay fraternity men and their heterosexual counterparts. Examining the role of heterosexism and homophobia through qualitative interview data, Hesp (2006) found that though many heterosexual brothers do

not consider themselves to be homophobic, they found value in *blending*, where a gay brother would hide effeminate traits as a means of protecting themselves from overt prejudice:

If that person didn't exhibit gay traits and gay characteristics, then they would be able to make it through, but people that had effeminate voices, effeminate body walk, effeminate handshakes, would not [emphasis his] be allowed in. There would be such an uproar and outcry against it that it just wouldn't be allowed. If someone had the looks, and athleticism, the GPA, all those things I talked about, there's a chance he might get a bid. It depends on who he tells and how it gets played. If he tells one or two people he's gay and those people just don't care then he's probably going to be fine. But if he tells our most homophobic member, odds are he will raise hell until he can figure out a way to not let you in. Basically, if others from the outside can't tell without you telling them, then it's pretty easy (*Jake*, as cited in Hesp, 2006).

The great harm here is that though a person may not share ill feelings towards a gay or bisexual brother, there seems to be a lack of will to combat heteronormativity or homophobia. This can often contribute to a general sense of being unwelcome or anger over the tolerance of ignorance and hate within an organization.

This sampling of discourse concerning the experiences of gay and bisexual college fraternity men is relevant to this study because it highlights that gay and bisexual men are generally affected in some capacity by the lack of protection afforded to them, as well as the lack of desire to combat heteronormativity and homophobia. It is reasonable to deduce that many of these same issues are occurring in college fraternities, and that examining matters further will present opportunities for future educational intervention.

Finally, the Lambda 10 collaborative published a 2007 study that surveyed how active fraternity men and alumni viewed the levels of acceptance and homophobia in their respective chapters. 440 surveys were distributed to fraternity men and sorority women and aimed at identifying the current climate of chapters concerning gay membership. According to the study, 50% (n=98) of undergraduate students indicated that their respective chapters are accepting of

gay members. The same notion was expressed by 100 alumni respondents (47%). Conversely, 74% (n=122) of undergraduates described their chapter climate as *friendly* to gay members, as 33% (n=71) of alumni indicated that the current chapter climate was *hostile*. This specific work is relevant to this case because it deals with perceptions of diversity. My study will expand this type of research, as it will explore not only perceptions of diversity, but deal more directly with how diversity is handled in terms of codification.

#### **2.2.4 Summary of findings**

The articles reviewed identified that (a) diverse men and women have been a part of fraternities in some capacity through time, (b) there is unrest amongst minority groups regarding reasons for joining, and (c) societal classifications are still apparent in Greek life. This is significant for my study because it affirms that the problem space I am studying has significant and relevant phenomena occurring that is affecting students.

Lord (1987) and Sanua (2000) both highlight how black and Jewish fraternity men faced prejudice by other members in college fraternities. Interestingly, Segal (1965) indicates that anti-Semitic views developed in Jewish fraternity men towards other Jews with elitism as their motivation.

Hughey (2008) suggests that slanderous terms are dangerously accepted as vernacular for black Greek men and women, which is increasing societies acceptance of such negative terms. This is antithetical to the original mission of the organizations.

Likewise, Windmeyer (2005) and Windmeyer and Freeman (1998; 2000) offer personal accounts of gay and lesbian members that shows how the aspect of time is important in Greek life. Ultimately, it shows that the same feelings regarding gays and lesbians in fraternities and

sororities has transcended as similar experiences occurred in various decades. Similarly, Yueng and Stompler (2000) and Yueng, Stompler, and Wharton (2006) provide a look inside the gay fraternity and attitudes within. Their findings show that there is substantial disagreement within underrepresented groups on how they should act, and how their membership should be used to create positive change.

All of these examples from the literature prove how important multicultural competency can be for stakeholders. The literature also raises a few key questions such as *how* are fraternities protecting the interests of minority students, and *to what extent* are they effective at doing so? Knowing the experiences of fraternity men in the past may provide a necessary framework for future practice. Remaining informed on such experiences can help a fellow student or professional work on developing diverse populations.

### **2.3 THE REACTIONS TO DIVERSE MEMBERSHIP AT NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVELS**

It is certainly important to understand diverse students' experiences in Greek life in order to develop multicultural competency and provide care. Yet, probably equally as important is understanding how the institution of Greek life (including local chapters and national headquarters) are reacting to diverse students joining fraternities, as well as the American college and university itself. This section will identify reactions of the institution in accordance with race, religion, and sexual orientation.

### 2.3.1 Matters of race

Along similar lines, this sub-section will focus on how fraternities as organizations have responded to racially-diverse men, specifically examining the role of African-Americans.

Kimbrough (2005) presents an interesting essay on how far black Greek lettered organizations have strayed from their original intention of *brotherhood* through the practice of hazing, sexual assault, and binge drinking. He calls for the abolition of undergraduate chapters if things do not improve their behaviors, and return to their original cause of developing competent black leaders. It is also suggested that part of the problem with enforcing hazing prevention stems from institutions of higher learning turning a blind eye to black organizations' behavior to avoid liability or claims of institutional racism (Kimbrough, 2005). Without a constant exchange of communication between an organization and its institution, coupled with genuine engagement in matters of racial identity, Kimbrough (2005) suggests that the black fraternity will shift into a period of hardship. This is significant because student experience is shaped by perceptions of internal and external stakeholders. What will the future hold for the black fraternity?

Next, Lee (1970) presents a historical account of racism and prejudice against black fraternity men and sorority women over time. Given the time of his account, Lee's (1970) review will provide insight during a time where civil rights were put at the forefront of societal attention. According to Lee (1970), at one point in time all southern organizations had membership clauses that excluded non-whites from joining. This was made void with the passing of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and the Higher Education Act of 1965. Because some organizations refused to allow non-whites to join, they eventually closed due to lack of financial support and recognition on college campuses.



Continuing with the sense of inferiority, a comparative analysis presented by Ray and Rosow (2012) highlights the inequity in attention to black fraternities, and infers that many white fraternity men, and other stakeholders, view the organizations as illegitimate. The researchers state: "...only three of the fifteen white fraternity men who participated in in-depth interviews could name one black fraternity. On the other hand, all fifteen of the black fraternity men who participated in in-depth interviews could name at least three white fraternities, with many of them naming the white fraternities in our study" (Ray & Rosow, 2012, p. 84). As such, the black Greek experience is hindered as black organizations are often steeped with stigma in terms of their academic performance and ability to positively impact members through socialization. This causes a general sense of isolation for black Greek-lettered organizations and their members.

It is obvious that institutions and fraternities tread lightly when dealing with a socially sensitive issue such as race. By doing so, however, such entities are directly affecting the way Greek life is perceived, as well as affecting the experiences of students in some capacity.

### **2.3.2 Matters of religion**

In this section, the reactions to Jewish members by institutions and fraternities will be explored through a review of relevant literature.

Lee (1970) lists several occurrences of specific national organizations resisting change with federal policy. After the passing of the 1964 Civil Rights Act in the United States, many organizations were forced to remove their membership clauses in their constitutions, which normally restricted membership to only White, Christian, and heterosexual men. Failure to do so would result in an organization losing its not-for-profit status with the Internal Revenue Service, as well as losing recognition at all public institutions of higher learning. In response, Kappa

Delta Rho (ΚΔΡ) Fraternity obeyed the law and removed the organization's membership clause, but also amended their initiation ritual to include a prayer to Jesus Christ (Lee, 1970). This would forbid any non-Christian from taking the oath, and undermine the intent of the Civil Rights Act.

Next, Sanua (2000) indicates that at certain points in American history, institutions were rather unreceptive to Jewish organizations. The organizations were often denied funding and edifices for housing, and had to rely on local communities for financial support. Also, the organizations were rarely recognized by the institution, so typically did not receive any support or rights to assemble on campus. For example, Alpha Epsilon Pi (ΑΕΠ) and Sigma Alpha Mu (ΣΑΜ) often faced anti-Semitic discrimination and taunts, and needed to meet in private as the institution would not recognize them as valid student organizations (Sanua, 2000, 1998; Segal, 1965). The anti-Semitic notions would shift post World War I to be more inclusive and supportive of the Jewish state of Israel, shifting society into a more inclusive entity that supports Zionist movements and equality (Sanua, 2000).

Moreover, Sanua (1998) emphasizes that fraternity rivalries at (inter)national levels, specifically between Alpha Epsilon Pi (ΑΕΠ) and Zeta Beta Tau (ΖΒΤ) works against the ideals of inclusion and ultimately hurts organizational mission. The North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC) is credited by Sanua (1998) for bringing organizations together in a collegial setting to collaborate on ways to better serve students. The organizations, regardless of tradition, face similar issues. In this specific context, however, the two historically Jewish fraternities differed on how they approached inclusion and the promotion of Jewish culture. Their collaboration in the 1980's helped reconcile differences and better serve their members through a

spirit of religious unity (Sanua, 1998). Contemporarily, Sanua (1998) suggests that on-campus rivalries are playful, as more non-Jewish members are joining traditionally Jewish fraternities.

Finally, Sugarman (2006) provides an investigative piece that highlights the struggle of an interested group of students in establishing a colony of Alpha Epsilon Pi (AEPi), a traditionally Jewish fraternity, on Dartmouth College's campus in the early 2000's. The student affairs administrator who works with Greek lettered organizations at Dartmouth indicated that an organization colonizing on campus that specifically is aimed at bringing in a certain type of student could potentially deprive the other organizations of boasting cultural diversity (Sugarman, 2006). This reaction is much different from the reactions highlighted by other scholars (Jones, 2000; Lee, 1970) as it is framed not in discriminatory fashion, but in a way to ensure inclusivity across student organizations. Such a decision suggests a great debate amongst culturally-specific fraternity men: what is the future of such organizations when others are trying to be more inclusive?

### **2.3.3 Matters of sexual orientation**

Gay and bisexual men have experienced significant drawbacks in terms of finding support networks in college fraternities. With this in mind, it is important to explore how institutions and fraternities have generally reacted to gay and bisexual men, to help contextualize this case study and future research.

Hesp and Brooks (2009) provide a case study where a sample of fraternity men (three active members, an alumnus, and a potential new member) were interviewed to discuss their views on concepts such as fraternal values, interpersonal relationships, and defining what it means to be a fraternity man. The sample was random and did not necessarily reflect the opinion

of an openly gay member. The findings showed that the men seemed unconcerned of the sexual orientation of other members, as long as they were cordial and held true to the organizations values. However, the Interfraternity Council and institution were deemed *homophobic*. A respondent stated: “I don’t foresee anything happening through IFC or Greek Life [sic] at all. If there was a gay awareness, or something like that, the reaction would be ‘erg, what are you doing?’” (Gary, as cited in Hesp & Brooks, 2009, p. 404). In this context, homosexuality is still viewed with a sensitive eye, so change is occurring slowly.

Interestingly, Lambda 10 (2005) has published a guide for establishing a Greek Safe Zone Ally Training Program, which is a support group of progressively minded fraternity men and sorority women for gay, bisexual, lesbian, and transgendered Greeks. Safe Zones are frequently found on college campuses and certainly promote inclusiveness, but never before has there been a version that caters specifically to the Greek community. The program includes practical activities that help raise awareness for inequality and other factors effecting gay Greek students. This is an example of proactive intervention that is often started by a collaboration of students and administrators at an institutional level.

Karnes (2005) suggests that the atmosphere and climate for gay Greek students has shifted to a more inclusive environment, but that gay students must gauge their environment to ensure that an organization they may want to join is accepting and safe. Karnes (2005) lists a set of questions that, when asked, hopefully identify the memberships’ views on diversity and inclusion. Such questions include “Are we prepared to confront behaviors or comments may be harassing to any minority member?” (Karnes, 2005, p. 4). This guide highlights the pre-emptive attempts of gay students to identify how an organization regards diversity.

Moreover, Bureau (2004) provides an advice column for Greek professionals and advisors concerning dealing with matters of diversity and inclusion. Essentially, Bureau (2004) suggests that two actions will help an educator intervene or educate concerning diversity when necessary. Engaging in current discourse, and simply being a part of the campus culture are two key ways to identify the struggles of diverse students, and assist in providing aid to students in need. Furthermore, Bureau (2004) suggests that Greek professionals must not be afraid of being an ally and being out there, showing people they support diverse student movements.

Finally, the Association of Fraternity Advisors (AFA) passed a resolution in 1990 that promoted sexual orientation awareness on campus and within national organizations. The resolution included measures such as “be it further resolved, that each men’s and women’s fraternity and sorority be strongly encouraged to implement sexual orientation awareness, education, and sensitivity programs on all membership levels” (AFA, 1990, n.p.). A collection of student affairs professionals, the AFA is the leading organization of Greek alumni, professionals, and students. The organization’s affirmation at the beginning of the 1990’s is indicative of an early commitment to the promotion of social justice for the LGBT community in Greek-lettered organizations.

#### **2.3.4 Summary of findings**

This review highlights some of the reactions that local campuses as well as national headquarters have had in regards to diverse students. The literature supports a study like this as there is a collection of scholars conducting research yielding more knowledge surrounding the problem space. Such findings can aid in the student experience. However, the number remains very scarce.

There are some organizations, such as Lambda 10, that aim at being a resource for progressive thinking. Likewise, many professional organizations have affirmed their commitment to diversity, such as the Association of Fraternity Advisors. Yet, the experience of diverse students is still mixed between positive and negative implications.

Hesp and Brooks (2009) present a study that affirms that gay fraternity men still experience the negative effects of stigma, prejudice, and discrimination, though it is often hidden and more subtly expressed.

Lee (1970) identified how at least one national organization went so far as to change its initiation ritual to keep certain members out. Although fraternal law may have since changed, there is no doubt that such politics continue to exist in contemporary society. Lee (1970) identified the same zeal for keeping non-white members out of organizations, which led to the downfall of many organizations.

Kimbrough (2005), as an alumnus of a black Greek lettered organization, indicates that the practice of hazing, binge drinking, and sexual abuse has taken the active men of these organizations away from their original, positive intent.

Sanua (2000) states that over time, relations between an institution of higher learning and Jewish organizations have drastically improved. The relationship has gone from not allowing said organizations to assemble, to fully recognizing them as active and critical student organizations.

In regards to sexual orientation, Hesp and Brooks (2009) indicate that local chapter members tend not to care about a person's orientation, rather that they accept and live the values in which the organization was founded upon.

Bureau (2004) and Karnes (2005) each provide advice and practical knowledge for gay Greek students and the student affairs professionals that work with them. This is indicative of a culture of support that provides assistance to both directly affected parties, and the professionals attempting to increase awareness.

Lambda 10 (2005) provides evidence that underrepresented groups are passionate enough about their organizations to assemble and provide support for like-minded Greeks. Such an organization may have seemed unheard of in the past, but is currently providing excellent service to help integrate gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered fraternity men and sorority women into the vast benefits of fraternal membership.

Finally, the Association of Fraternity Advisors resolution on heterosexism is evidence of a working collaboration to increase the positive experience of gay men in fraternities. The AFA's impact on the overall Greek community is evidenced by various organizations adopting sexual orientation as a protected class in their membership clauses of national constitutions. In this sense, things are improving for the gay Greek student.

## **2.4 BUILDING A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The review of the literature highlighted various instances of diverse fraternity men facing significant challenges in terms of inclusion. The review spanned various eras of time where societal implications, such as racism, anti-Semitism, and homophobia created significant challenges for minority populations to gain access to or equal treatment within college social fraternities. Yet, as organizations codify anti-discrimination clauses for the intention of

protecting minority men and/or foundationally for legal compliance, espoused intentions are often met with unexpected enactments.

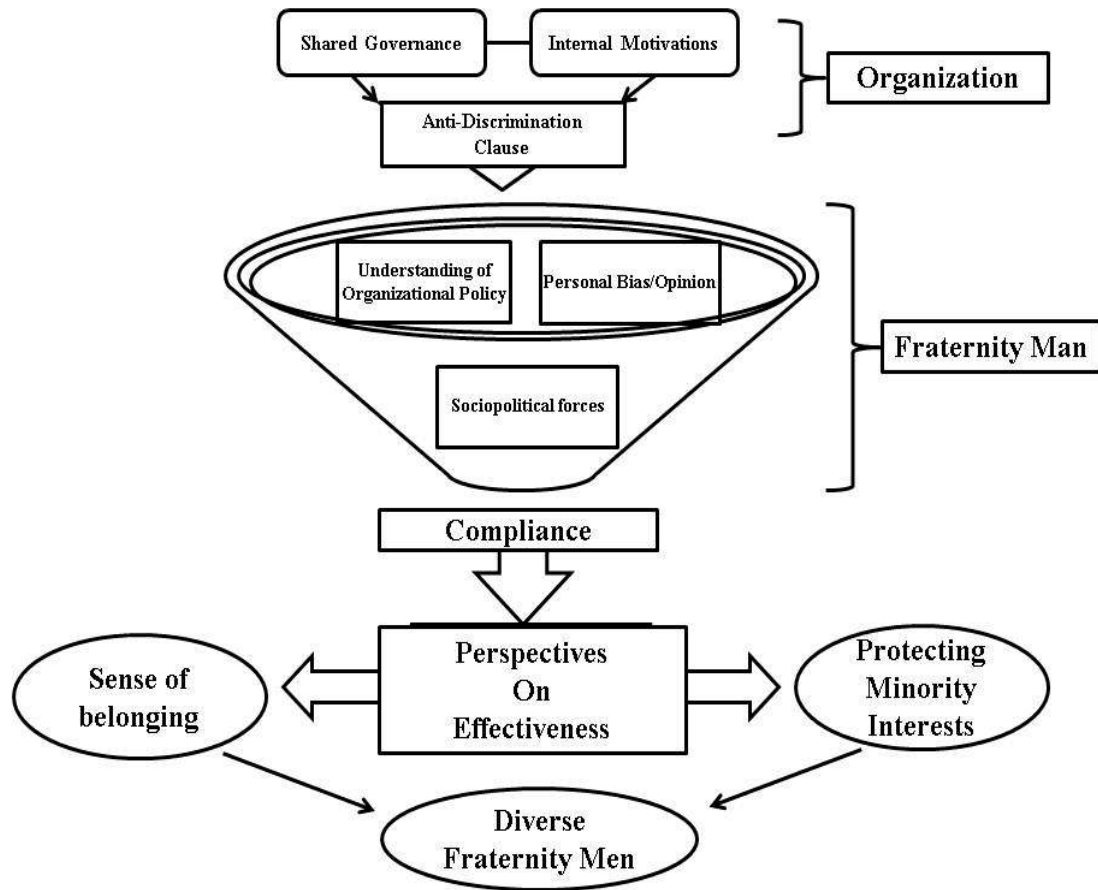
Noting that a majority of the literature reviewed was published after the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, it is safe to assume that almost all organizations were integrated by the 1970's. However, discrimination is still seen in organizations, regardless of the clauses. It is here where this study finds its relevancy.

#### **2.4.1 Conceptual framework**

Leshem and Trafford (2007) indicate that conceptual frameworks are important pieces of social sciences research as they help narrow the focus of the researcher and better organize the study. Within organizational research, theory, and practice many frames emerge as guides in understanding complex institutions. At a foundational level, this study is concerned with the perceptions of compliance, specifically through the lens of the "...interface between the organization and its [members] where organizations aim to influence and shape the behavior of [members]" (Interligi, 2010, pp. 237-238). In this lens, policy becomes the vehicle by which behavior changes or is reinforced, and compliance stands as an expectation to maintain membership within the organization. While examining college social fraternities in this frame, Pike (2000) and Rhodes (1995) indicate that fraternity men often benefit from their affiliation due to high standards and expectations in terms of retention, achievement, and the development of social skills.

Operating within the pragmatic research paradigm, this study is interested in the use of the frame in terms of practice. Figure 5. highlights how the study will operate within the conceptual frame.





**Figure 5.** Conceptual Framework Guiding the Study

The frame begins with the formation of the actual anti-discrimination clause (policy) of the organization either solely by or through a collaboration of shared governance and internal motivations from within the organization itself. As stated earlier, Gamma Fraternity is a member of the North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC) that requires adherence to certain guidelines and policies. Its affiliation with the NIC, as well as its 501(c)(3) tax status creates a shared governance structure with federal law. Therefore, federal laws such as the Civil Rights

Act of 1964 or common law verdicts such as *Brown v. Board of Education* all relate directly to how the organization functions in terms of diversity.

At the center of the model is the depiction of the fraternity man, where his understanding of organizational policy, personal biases and opinions, and reactions to sociopolitical forces frame the way he complies with the policy. His degree of compliance then shapes his perspective on the effectiveness of the clause *in practice* and/or his perspective shapes his compliance *of* the clause. In this context, the perspective this study is interested in identifying is to what extent the fraternity man finds the anti-discrimination clause effective in contributing to the sense of belonging and protecting minority interests.

## **2.5 LINKING THE LITERATURE TO THE STUDY QUESTIONS**

After a comprehensive review of the literature surrounding the problem space of diversity in fraternity life, many questions remain unanswered. The next section will highlight significant questions raised for future research, but this section will provide links to how this review of the literature informed the creation of the study questions posed in this dissertation.

### **2.5.1 Organizational policy**

The review of the literature discussed the various experiences of African-American, Jewish, and gay men in college fraternities. The literature proved bountiful in some areas, and noticeably lacking in others. Significant, however, is this notion that organization's have codified anti-discrimination clauses in their constitution, and some literature. Sanua (2000), Hesp (2006), Lee

(1970), and Ray and Rosow (2012), provided data indicating that discrimination is still occurring, even after the law has been included in the organization's system of governance. If this is the case, perhaps a case study of an NIC fraternity would help provide more recent developments on whether these clauses are enacting the espoused intention of the clauses. To answer this, I established the first study question, which foundationally asks what the policies of Gamma Fraternity are in regards to its anti-discrimination clause.

### **2.5.2 Historical reactions**

Probably most directly related to this literature review is the second study question of this dissertation, that asks in a historical framework what the experiences of diverse Greek men have been, and how organizations have reacted to minority men in the past. Though this question has been partially answered in this Chapter of the dissertation, a document review of Gamma Fraternity's convention agendas and minutes will allow for a more contextualized answer that is relevant to this specific organization.

### **2.5.3 Perceived effectiveness in the protection of minority members**

As highlighted by the Association of Fraternity Advisors' (AFA) (1990) statement of inclusiveness in college fraternities, it is important to understand the espoused intentions versus enacted realities of anti-discrimination clauses in college fraternity bylaws in protecting the rights and interests of minority members. Lee (1970) and Lord (1987) both identify various instances of discrimination during an era of fraternity life that focused on hazing, binge drinking, and celebrating youth. Yet, standards of membership mirrored the exclusive nature of American

society, which was still progressing to integration at the end of the 1960's Civil Rights Movement.

In a more contemporary sense, Ray and Rosow (2012) and Windmeyer (2005) present an argument that though discrimination may not be as outwardly focused as in times past, that discrimination is occurring in fraternity life internally, in terms of harassment and bullying. So, if these organizations are integrated at a policy level, what are these policies doing to protect minority students from having an equitable experience in their fraternity as their white, Christian, and heterosexual counterparts? This has become the foundation for the third study question.

#### **2.5.4 Perceived effectiveness in the contribution of a sense of belonging**

Finally, and in the same line of thinking as the previous study question, the last question this study seeks to answer relates to the perception of utility regarding an anti-discrimination clause's ability to contribute to a minority student's sense of belonging in an organization. Both Yueng and Stompler (2000) and Sanua (2000) identify factors that impact how a student is received in college fraternities—in this case, the level in which a student identifies as authentically Jewish or gay. Though identity theory is not the focus of this dissertation, much is to be attributed to the idea that discrimination can happen not only along different fraternity men, but among diverse students. Appreciating the complexity of the idea that some minority students may feel more included than others, the fourth study question aims at understanding how fraternity men perceive this notion, and how anti-discrimination clauses affect this.

## 2.6 FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This review of the literature organized discourse based on interpersonal experiences and intra-organizational interaction, both within the fraternity as an organization, and within higher education institutional contexts. Though a comprehensive search yielded some substantial empirical studies, it is obvious that topic of diversity in fraternity life is a topic not yet thoroughly explored. As a practitioner in student affairs, one can seek counsel from discourse to solve a problem or to find an appropriate intervention technique for student crises. But when the discourse provides little solace, the social scientist would turn to action.

This review raised a number of significant questions, including:

- 1.) Is the presence of few empirical sources concerning religious and sexual-orientation issues in Greek life indicative of little interest by scholar-practitioners or due to the social sensitivity of the issues in general?
- 2.) How are student affairs practitioners intervening with little discourse to reference? Trial and error?
- 3.) Is this yielding a more practical versus theoretical framework for student affairs practice?

It is doubtful that such broad questions are answerable in this context; however, the review of the literature did provide enough background where a problem is identifiable, stakeholders are discernible, and a pragmatic study may be an effective tool in determining intervention.

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

This dissertation is an example of case study research. As qualified by Yin (2003), the study aims at understanding the *what* and *how* of a particular phenomenon. In this case, the *what* and *how* Yin (2003) refers to is to what degree fraternity men find anti-discrimination clauses effective in protecting the interests of minority populations, and how this issue has affected their organization in terms of a sense of belonging. This chapter highlights how the study commenced and by what means data was collected, analyzed, and reported.

#### **3.1 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH**

This dissertation utilizes the case study research design, and used a mixed methods approach, specifically employing research interviewing, a focus group, and an original survey of respective participants. The specifics of the case, including a brief summary of the method, a rationale for its employment, and a review of the instruments are highlighted in this section.

##### **3.1.1 The nature of case study research**

In selecting a methodology for this study, I found it appropriate to consider my intentions of conducting the study in the first place—to conduct a study where the results may help inform

policy and advance practice in student affairs. Case study methods are certainly an effective tool for a researcher in this pragmatic research paradigm because the methods allow for the establishment of theory based on field materials, social interactions, and culture (Hamel, 1993). By selecting a method that allows for a variance of data collection methods, I would be better suited in collecting data rich materials, insights, and perspectives.

The case study as a method has been a point of contention in the field of social science research as it does not specify certain data collection methods, but rather focuses on a specific phenomenon that becomes the center of the research (Wolf, 2011; Stake, 2005). Yet, this is an opportunity for a researcher to familiarize him or herself with the case and make an informed decision on how exactly he or she wishes to collect data. As Wolf (2011) suggests, the case study is in a sense not so much a research method but a research design.

With the freedom to design my research methodology within the general frame of case study research, I looked to other empirical studies and dissertations surrounding the general problem space of diversity in fraternity life. A number of dissertations and theses (Hesp, 2006; Shelnutt, 2012) employed the case study method in studying particular phenomena utilizing mixed methods in collecting data. The success of their studies is indicative of the usefulness of case study research in examining socially sensitive issues and matters affecting students.

### **3.1.2 A rationale for mixed methods**

As highlighted earlier, employing mixed methods in collecting data in case study research is an effective way of understanding phenomena (Mertens, 2010; Yin, 2003, Fitzpatrick, et al., 2009). In this study, I am examining fraternity men's perspectives on the effectiveness of anti-discrimination clauses in protecting the interests of minority populations. Utilizing a survey

could yield useful data in terms of the research questions and could be more accessible for the larger sample of fraternity men. However, the data concluded from the survey may be limited and not able to answer the study questions alone. Adding interviews through a focus group and one-on-one interaction is an effective way to increase the amount of rich and useful data collected from participants, and potentially provide the setting for the participants to qualify their perspectives (Rubin & Rubin, 2009).

In sum, attempting to understand perceptions of participants on the effectiveness of policy can be better qualified through various data sets. The approach I am using is reasonable, attainable, and relevant; three elements of valid scholarship (Mertens, 2010; Fitzpatrick, et al., 2009; Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2010).

## **3.2    PROTOCOL OF THE CASE**

This section highlights the specifics of the case study, including a review of the study questions, setting, population and sample, data collection practices, and a statement of Institutional Review Board compliance.

### **3.2.1    Setting**

This study focused on a single Chapter of Gamma Fraternity at a large, public, research university in the northeastern region of the United States. “Greater Metropolitan University” is the pseudonym given to this university for the purpose of this study, and the specific chapter of Gamma Fraternity sampled is referred to as the “Greater Metropolitan Chapter.”



At the time of the study, Greater Metropolitan University had over 20 fraternity and sorority chapters and was considered a medium-sized Greek community in comparison to other institutions such as The Pennsylvania State University, which had over 40 Greek-lettered organizations from the NIC, PHC, and NPHC councils (Fraternity & Sorority Life, 2012). Greater Metropolitan University has approximately 28,000 total students, with more than one branch campus within its home state. This study was conducted on the main campus of Greater Metropolitan University.

The Greek community is reputable at Greater Metropolitan University with over 2,000 active student members out of an undergraduate student population of approximately 25,000. The community is also active in philanthropy and service, having raised roughly \$100,000 for the University-affiliated medical center's cancer initiative, and approximately \$200,000 for local charities in the 2011-2012 academic year alone. This information comes from the *Greater Metropolitan University Fraternity/Sorority Annual Report*, which has been coded to ensure anonymity. The specific figures are rounded to the nearest hundredth.

The Greater Metropolitan Chapter of Gamma Fraternity colonized at Greater Metropolitan University originally in the 1960's. The Chapter was dismissed from campus due to an undisclosed risk management violation, and was re-colonized in the early 2000's. Since then, the Chapter has won consecutive "Top Fraternity" awards both locally and nationally and is one of the most active on campus at the time of this research.

### **3.2.2 Population and sample**

This study included the active participation of various organizational stakeholders. I used purposive sampling that is detailed by Mertens (2010) in selecting diverse fraternity leaders to

interview. In no particular order, I will describe the targeted participants for this study by pseudonym below:

1. The study aimed to include four selected international officers of Gamma Fraternity. I have selected the participants based on the recommendation of the Executive Director of the Fraternity because of their experience and years of service to the organization, as well as potential diversities that may share some particular insights on the topic of diverse fraternity men. The participants were both African-American and white, and be past or present leaders of the organization.
2. The study also aimed to include the surveying of the entire active membership of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter of Gamma Fraternity; approximately 66 traditionally college-aged male students.
3. The study included a focus group interview of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter's executive committee, which included the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Risk Management Officer, New Member Educator, and Alumni Relations Chair.

### **3.2.3 Data collection**

In collecting data, I utilized a survey of all of the active members of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter of Gamma Fraternity, conducted interviews with select alumni leadership, and ran a focus group with the executive committee members of the undergraduate chapter (Table 2.).

**Table 2.** Data Collection

<b>Data</b>		<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Method of Data Collection</b>	
Background and demographic information about respondents and participants		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demographic information</li> <li>• Time as an active member</li> <li>• Leadership positions held</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• Focus group</li> <li>• Interviews</li> </ul>	
<b>Study Question 1</b>	What are Gamma Fraternity’s policies and/or standards regarding anti-discrimination or other diversity-related statutes?	Found in international constitution and local bylaws	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> </ul>	
<b>Study Question 2</b>	How have fraternities historically reacted to non-white, non-Christian, and non-heterosexual men seeking membership at the local/institutional and national/international levels?	Empirical studies and historical accounts informed by experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of the literature</li> <li>• Document review</li> </ul>	
<b>Study Question 3</b>	What are active fraternity men’s perspectives on the effectiveness of anti-discrimination clauses in fraternal legislation in protecting the interests of diverse members?	Evidence to be collected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• Focus group</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Document review</li> </ul>	Alumni and active members
<b>Study Question 4</b>	What are active fraternity men’s perspectives on the effectiveness of anti-discrimination clauses in fraternal legislation in contributing to a sense of belonging amongst chapter members?	Evidence to be collected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• Focus group</li> </ul>	Active members

The study began by gaining Institutional Review Board approval. The study was deemed *exempt* in its review by the Board because the subjects of the study were all over the age of 18, and due to the anonymity associated with the study. Appendix H depicts the approval notice granted by the Board. Sequentially, I then made outreach to the Executive Director of Gamma Fraternity. The Executive Director indicated previously that he felt as if his active participation in contacting the alumni leaders and chapter leadership would yield the most effective results in terms of participation. Likewise, the Executive Director then made outreach to his staff and asked them to assemble various historical documents, such as convention meeting minutes and agendas, for my review. Such documents will be reviewed in detail in Chapter 4.

Next, I sent an E-mail communication with the various invitations to participate forms [Appendices E-G] to each respective population (e.g. active fraternity men, alumni members). Within each correspondence, I explained what each member's role in the study will be and emphasized that their participation is voluntary, specifically in terms of filling out a survey, and/or participating in an interview.

In terms of the survey, I included a link to a Google Docs questionnaire in the invitation E-mail, and reassured that all responses were recorded anonymously. I also encouraged each respondent to avoid using identifiable language in their responses to open-ended questions. Two additional E-mails were sent out weekly to remind participants to fill out the survey until a suitable number of respondents (26; 40%) was achieved.

The focus group interview included various points of contact with the leadership of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter. An invitation E-mail was sent out to the chapter president, who then passed the E-mail along to the executive board members. The focus group was then scheduled. In terms of data collection, each participant was labeled as *leader* with a sequential

number (e.g. Leader 1, Leader 2, Leader 3) depending on the order in which they were seated. The meeting was held in the Student Union of Greater Metropolitan University and was recorded via voice recorders in a private location.

Finally, the invitation E-mail to the alumni leaders was carbon copied to the Executive Director to emphasize the organization's support of the study. The E-mail asked for each participant to provide his availability for a phone conference call. To record the interview for transcription, I downloaded a secure software package that recorded audio only.

### **3.2.4 Difficulties securing participation**

It should be noted that securing participation in the study did not come without challenge. Though the Executive Director of Gamma Fraternity provided a letter of support which was provided to participants in their invitation letters, the executive board of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter had some initial concerns. After receiving the invitation letter, the organization's president called me via conference call with his fellow executive leaders. Many of the leaders voiced concern that they were afraid that some members may provide negative responses to the survey, thus making the Greater Metropolitan Chapter look intolerant of diversity. The executive board provided a non-unanimous vote of support for the study pending approval from the organization's faculty advisor at Greater Metropolitan University.

Shortly thereafter, I was contacted by the faculty advisor who introduced himself as member of the science faculty, and was inquiring as to where the study's certificate of Institutional Review Board approval was and the contact information of my dissertation advisor. I provided him with this information, and he then recommended that the chapter participate.

The active men I met with for the focus group interview indicated that given the controversial nature of the study, they did not project that I would receive a high number of participants. One leader indicated that the chapter leadership, itself, was not at consensus regarding whether or not to participate. Notable, however, was the willingness of the alumni sample to participate in the study. Though only 3 of the 4 (75%) invited men responded, the general sense of the men was that they were excited to participate.

It is clear that the issue of diversity is still sensitive. It is here where the study faced its highest sense of limitations, which will be explained later in Chapter 5. The next section details the document review of the organization which provides context for the study.

### **3.2.5 Document review**

This study also involved the investigation, review, and analysis of various relevant historical documents of the Fraternity. Specifically, I looked at meeting minutes from various points of time where the topic of diversity was addressed at national conventions. In this context, I selected convention minutes from 1950-2013 for review. Ironically, the Fraternity has recently published a complete history spanning the over 100 years of longevity the organization enjoys. Locating a number of these texts assisted me in establishing a historical and organizational frame by which the organization functions.

Likewise, I looked at the Greater Metropolitan Chapter's specific set of bylaws and cross-referenced the anti-discrimination clause with the clause of national organization. This identified whether the chapter's clause is up to date, existent, and/or different.

### **3.2.6 Institutional Review Board compliance**

As this study intended to measure the presence of and perceived effectiveness of anti-discrimination codification in fraternity bylaws, there was a need for researcher-subject interaction. This study is in proper compliance with and gained the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Pittsburgh and has been approved as an exempt study.

## **3.3 INSTRUMENTS**

This mixed-methods case study utilized a survey for the active fraternity men, a focus group interview of the current executive committee of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter, and four interviews with alumni leaders of the organization. All of the protocols relating to these instruments can be found in the appendices. In this section, I highlight the specifics of each instrument, and align each data collection method to my specific study questions.

### **3.3.1 Survey**

In the field of educational research, surveying has emerged as a useful data collection method that can provide quantifiable and qualitative data in terms of measuring a specific phenomenon. Fitzpatrick, Sanders, and Worthen (2011) indicate that cross-sectional designs are one method in which surveys collect “a snapshot in time of how people think, believe, or behave” (p. 392). The authors continue to suggest that these designs are useful in identifying varying opinions amongst a group of people or subgroups. Likewise, the survey method is used heavily in collecting

information on respondents perceived knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and understanding of certain phenomenon (Fitzpatrick, et al.,2011; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011; Patten, 2011; Dowling & Brown, 2010). Given this, a survey is the most efficient way to gather data on the perspectives of fraternity men related to my study questions.

The survey I am using is an adaptation of *The Campus Diversity Survey*, established by the Association for Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania (AICUP). I found this survey by performing a basic internet search and found it to frame questions to a campus community similarly to the way I want to with my sample. The survey is over ten years old, and the group who originally utilized it, the Regional Consortium for Multicultural Education, no longer exists.

I was strategic in developing and/or adapting survey questions, and followed the 14-step process of survey development as highlighted by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011). Being mindful of the language of each question and being careful not to ask questions that are not relevant to my particular study are two important aspects in devising a sound instrument. Table 3. highlights how I utilized the data collected from the survey, as well as provides a rationale routed in relevant discourse.

**Table 3.** Survey Questions Relation to Study Questions

<b>Study Question</b>	<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
1.) What are Gamma Fraternity’s policies and/or standards regarding anti-discrimination or other diversity-related statutes?	25-27, 31, 32	Anson & Marchesani, 1991; Syrett, 2009
2.) How have fraternities historically reacted to non-white, non-	9-14, 35, 36	Lee, 1970; Hughey, 2008; Syrett, 2009



Christian, and non-heterosexual men seeking membership at the local/institutional and national/international levels?		
3.) What are active fraternity men's perspectives on the effectiveness of anti-discrimination clauses in fraternal legislation in protecting the interests of diverse members?	19-24, 28-31, 32-42	Lee, 1970; Kaplin & Lee, 2007; Syrett, 2009
4.) What are active fraternity men's perspectives on the effectiveness of anti-discrimination clauses in fraternal legislation in contributing to a sense of belonging amongst chapter members?	15- 18, 18a, 18b	Windmeyer & Freeman, 1998; Hughey, 2008; Sanua, 2000; Syrett, 2009
Respondents: Demographics	1-8	Mertens, 2010; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011

Most notably from the table above, Study Question 3, probing what fraternity men's perspectives are on the effectiveness of anti-discrimination clauses in terms of protecting minority populations, has the highest number of related survey questions. Chapter 4 will highlight relevant findings.

### 3.3.2 Focus group interview with active members

Fontana and Prokos (2007) highlight that one of the positive attributes of using group interviews is that the method is complementary to other forms of data collection. Its formal structure gives weight to the research, and group collaboration aids in the analyzing of complex phenomena. In conducting a focus group, I had to be mindful of *groupthink*, or the collective consensus of a group based not on reason but on a desire for harmony (Fontana & Prokos, 2007; Mertens, 2010; Rubin & Rubin, 2009). If the interview was to lose participants' interest, offend them, or cause them discomfort, honesty and openness would suffer, causing a challenge to the validity of the data collected. Therefore, I deliberately framed the focus group protocol with brevity, consistency, and relevance to my research questions.

To gain a better understanding of active fraternity men's perspectives on anti-discrimination clauses in terms of diverse members, I decided to utilize the focus group method on the Greater Metropolitan Chapter's executive committee. This committee consisted of nine active students representing the roles of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Sergeant-At-Arms, Alumni Relations Chairman, Social Chair, Rush Chair, and the New Member Educator. As the elected group of men who execute laws and policy, their insights as to how the fraternity operates within the context of compliance of local and (inter)national statutes was best expressed in a collective group interview. Table 4. aligns the interview protocol with the specific research questions of this study, as well as provides a rationale stemming from discourse.

**Table 4.** Focus Group Questions Relation to Study Questions

<b>Study Question</b>	<b>Interview Questions</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
1.) What are Gamma Fraternity's policies and/or standards regarding anti-discrimination or other diversity-related statutes?	4,5,6	Syrett, 2009
2.) How have fraternities historically reacted to non-white, non-Christian, and non-heterosexual men seeking membership at the local/institutional and national/international levels?	10, 11, 12, 14	Lee, 1970; Windmeyer & Freeman, 1998; Hughey, 2008; Sanua, 2000
3.) What are active fraternity men's perspectives on the effectiveness of anti-discrimination clauses in fraternal legislation in protecting the interests of diverse members?	7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15	Windmeyer & Freeman, 1998; Syrett, 2009; Hughey, 2010
4.) What are active fraternity men's perspectives on the effectiveness of anti-discrimination clauses in fraternal legislation in contributing to a sense of belonging amongst chapter members?	7, 8, 9, 13, 10, 11, 12, 15	Windmeyer & Freeman, 1998; Syrett, 2009; Hughey, 2010
Respondents: Demographics	1,2,3	Rubin & Rubin, 2009; Mertens, 2010

### 3.3.3 Interview with select alumni leadership

Rubin and Rubin (2009) indicate that an effective way to understand what a person or a group is thinking and feeling and why that is so is to simply ask them. The interview as a data collection method is often overlooked as a tool that all people use in their day-to-day lives. Asking questions, probing for more information, and seeking clarification are verbal expressions used without thought. Yet, while conducting educational research, there is only so much that mere observation can do in trying to explore how or what students are thinking. The art of effective interviewing is based on a general understanding of the researcher knowing his or her place in the conversation, and the subject as the leading presence doing most of the talking and feeling in control (Ginsburg, 2002; Rubin & Rubin, 2009).

In this study, I spoke with three alumni leaders of the sampled organization. They were selected due to their societal classifications in some instances (religion and/or race), their experience in the organization over time, as well as the high rank of their positions. While determining how I would meet with them, as some live many miles away from my current location, I turned to the literature surrounding interviewing as a method and found various pieces of advice.

Fontana and Prokos (2007) emphasize that if a researcher provides anonymity to his or her research, electronic interviewing via E-mail would be a difficult method. This is so because the World Wide Web is so connected and unsecure that someone could potentially access data without the researcher knowing. The same logic is applied to cellular phones, so a general rule in conducting telephone interviews is to call from a landline (Fontana & Prokos, 2007). Yet, as technology has progressed, many *plug-in* software packages provide reliable security to protect data. The free video-chat service, Skype, is one of these packages.

To collect these data, I utilized technology capable of recording over a landline phone. I made enough outreach to the participants in advance to schedule the interview, conducted the interviews, and then transcribed the interviews directly after the call as the information is still new.

Table 5. connects the one-on-one interview questions to the research questions of this study, as well as outlines a rationale found from literature.

**Table 5.** Interview Questions Relation to Study Questions

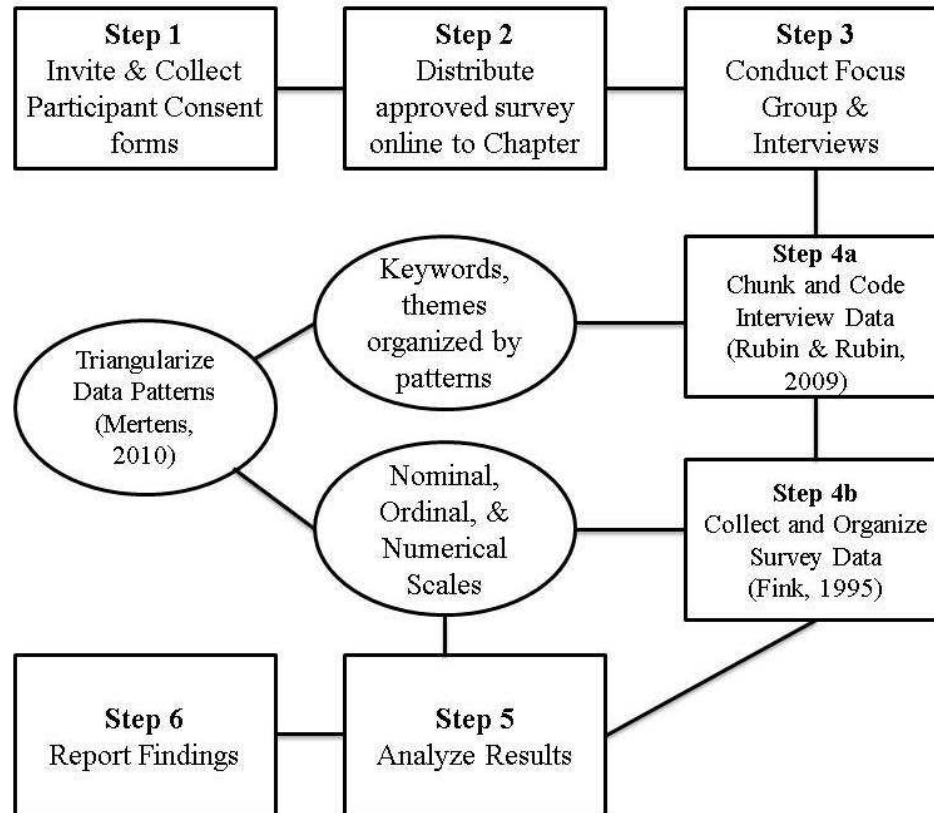
<b>Study Question</b>	<b>Interview Questions</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
5.) What are Gamma Fraternity’s policies and/or standards regarding anti-discrimination or other diversity-related statutes?	4,5,6, 11	Syrett, 2009
6.) How have fraternities historically reacted to non-white, non-Christian, and non-heterosexual men seeking membership at the local/institutional and national/international levels?	7, 8, 15	Hesp, 2006; Hesp & Brooks, 2009; Syrett, 2009
7.) What are active fraternity men’s perspectives on the effectiveness of anti-discrimination clauses in fraternal legislation in protecting the interests of diverse members?	6, 9, 10, 11, 12	Hesp, 2006; Hughey, 2008; Sanua, 2000; Hesp & Brooks, 2009; Syrett, 2009

8.) What are active fraternity men's perspectives on the effectiveness of anti-discrimination clauses in fraternal legislation in contributing to a sense of belonging amongst chapter members?	13, 14	Syrett, 2009
Respondents: Demographics	1,2,3	Rubin & Rubin, 2009

### 3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

As this case study is using a mixed-methods approach in collecting data, I am confident that I have enough data to present interpretive, valid, and formidable findings. By utilizing a survey, a focus group, and interview data collection techniques, the chances of theory triangulation to explain a particular phenomenon is high (Mertens, 2010), and, as highlighted in Chapter 4, attainable. Likewise, utilizing categorical aggregation as described by Creswell (1998) I sought “a collection of instances from the data, hoping that issue-relevant meanings will emerge” (p. 154). In this sense, having a well thought out plan of analysis was crucial in providing opportunities for data-rich material and valid findings.

Figure 6. (below) highlights the plan of action utilized in analyzing the various kinds of data, and serves as a summary of this Chapter:



**Figure 6.** Data Analysis Plan

The first two steps in the process include providing each participant an invitation to participate, and the relative instruments if necessary. This was done by E-mailing a link to the survey, hosted by Google Docs. The results were collected over a two-week period.

Then, I conducted the focus group interviews with the active members on the executive committee and recorded the interview via tape recorders. I also took simple notes. Then, I immediately moved into the transcription process through replaying the interview and typing directly into a word processor. In terms of analysis, Rubin and Rubin (2009) indicate the importance of chunking and coding so that a researcher can find relevant data without reliving an entire interview. This proved to be an effective tool in organizing the data. Likewise, coding helped me identify emergent themes and patterns that were useful in answering my study

questions, specifically the third and fourth questions. I followed a similar process with the phone interviews with the selected alumni leadership.

Furthermore, a comprehensive document review helped provide organizational context to the study. The Executive Director offered his assistance in locating organizational texts such as meeting minutes and agendas that may assist in providing a framework of the issues the fraternity considered in establishing their anti-discrimination clauses.

In terms of the survey method, I used an online resource, Google Docs, to help me organize and collect the data. I analyzed the results through numerical analysis and reported findings across survey questions. The survey questions used nominal, ordinal, and numerical scales to organize the data. Fink (1995) indicates that organizing data along all three of these methods is an efficient way to “describe, summarize, compare, and predict” (Fink, 1995, p. 4) emergent themes and trends in quantitative data. Similarly to the interview data, I coded the quantitative data by means of how the data relate to my study questions, organizing them in a fashion that depicts evidential answers or trends. The various data sets yielded in the study helped me triangulate themes, and provided evidential answers to my study questions.

Foundationally, I analyzed the data through applied thematic analysis. Highlighted as a “rigorous, yet inductive, set of procedures designed to identify and examine themes from textual data in a way that is transparent and credible” (Guest, Mitchell, & Namey, 2012, p. 16), this data analysis frame is often employed in case study designs. In this frame, data was scanned for key terms and other emergent themes that aided in organizing and coding the data.

Finally, there was a key technique that I employed to ensure validity of the data. Throughout data collection, I monitored the data and tracked certain trends through coding and



organizing my notes in an appropriate way. Organizing a table combining data sets helped me better recognize patterns and be able to link trends across study questions [Appendix J].

Ultimately, the case study method assisted me in making what Creswell (1998) details as *naturalistic generalizations*, which are “generalizations that people can learn from the case either for themselves or for applying it to a population of cases” (p. 154). This is, after all, an example of practical research that is pragmatic in its focus.

## **4.0 RESULTS AND FINDINGS**

Data was collected over the course of one academic semester. Though each data collection method required its own implementation and yielded various findings, the study came to a close through an organized and systemic approach. This chapter will summarize the specific findings of the data collection methods. Numerical analysis and direct quoting are employed to highlight several emergent themes from the study. Specific findings from the instruments can be found in the following sections. First, however, are the data found through a comprehensive review of organizational documents drawn from the organization's bylaws, a published comprehensive history of the organization, member self-education program, strategic plan, and statement of Equal Employment Opportunity Commission compliance.

### **4.1 DOCUMENT REVIEW: CONTEXT OF GAMMA FRATERNITY**

Though every college fraternity holds similar practices in terms of organizational functionality, all fraternities differ on their culture, traditions, rituals, language, and history (Rhoades, 1995; Anson & Marchesani, 1991). Gamma Fraternity holds a unique organizational history in regards to issues of diversity and anti-discrimination. This section will provide an analysis of various sources, including organizational documents that will highlight how the organization has traditionally responded to diversity in the past, and how it operates today. First, a review of the

fraternity's comprehensive history text will uncover certain instances of anti-discrimination. Next, convention meeting minutes spanning 60 years are highlighted. Then, the organization's national anti-discrimination clauses are presented, along with the related clauses of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter's bylaws. Finally, other fraternal documents addressing the issue of diversity are detailed. It should be noted that due to the organization's request to remain anonymous, the use of codes are employed in this section. No direct citing is provided in this review, though when documents are paraphrased all page numbers, names, and other identifiable terms are coded via brackets. For example: "[John] indicated that the decision to expand to Canadian universities was highly contested at the [2052] Convention, and the measure failed by an [87] to [1] vote." Such codes will be made obvious to the reader in the following sections.

#### **4.1.1 Published comprehensive history**

In the early part of the Twenty First century, Gamma Fraternity employed an author to write a comprehensive history on the organization spanning the year of the organizations founding (coded as 1886) to a recent year (coded as 2008). For the purpose of this dissertation, the author of the text will be coded as *Author*, and the year of publication will be coded as 2008. Similar coding is used in the reference list.

Author (2008) provides what is detailed as a comprehensive history of Gamma Fraternity and spans the over 100 years of organizational longevity. The text is broken up into chapters, specifically organized by various decades and the emergent issues facing the organization during that given period of time. After reading the entire text, the issue of legislating anti-discrimination is referred to only once, and the general issue of diversity is referred to twice.

One of the first great debates that was held between organizational stakeholders was that of expansion—insofar that some wanted to expand across the United States (from the predominant northeast region) and into Canada, as others wanted more restrictive expansion policies. One member is cited as alluding to the notion that within Gamma Fraternity, there are no national borders, just a brotherhood of men. Along similar lines, as Gamma Fraternity was founded as a professional fraternity, another significant debate occurred during the early years of the organization: whether to only admit [pharmacy] students as was current practice, or to go *general* and not limit membership based on academic discipline (Author, 2008). After a number of convention votes, the organization eventually opened its membership to non-[pharmacy] students in the [1920's].

As American society entered eras of racial and socioeconomic tension, college fraternities have historically reacted in exclusive ways, slowly integrating membership along the lines of race, religion, and sexual orientation (Syrett, 2009). Yet, very little is discussed within Author's (2008) comprehensive history of Gamma Fraternity. The [1966] Convention would add the organization's first anti-discrimination clause to read that no male student could be denied membership based on religion, race, creed, or national origin (Author, 2008). A single mention of integration is found right after this clause where the official fraternity magazine offered opposing articles in favor and against integration written by alumni members. Though it is suggested by an alumni testimonial later in the text that the fraternity was racially integrated as early as [1955], Author (2008) fails to mention this fact as a key occurrence in Gamma's history, with less than a paragraph dedicated to it. In a sense, this key decision was casually mentioned and no analysis from the author is provided. A total of four sentences summarize this section in the text, with no other mention of diversity formally written, save a single alumnus member's

testimonial. The section ends with a generic statement that suggests that Gamma Fraternity would continue to operate in socially contentious times.

Interestingly, the text does discuss how critical events such as the Great Depression, the World Wars, and Vietnam affected the fraternity in terms of leadership, values, and operation, yet overlooks the Civil Rights Era of the 1960's. Instead, convention voting patterns across the 1960's decade gave a foundational base to what the fraternity structurally looks like today (e.g. what positions are considered *executive*).

#### **4.1.2 Convention minutes**

Upon approval of the study by the Institutional Review Board, I contacted the clerk of Gamma Fraternity and asked for access to any digitized convention minutes or related materials. The clerk mailed me three compact discs that held convention materials from the 1954-2012 (inter)national conventions. To ensure anonymity, no file will be directly cited and brackets will be used for additional coding.

After a review of all of the documents, which included several sets of meeting minutes, agendas, programs, pictures, and formal committee statements, several key themes emerged. The following convention years will be reported for the purposes of this study due to the fact that the issue of diversity and/or anti-discrimination was a topic of discussion at each respective convention: [1955] [1969] [2007] and [2011].

The following table identifies landmark decisions made by the organization according to the convention meeting minutes provided to me by the Clerk of Gamma Fraternity. Those years marked with an asterisk (\*) included the topics of diversity or anti-discrimination in deliberation at the convention. All other years have been provided to provide an organizational context to

Gamma Fraternity, as well as identify what was considered to be relevant to the organization during a given time.

**Table 6.** Analysis of Convention Documents

<b>Year of Convention</b>	<b>Document Analyzed</b>	<b>Anti-Discrimination or Diversity Mentioned?</b>	<b>Key Policy Issues</b>
1955*	Convention Minutes	Yes	Removal of the “Caucasian clause” officially integrating the organization
1957	Convention Minutes	No	Expansion; changing fraternity flag
1959	Convention Minutes	No	Redefining regions of the organization; establishing term limits for (inter)national officers
1961	Convention Minutes	No	Financial services of central organization limited to chapter requests
1964	Convention Minutes	No	Clarify that alumni chapters hold less legislative power than undergraduate chapters
1967	Convention Minutes	No	Emeritus status for officers; official jeweler of the fraternity; accepting officer resignations
1969*	Convention Minutes	Yes	Formal anti-discrimination clause added to constitution
1971	Convention Minutes	No	Editorial changes
1974	Convention Minutes	No	Housing funds and obtaining financial loans to build a chapter house
1977	Convention Minutes	No	Regional director qualifications, chapter suspensions, chapter advisor

			responsibilities
1979	Convention Minutes	No	Amending the constitution; increasing chapter annual fees
1981	Convention Minutes	No	Chapter fee delinquency; Voting requirements of chapters
1985	Convention Minutes	No	Authority given to bylaws committee to make editorial changes
1987	Convention Minutes	No	Order of bylaws as written altered
1989	Convention Minutes	No	Defining active member, alumnus member, and inactive status
1991	Convention Minutes	No	Little sister organization removed; rules of debate established
1993	Convention Minutes	No	Firearms banned from chapter property; sanction for policy violation enforced
1995	Convention Minutes	No	Resignation from the fraternity process by an alumnus
1997	Convention Minutes	No	Conservatorship and due process procedure established
1999	Convention Minutes	No	Compulsory attendance at regional conferences
2001	Convention documents unreadable. No data collected.		
2003	Convention Minutes	No	Undergraduate representation on fraternity-wide committees
2005	Convention Minutes	No	Technical and grammatical changes to various sections of the bylaws
2007*	Convention Minutes	Yes	Sexual orientation

			added to anti-discrimination clause
2009	Convention Minutes	No	Changes to fees for non-convention attendance
2011*	Convention Minutes	Yes	Marital status, ethnicity, age, and disability added to anti-discrimination clause.

At the [1955] convention, the Caucasian-only clause was formally removed from the organization’s bylaws, formally integrating the fraternity. The document provided was a simple statement from the then Executive Director which indicated that the fraternity, through a vote on the convention floor, thought it proper to welcome non-white men into the organization. No other provided document nor meeting minutes discussed the number of votes in favor or against or the arguments made.

At the [1969] convention, Gamma Fraternity added its first anti-discrimination policy to its constitution prohibiting the discrimination of men on the basis of race, religion, or creed. No specific mention as to why the organization did so was provided in the meeting minutes, but given the year of enactment, one could safely assume this was done for compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Higher Education Act of 1965, and/or the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

No other policy changes would be made (given the provided documents from the Fraternity) until the [2007] convention, when sexual orientation was added to the anti-discrimination clause. The recommendation was brought by a chapter of Gamma Fraternity from the Commonwealth of Virginia, and seconded by a chapter in the State of Massachusetts. The measure passed the convention floor, though no mention of dissent was listed in the meeting minutes.



Finally, in [2011] age, marital status, ethnicity, and disability were added to the anti-discrimination clause by unanimous vote of the undergraduate chapters. The motion was brought to the floor by an alumnus member with the executive committee of the (inter)national fraternity's support. The motion passed unanimously.

In order to better understand the thought process of the membership and/or rationale for such policy decisions, the one-on-one interview with alumni leaders protocol probed for more information and insight. As a reminder to the reader, Gamma Fraternity was founded in the late 1800's as a professional fraternity and was not affiliated with a particular religion. Gamma is considered a historically-white fraternity and is associated with the North American Interfraternity Conference. To gather insight as to how the fraternity has dealt with diversity, I asked the following question of all three alumni that participated in the study:

I'd like to talk about how the fraternity has handled issues of race, religion, and sexual orientation more specifically. What are some landmark decisions the fraternity has made, and in your perception, how did chapter members handle it?

Alumnus 1 responded with the following:

Ha. I remember sitting on my national board and the subject actually coming up of protecting sexual orientation in our national constitution. And it became...ha. Well, obviously, it started conversation and the funny thing was and what I thought was really funny about the entire conversation—was that it had more—I wanna use the right word. It had more *attention* at the board level than it did when it was presented to the undergraduates-- it was like no big deal. I mean there was some—some discussion, there were some chapters that, yanno, didn't want to have that into their constitution or whatever, but it passed and it passed fairly soundly.

When probed about any landmark decisions concerning race and religion, Alumnus 1 stated:

(Pause). No because, these were—even my own election—as the international president, though being African American was meant by some comments, snide remarks or whatever, even though I wasn't in the tally, or in the room when the votes were being tallied, I was told that even on my first try I was elected pretty soundly. Even though that information technically wasn't supposed to reach me.

Another alumnus indicated:

Alumnus 2: Uh, I can't think of anything directly.

In this sense, very little insight was provided as to what those votes looked like, or what discussion was held at these conventions. None the less, the document review provided a strong foundation as to how Gamma Fraternity has functioned organizationally in the past, and how certain policies and procedures pertaining to anti-discrimination have come to be.

#### **4.1.3 Organizational bylaws**

As indicated earlier in Table 1., Gamma Fraternity protects all classes listed by the Equal Opportunity Commission, with the addition of two extra classes—sexual orientation and marital status—through an anti-discrimination clause. The Greater Metropolitan Chapter's local bylaws were available in the Office of Greek Life at Greater Metropolitan University, so access to them was achievable. The document, revised and updated in September of [2012] included an anti-discrimination clause with all of the protected classes listed in the (inter)national bylaws and did not protect any additional classes beyond what is required by the organization (inter)nationally. There were no other references to diversity or discrimination in the local chapter bylaws.

#### **4.1.4 Strategic plan**

Alfred (2010) comments that entities involved in the higher education enterprise would benefit from a comprehensive and written strategic plan that includes both short and long term initiatives aimed at promoting growth and change of the organization and its members. Though certainly not a new phenomenon in organizational makeup, Gamma Fraternity presented its new strategic

plan publically by making it a headline on its website, and including an overview of it in a recent edition of the Fraternity magazine.

The plan includes [six] strategic initiatives that correlate to the actions of members, chapters, and colonies. Among these initiatives are the [improvement of member experience through a focus on academic success], [providing safer housing], [developing leadership skills], [advancing philanthropic efforts], [promoting a working network of peers amongst chapters], and [making affiliation with Gamma Fraternity a lifelong commitment]. Within each of these initiatives are key performance indicators (Alfred, 2010) that will measure when the organization has reached its goal. In terms of diversity, only one indicator relates to member's developing multicultural competency or appreciating diverse perspectives. The indicator includes developing a working knowledge of self and others within each member through the promotion of diversity events on campus, such as encouraging an active member to attend an event sponsored by a diverse student organization.

There is no other mention of diversity or discrimination within the comprehensive strategic plan.

#### **4.1.5 Member self education program**

Gamma Fraternity has employed a member self-education program as early as the [mid 1990's]. The program is free to all associate, active, and alumnus members of the organization, and is currently available online. The program is separated into [four] phases that each focus on a particular area of mastery. The phases include leadership, ethics, career development, and organizational functioning. Within the [first] phase, a member is encouraged to value diverse perspectives. To master this, a student is encouraged to join diverse student organizations on

campus, attend speaking engagements with faculty or visiting scholars focused on diversity, and focus on global citizenship through an active engagement in current events. Likewise, Gamma Fraternity suggests [three] activities that can be done within a chapter or colony that will increase member attention to diverse opinions.

During the introduction to this phase, the organization recognizes that key differences of members exist within the organization, and highlights the differences in terms of race, religion, and ethnicity. This is not inclusive of the other protected classes as listed in the organization's anti-discrimination clause. This particular phase is framed in terms of national identity and ethnic backgrounds. Where the organization promotes intercultural diversity, there is no mention of sexual orientation at all.

#### **4.1.6 Privacy policy**

Performing a simple site search for “diversity” and “discrimination” lead to the organization's privacy policy, which related to the notion of the organization disclosing member information to third party organizations. The release of this information, for example, may be to a vendor who is compiling contact information of all living members for an annual membership directory. Gamma Fraternity explicitly indicates that alumni members may be contacted to supply this information but giving it is voluntary. The policy also affirms that the diversity of its members may be sensitive, and known information about a member will not be disclosed in official correspondence within the organization.

#### **4.1.7 Statement of commitment to equal employment opportunities**

Gamma Fraternity indicates on its website that in terms of employment within the organization, that the Fraternity is committed to equal employment opportunities and will not discriminate on the bases protected by federal law. Given this, Gamma Fraternity is in compliance with federal law, and outwardly expresses its commitment to equal employment. As a private enterprise, college fraternities are still required to meet regulations set forth in common law, so Gamma's formal statement on their website highlights its commitment to equal opportunity. This seems related to the anti-discrimination clause housed in organizational policy, as the organization will neither discriminate in terms of membership, nor in employment at the (inter)national level.

## **4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS ACROSS INSTRUMENTS**

The fraternity men sampled in this study differ in race, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, socioeconomic status, among other key diversity indicators. However, the men sampled share one common characteristic: membership in Gamma Fraternity. As highlighted in the introductory chapters of this dissertation, fraternity membership requires the conforming to certain organizational values, behaviors, rituals, laws, and language (Rhoades, 1995; Anson & Marchesani, 1991). Respondent/participant engagement in this study rested on their understanding of organizational policy. Below, demographic information per population is highlighted.

#### 4.2.1 Demographic information of the survey participants

A survey, informed by the *Campus Diversity Survey* of the defunct Regional Consortium for Multicultural Education, was written, tested, and administered to 66 potential participants via a Google Docs survey link. 66 active men were E-mailed and given access to the survey, with only 1 “bounce back”. Due to the requirement that any responses remain anonymous and untraceable, I was not able to seek correction to the E-mail address. Thus, a total of 65 men were invited. A copy of this E-mail correspondence can be viewed in Appendix E. Of the 65 men invited, 40% (n=26 ) participated.

The survey collected demographic information of the participants along the lines of student status, when they affiliated with the organization, the academic year they joined, age, race, religion, sexual orientation, and in what setting they grew up. The numerical data are reported in Table 7. For clarity, percentage calculations are based off of the total number of respondents (n=26).

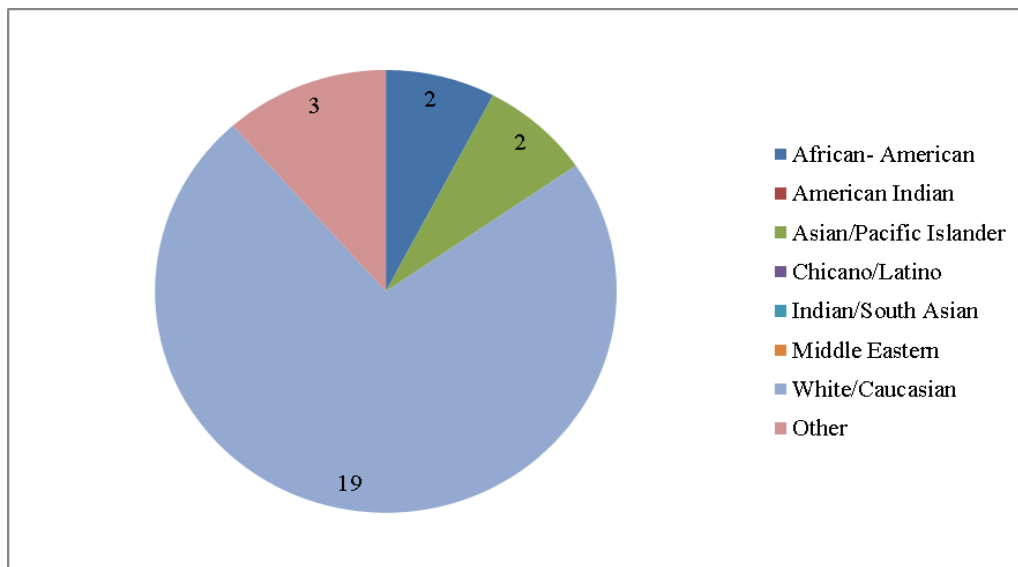
**Table 7.** Age, Academic, and Student Standing of Survey Respondents

<b>Student Status</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Full-Time Undergraduate	23	88%
Other	3	12%
<b>Academic Standing</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Freshman	2	8%
Sophomore	8	31%
Junior	8	31%
Senior	5	19%
Graduate	0	0%
Other	3	12%
<b>Age Range</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
18-20	15	58%
21-23	8	31%
Other	3	12%

In terms of the respondents, current student status, 23 (88%) indicated that they were full time undergraduate students. Few respondents (n=3; 12%) indicated that they would consider themselves as “other” but failed to write in a descriptive response of how they would identify. Likewise, 2 respondents (8%) stated they were freshmen, 8 (31%) indicated that they were sophomores, 8 (31%) identified as juniors, 5 (19%) selected “senior”, no one (n=0; 0%) said he was a graduate student, and 3 (12%) selected “other” with no descriptive response provided.

Also, 15 of the respondents (58%) indicated that they were in the age range of 18-20, with 8 respondents (31%) indicating that they were between the ages of 21 and 23. Some respondents (n=3; 12%) identified their age as “other” but did not clarify when given the opportunity.

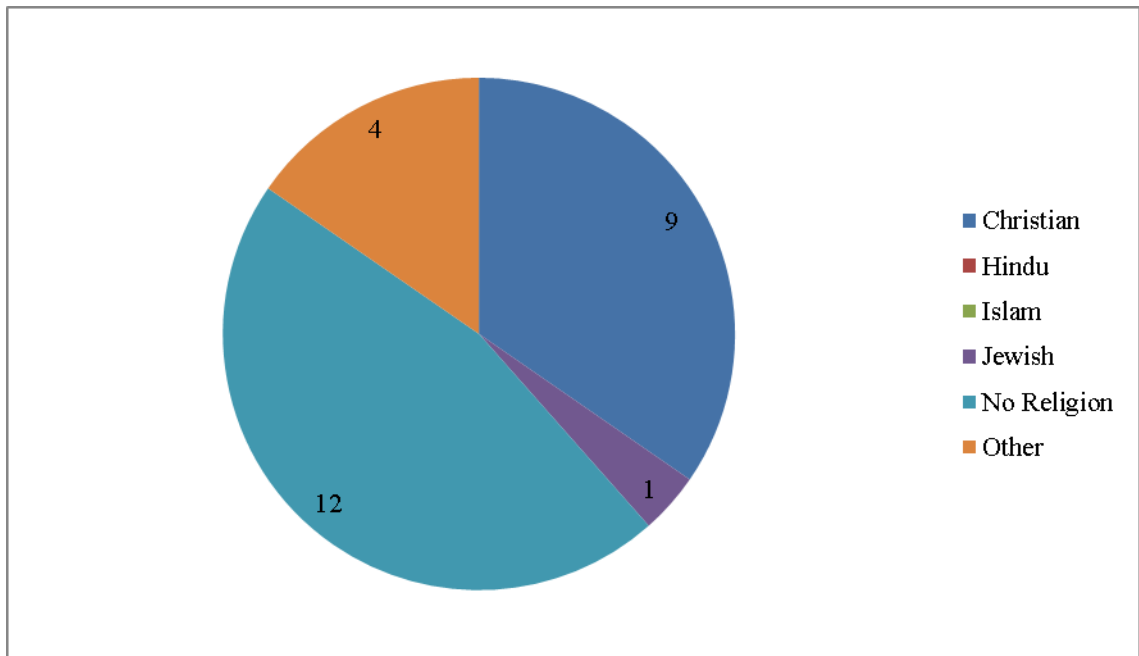
The instrument also asked about respondents’ race, religion, and sexual orientation. Figures 7, 8, and 9 visually depict respondent selections.



**Figure 7.** Race of Respondents

As indicated, a vast majority (n=19; 73%) of respondents identified as White/Caucasian. Other represented groups include 2 African-American/Black respondents (8%) and 2

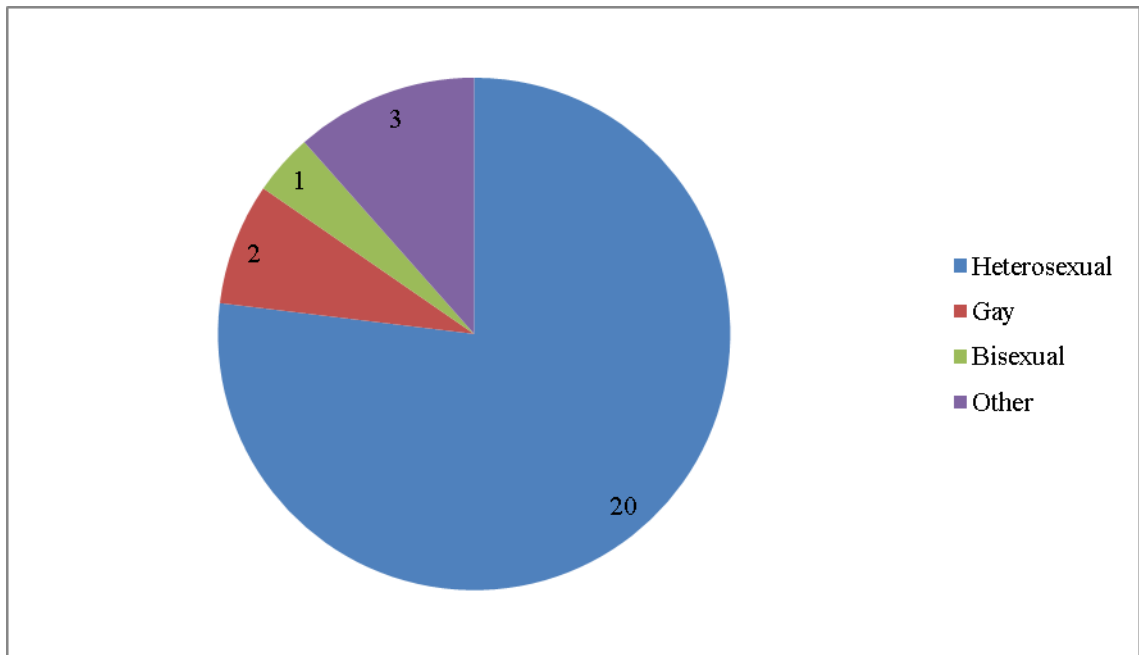
Asian/Pacific Islander (8%) respondents. Again, 3 respondents selected “other” but did not provide descriptive information when prompted.



**Figure 8.** Religion of Respondents

Interestingly, a large number of respondents (n=12; 46%) indicated that they had no religion, with Christianity following as the second highest population (n=9; 35%). Then, 1 respondent (4%) indicated that he was Jewish, and 4 respondents (15%) selected “other”. However, when prompted, the 4 respondents did not provide descriptive information.





**Figure 9.** Sexual Orientation of Respondents

A majority of respondents (n=20; 77%) indicated that they were heterosexual. Two (2) respondents (8%) selected “gay” as their sexual orientation, with 1 respondent (4%) identifying as bisexual. Again, 3 respondents (12%) identified as “other” but did not specify their orientation.

Finally, the survey prompted respondents to identify where they predominately grew up in terms of setting. Ten (10) respondents (38%) said that they hailed from a large city or metropolitan area, followed by 8 respondents (31%) coming from a rural area or town. Only 3 respondents (12%) said that they were from a small town, and 5 respondents (19%) said “other” but failed to specify.

The significance of this demographic information is foundational: that respondents are inherently diverse and have varying perspectives. Yet, it is difficult for this kind of study to link a specific diversity to a particular pattern of thought as anonymity must be maintained. Perhaps there is a particular phenomenon of how a gay 20 year old from a small town views diversity.

That, however, cannot be explored given the nature of this study. Instead, accepting that the respondents are different in their perspective may provide insight as to how the Greater Metropolitan Chapter deals with diversity issues, and exactly how welcoming the chapter is to diverse men.

#### **4.2.2 Demographic information of the focus group population**

The executive board of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter of Gamma Fraternity was invited to participate in a focus group interview. The executive committee has 12 positions, with 9 men holding executive suffrage. To make data collection more manageable, and due to the importance of voting rights in regards to the implementation of policy, participation was limited to the 9 voting members. One hundred percent (n=9) of the voting members participated in the interview. In terms of reporting, members of the focus group were labeled as Leader 1 through 9. To ensure that I was able to determine which executive was speaking in the voice recording, I took steadfast notes as to what the first few words were of each participant to guide the transcription process. No further questions were asked of the focus group participants as I did not want to link any identifiable information to the participants, thus violating the approval of the Institutional Review Board. However, it is safe to state that the participants were all undergraduate students at Greater Metropolitan University, between the ages of 18-24, and have been members of the fraternity for no less than one (1) year.

### 4.2.3 Demographic information of the interview population

After briefly consulting with the Executive Director of Gamma Fraternity, four (4) alumni leaders were invited to participate in the study. Once the study was approved by the IRB and dissertation committee, the researcher E-mailed each potential participant. Three (3) of the 4 (75%) alumni members agreed to participate. The other participant was silent, thus indicating that he did not wish to participate in the study. Each man was interviewed via a telephone call. The interviews were recorded using a voice recording device. For the purpose of this study, the participants are labeled “Leader 1, Leader 2, Leader 3” based upon their chronological interview dates.

Demographic information in terms of race, religion, and/or sexual orientation was not asked of the interview participants. However, since they were selected based on their experience with the organization, I asked each participant the following question:

You’ve given a number of years of your own life, many—if not all—on a volunteer basis to serve your fraternity. Can you tell me a bit about the roles you have played within the fraternity?

Alumnus 1 stated:

Um as an undergraduate member I was an officer—I was the vice president and secretary. And new member trainer of my...chapter. Um I stayed involved as an alumnus after I got my career started by becoming a chapter advisor, um for a starting colony of my organization and I have since been a chapter advisor of three different groups and have served on 7 advisory boards of my organization of 7 different chapters. I then went on to become a regional, um, officer, which by being a regional officer, I became a member of the international board. I then became international secretary and then international president, serving two terms each.

Alumnus 2 stated:

Well I have played uh faculty advisor to a chapter of a different fraternity than mine. I have been chapter advisor of a chapter of my fraternity. I have been a member of the governing board of my fraternity and I have been a staff member

of my fraternity. Among other thing,. I've represented the fraternity in the interfraternity world, in various positions.

Alumnus 3 stated:

Throughout my time as a volunteer for Gamma, um...when I graduated college in 1987 I immediately got onto the University of [BLANK] Alumni Council and \*cough\* excuse me, served, um. (Pause) worked with the Alumni Council in Georgia before I moved. That was back in 19---um. 98? 97? I served on the educational foundation for a few years, two years as their Vice President. I served as a Vice Regent for Gamma in Region 8, for two years then Regent in Region 9 for four years. I served as (clears throat) alumni advisor for XX Chapter for 4 years, and for the XXX colony which is now a chapter. I've served on the housing corp for XXX. I've been a Regent. I've been the international secretary, the international treasurer, and the international president for Gamma. Trying to think if I forgot anything. I've served on numerous international committees, uh, the strategic initiatives committee most recently, I'm the chair of it because I'm the international president. I served on the strategic planning committee back in the early 2000s. I've served on the investment advisory committee. I've served on the audit committee.

The alumni all played various roles within the organization, and their breadth of experience was the foundation for their selection. As they have served the organization over time, it was also a hope that they provide context for policy changes and decisions.

From here, data were collected. The next series of sections specifically address the first through the fourth study question, and reports notable data across the instruments.

### **4.3 FINDINGS RELATED TO STUDY QUESTION ONE**

The first study question posed is “What are Gamma Fraternity’s policies and/or standards regarding anti-discrimination or other diversity-related statutes at both local and (inter)national levels?” This foundational question has been addressed throughout various stages of data collection. Most specifically, the document review of Gamma Fraternity’s (inter)national bylaws

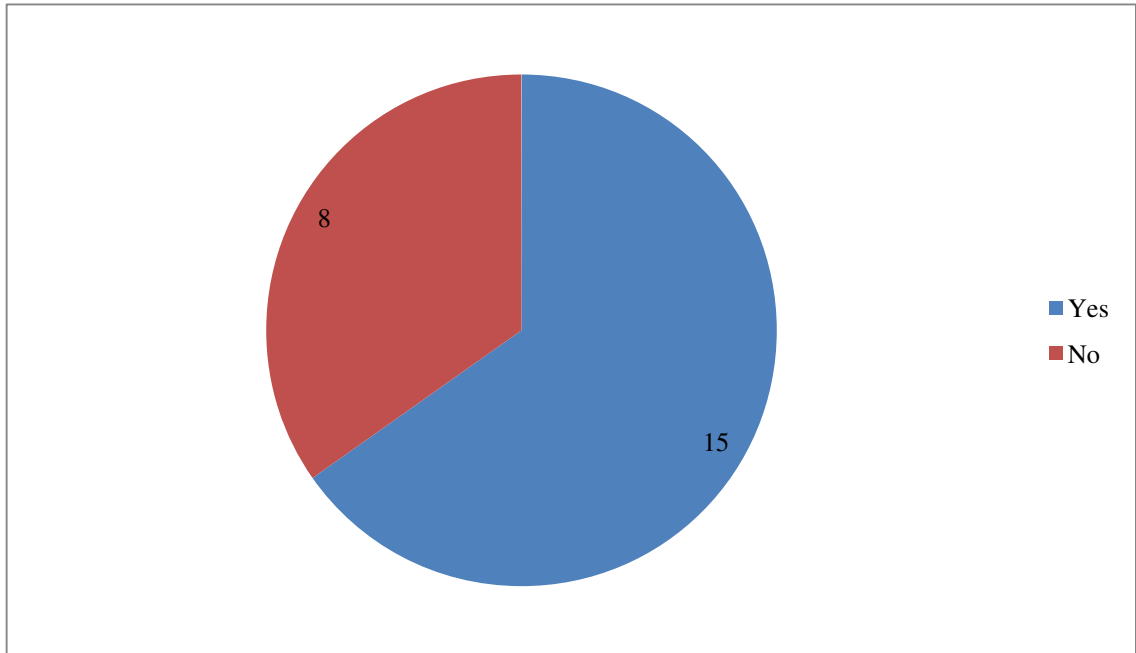
and constitution yielded relevant data linked to this question. Paraphrasing, Gamma Fraternity has a similar statement to the one that follows here in its (inter)national constitution:

In terms of membership, promotion, hiring, or any other fraternity-related activity, Gamma Fraternity will not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, creed, national origin, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, marital status, and/or disability.

A similar statement is made in reference to the organization's compliance with equal employment opportunities, as well as the organization's privacy policy where no demographic information of members will be shared with third party vendors as highlighted in the document review. The relevance of this is that these are examples of organization policy with espoused intentions. As identified in the conceptual framework for this study, Interligi (2010) suggests that an organization establishes and enforces a policy to change or ensure a particular behavior. In this sense, Gamma Fraternity has mandated that its members not discriminate. Yet, is the policy understood and/or obeyed? The data collected in this case study may determine whether the enacted reality mirrors the espoused intention.

#### **4.3.1 Understanding of organizational policy: Survey data**

The survey included an entire section on organizational governance and bylaws. The first question in the series collected in information on whether or not the respondents were aware of the anti-discrimination clause provided by the organization. Figure 10. highlights this understanding.



**Figure 10.** Awareness of an Organizational Anti-Discrimination Clause

Respondents were asked whether or not they were aware of the organization’s anti-discrimination clause prior to participating in this study. Those who indicated “yes” (n=15; 58%) implied that they knew the organization had such a clause. Yet, 31% (n=8) of respondents indicated that they did not know such a clause existed.

There is certainly a difference between being aware of a particular clause and being versed in what the policy is calling for. To better understand active fraternity men’s understanding of the policy, the survey asked if the men have read the clause and if they understand it. Table 8. presents the data linked towards this understanding.

**Table 8.** Knowledge of the Anti-Discrimination Clause

<b>Level of Understanding</b>	<b>Number (N)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Yes, I have read it and am comfortable in saying that I understand it.	8	31
Yes, I have read it but am not comfortable in saying that I understand it.	2	8
No, I have not read it.	13	50

Half of the respondents (n=13; 50%) indicated that they have not read the anti-discrimination clause, followed by 8 respondents (31%) stating that they have read it and are comfortable in saying that they understand it. As presented above, 8 respondents (31%) suggested that they were not aware of the clause, and 13 respondents (50%) indicated that they have not read it. This could account for 5 respondents being aware of the clause, but not reading it. The point here is that organizations can implement policy for an espoused intention, but this may not be enough to change the behavior of organizational stakeholders. In a sense, the ignorance of members in reading and understanding policy is a relevant factor in changing behavior. These data show that there are at least 5 respondents in the sample who are aware of the policy, but have never read it. To this end, how impactful can the policy be if it is not being read?

#### **4.3.2 Understanding of organizational policy: Focus group data**

As the executors of organizational policy, the executive board of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter of Gamma Fraternity participated in a focus group interview to measure its understanding and perceptions of utility concerning anti-discrimination clauses. Upon beginning the interview, I asked whether the participants were familiar with said anti-discrimination clauses. It should be noted that this interview occurred after the initial survey was sent out. The survey was referenced by some of the participants, so it is safe to assume that a number of them have seen the content of the survey. The following exchange between members of the executive board and me (the researcher) was most interesting concerning their understanding of anti-discrimination policies:

M: Ok. This study is concerned with protected classes. Are you familiar with protected classes, and do you know of the classes that your fraternity's national constitution protects?

(pause)

M: Let's, let's break that down-- so who is um... familiar with this concept of protected classes?

Leader 1: Can you explain?

M: Well-

Leader 3: Protected classes are citizens who are protected legally and they won't have discrimination against them. So like, you can't discriminate against them in the workplace and it's like, veteran status, age, marital status, sexual orientation, race.

Leader 8: Religion.

Leader 3: Religion. Like whether or not they have a disability—uh, and I'm not sure about that.

(Inaudible mumbling)

M: Um, so are we—does anyone know of the classes that your organization protects. (pause). So, let's start here. Who does *not* know?

Leader 1: Is this nationally or?

M: Nationally, yes. (pause). So. 7 out of 9. 7 out of 9. Um. Ok. And for those, for the two of you, do you know what the organization protects? Can you list a few of those?

Leader 3: Age, race, religion, sexual orientation. I wanna say um, marital status, but that may not be correct. And I believe veteran status, but that also may not be correct.

This exchange highlights that 7 out of 9 participants did not know what I was referring to when I referenced anti-discrimination clauses. The two that did seemingly understood the concept, but did not know exactly what their organization protects. Confusion continued by what was meant by “anti-discrimination” as highlighted in the following exchange:

M: Now in terms of your chapter bylaws. Um, now obviously with your bylaws you cannot go beneath [(inter)national law], so your chapter has to protect whatever the national organization protects. Have any of you, or rather, *do* any of you know whether your particular chapter protects beyond what is listed nationally?



Leader 1: Well, one thing is that—we require a higher GPA for our executive board and also our brothers than what is required nationally.

M: Ok. Um. In terms of the anti-discrimination clause, um, scholarship is a different category. So, you're not discriminating against someone because they have a 2.4 or whatever the case may be. But that—same line of thinking, that logic is exactly what I'm referring to so, if the organization does not protect sexual orientation, but your chapter does, that would be an example. So.

(participants laughing)

It was clear that the executive board was not confident in stating that they understood what was meant by the anti-discrimination clause, so as a reaction, I asked broader questions concerning whether or not they were familiar with the (inter)national and/or chapter bylaws. Interestingly, this concept of *relevancy* emerged as a relative issue. When asked if chapter members that were not in positions of authority have read the chapter or (inter)national bylaws, a participant answered:

Leader 8: Yeah, like, I know if they want to take on roles they read what they'd have to do and know and I think besides knowing our basic expectations, they know how the organization works. Like I think it just depends on the responsibility of—like. (pause) All of our brothers are busy people and aren't always on campus, they have a lot going on in their lives, so they know what's relevant to them.

This response was in reference to whether or not members have read the bylaws of the organization. If the initial reaction of the leaders is that members will read what is relevant to them, is it safe to assume that the only people who would read the anti-discrimination clause are those who are affected directly by it? If that is the case, would only minority students need to read the clause? Is this policy relevant for non-minority students? These larger questions stem from the responses of participants, and may be relevant to other aspects of the study.

### 4.3.3 Understanding of organizational policy: Interview data

When speaking with the alumni leaders, I was specifically interested in how they perceived how others in the organization understood Gamma's anti-discrimination clause. For each of them, I asked the following question:

This study is concerned with protected classes. Are you familiar with protected classes, and do you know of the classes that your fraternity's national constitution protects?

The responses were somewhat similar, and each shared a common theme of affirmation (that they *did* in fact know of the policy) and that the three responses all mentioned race, religion, and sexual orientation as the three most prevalent classes that the organization protects. This notion confirmed my delineation of this study to focus on these three classes of diversity as they are most notably referenced in this problem space.

Another element I was interested in exploring was whether or not the alumni leaders knew of undergraduate chapters who protect additional classes above what is listed in (inter)national policy. Though two of the participants indicated that they could not name particular chapters at the moment of the interview, all three suggested that there more than likely is a chapter within the organization that takes this issue very seriously. One (1) alumnus stated the following:

Alumnus 2: Um. I'm not personally aware of any. I wouldn't be surprised but we've broaden our protected classes to the degree that I'm not sure what else is left that would be uh, reasonable to consider.

What is interesting about this response is the element of *rationality*. This individual suggests that Gamma Fraternity's anti-discrimination clause is now encompassing of various groups and that there may not be any additional classes that they could protect in a reasonable fashion. This then evokes the question, at what point is the clause "too much?" Can there be a point where an

organization is being unreasonable in trying to protect its members? To this point, the alumnus continues:

Alumnus 2: One of the questions you have to ask yourself, and I certainly ask myself, is, is the tail wagging the dog? Are anti-discrimination policies leading the way of our keeping pace with progress in society? I think our policies and our behavior is in the vanguard. Are we playing point on these things? Do our anti-discrimination clauses—are they causing a change in our behavior? That’s hard to say. Did we get at least one chapter to change its laws based on our law, yes. But I wouldn’t use a sample of one to prove much of anything.

As highlighted here, skepticism of the policies can be seen from varying perspectives. Whereas the other participants responded with simple affirmations, or praise of the policy, this particular alumnus questions its usage. Likewise, this participant seeks data to prove the worth of this particular policy. In the absence thereof, however, this study finds its relevancy.

#### **4.3.4 Section summary**

This section focused on data that were relevant to the first study question surrounding participants’ understanding of organizational policy. In sum, a large number (13; 50%) of survey respondents indicated that they have not read the fraternity’s anti-discrimination clause. Conversely, fewer respondents (n=8; 31%) stated that they have read the clause and understood it. In terms of the active membership’s leadership, 7 out of 9 participants in the focus group interview did not know what an anti-discrimination clause was, and 1 out of the 2 that did understand it showed confusion while defining it. Finally, the alumni leaders that have participated each indicated that they were aware of the anti-discrimination clause in the fraternity’s (inter)national law, and suggested that *race*, *religion*, and *sexual orientation* were the most dominant classes of which the alumni were aware as being protected. The next section presents data relevant to the second study question.

## **4.4 FINDINGS RELATED TO STUDY QUESTION TWO**

The second study question posed is “How have fraternities historically reacted to non-white, non-Christian, and non-heterosexual men seeking membership at the local/institutional and national/international levels?” In Chapter Two, a comprehensive review of the literature highlighted how minority men have functioned in Greek lettered organizations, and to what lengths some organizations have gone to stay in the status quo. In order to better understand where Gamma Fraternity fits in with all of this, the various instruments provided relevant data to answer this contextual study question.

As indicated in the document review, Gamma Fraternity integrated as early as [1955] and is credited as being one of the first general fraternities to open its membership to non-whites (Author, 2008). The focus group interview and the survey both collected information pertaining to how the organization functions contemporarily in relation to issues of diversity, at least through the lens of one particular chapter. Yet, the historical frame to this question is best answered by alumnus members through the interview protocol.

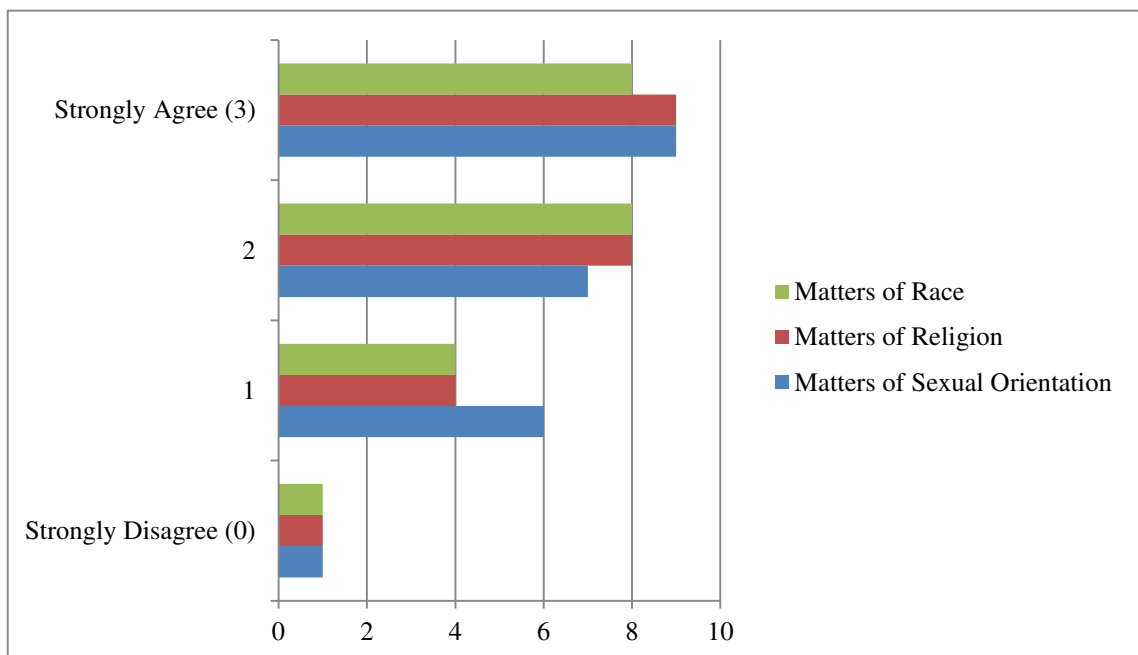
This section is separated based on the data collected per instrument of the study. The first section includes reportable findings from the survey data, followed by the data from the focus group interview and concludes with data from the individual interview protocol.

### **4.4.1 Reactions highlighted by survey data**

Again, this case study uses organizational context, alumni perceptions, and active fraternity men viewpoints to inform how organizational policy is perceived to impact minority students. To

gather perceptions about how the organization has reacted historically, the survey has framed various questions that link undergraduate perspectives to organizational initiatives.

The first question posed to collect data on how active men view their fraternity's actions in protecting minority students included a Likert scale-type prompt. Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the notion that their fraternity, at the (inter)national level thoroughly addresses issues related to race, religion, and sexual orientation. Figure 11. provides noteworthy findings collected by the survey.



**Figure 11.** Gamma Fraternity and Addressing Race, Religion, and Sexual Orientation

Although the data points are often relatively close, some findings are worth noting. For example, only 1 (4%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that the organization did not address these issues in an in-depth manner. Likewise, 9 respondents (35%) strongly agreed that Gamma effectively addresses matters of religion and sexual orientation, but only 8 respondents (31%) strongly agreed with the same notion for race. Matters of sexual orientation were also rated numerically lower (n=7, 27%; n=6, 23%) in comparison to race and religion. Essentially, this

chart identifies that though many suggest that Gamma Fraternity is effectively addressing these issues, there is still contention regarding how the organization is addressing issues of diversity.

Moreover, the survey asked respondents to identify how many times they witnessed a fellow active member engaging in certain kinds of behaviors (both positive and negative) in regards to minority students. Table 7. identifies the kind of behavior, the number, and the percentage of respondents who indicated they have witnessed it. It should be noted that, respondents were not limited to only 1 selection, so the percentages do not add up to 100%.

**Table 9.** Actions of Active Members

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Challenge others on racially derogatory comments	12	55
Challenge others on religiously derogatory comments	11	50
Challenge others on homophobic comments	15	68
Feel disapproval for a displace of public affection by a gay couple	1	5
Get to know people from different cultures and groups as individuals	20	91
Refuse to participate in comments or jokes that are derogatory to any group	16	73
Repeat a comment or joke about race, religion, or sexual orientation	13	59
Use hateful slurs, such as "Nigger" or "Faggot"	3	14
Take action to silence hate speech or rhetoric	18	82

Many respondents (n=20; 91%) indicated that the active members of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter take the time to get to know people from different cultures and groups as individuals. Likewise, 18 respondents (82%) suggest that active members in their chapter take action to

silence hate speech or rhetoric. Comparatively, only 3 respondents (14%) stated that they have heard active members use hateful slurs such as “nigger” or “faggot.” Along similar lines, 16 respondents (73%) stated that they have witnessed active men refuse to participate in comments or jokes that are derogatory to any group of people. It would seem from this sample that the Greater Metropolitan Chapter of Gamma Fraternity does not have many issues with intolerance amongst chapter membership. To test this notion and better warrant this claim, perhaps more insights may be provided from the focus group of the executive board. The next section will highlight notable findings in the focus group interview.

#### **4.4.2 Reactions highlighted by focus group data**

In order to better understand how diversity has been handled at the chapter level, the focus group interview protocol included questions set to determine how accepting the chapter is and has been, as well determine how the chapter has reacted to minority men in the past. To guide this discussion, I asked the executive board to describe how accepting they believe their chapter is to men of different races, religions, and sexual orientations. For the members that spoke, many of them emphasized how open and welcoming their chapter is to minority students:

Leader 8: They [minority men] are an asset to our chapter and, we wouldn't be where we are today without the diversity in our chapter. Yanno, the opportunities we give to diverse background they give to us.

When asked if it has always been this way, at least during their time in the chapter or what they have been told by alumni members, the men were silent and nodding in affirmation. However, one student spoke up on two separate occasions stating otherwise and was met with minor confrontation by a fellow executive member:

Leader 1: Uh. For the sake of full disclosure, there was, an instance. Well before my time joining the chapter. Um, an executive board member stepped down from his position citing in general, racism within the chapter as a whole. I believe that was about 6 years ago.

M: Ok, thank you.

Leader 8: But I would. Ha. I would say obviously whatever happened with that does not apply to this group now, and probably hasn't for a while.

In a similar situation, Leader 1 spoke again:

Leader 1: There was a time, about 3 years ago, when a transgendered male rushed. And. I was not there for when this happened. I did not hear what was like, said, or anything like that. But I know that a bid was not extended to this individual.

Leader 8: I don't think you can say that it was based on that.

Leader 1: That's what I'm saying—there is no basis for me saying that it is, but I just wanted it known that that happened.

This combative nature in the focus group could possibly have stemmed from the notion that Leader 8 did not want the Greater Metropolitan Chapter to appear as non-welcoming or accepting of minority students when the other members indicated that they were. Leader 1 was adamant about providing this information, and used terms as “for full disclosure” and “I just wanted it known that that happened.”

In terms of recruitment, I asked the executive board how they recruited new members and asked what were some of the standards they used in selecting men. A good sense of connection to senior brothers of the organization and alumni permeated with several responses. One of those responses came from Leader 4:

The way it was described to me—by an older brother—was that we look for people who excel in something, whether that's like a political organization, or a business group, or sports. Just look for something that is solid in their particular interest and as long as everything matches up to our, yanno, standards, then it doesn't matter where they come from or what their sexual orientation is, they are still treated equally.



Interestingly, this notion was alluded to by the members who suggested that they did not recruit on the basis of a person's diversity, but rather on his interests and character. Leader 1 went on to describe how the Greater Metropolitan Chapter's perspective differs from other chapters on campus:

Um. This is isn't about us, but I think fraternity chapters at [GMU] don't like, discriminate against, but would consider superficial things that this chapter would not take into account at all, so like, things like—looks. And I'm not, I'm not saying race but like, "is this guy attractive or not."

When asked to think comparatively of their chapter and other chapters of Gamma Fraternity, the leaders were hesitant to pass judgment on other chapters, and often refused to answer the question:

Leader 4: I just think it's difficult because we don't talk with other brothers from like other chapters. Like that's not something we would throw out.

Leader 8: Yanno, I was just with a chapter that just got chartered and they were a very diverse group of people but I think they welcomed the ones, like, there was 3 or 4 chapters there that was very welcoming, so I would say we are welcoming nationally based on that experience.

Leader 7: I think any of us making a judgment on this would be, short sighted, because we don't really have a grasp of the organization as a whole, nationally. That's why I'm not comfortable making that judgment.

Then, when asked how accepting their own chapter was in terms of accepting men with different races, religions, and sexual orientations on a scale from 0-5 [0 being not accepting and 5 being very accepting] the men indicated that they were "absolutely" accepting of men of different race and religion, and would rank their chapter as "6 out of 5" in terms their acceptance of sexual orientation.

Moreover, a point not discussed in this focus group interview was their awareness of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter prior to the Chapter's re-chartering in [2004]. As mentioned in Chapter One, the Greater Metropolitan Chapter of Gamma Fraternity existed on Greater Metropolitan University's campus in the early 1970's and was unrecognized for an undisclosed

risk management violation. The undergraduate men did not refer to their organization's time prior to the re-colonization in the early 2000's. Knowledge of the chapter during that time would provide a deeper understanding of chapter dynamics, and perhaps chronicle how the organization has evolved over time.

Essentially, the focus group interview identified that, in general, the Greater Metropolitan Chapter of Gamma Fraternity's executive board praised the progress made by chapter members, and that the men identify themselves as a very accepting chapter of minority men. They're reaction to minority students seems to be consistent over the years as they remain an open-minded group of men.

#### **4.4.3 Reactions highlighted by interview data**

The alumni members' perspectives and memory of significant fraternal events provide a substantial empirical answer to this specific study question. In order to yield data rich material from the participants, I asked intentional questions requiring a bit of reflection and knowledge recall. One of the questions I asked was whether or not there have been any negative reactions to organizational policy changes. For example, how did certain fraternity men react when anti-discrimination clauses or diversity-specific issues were addressed?

Alumnus 1, an African-American and former (inter)national president of Gamma Fraternity had a particularly interesting insight to such a reaction:

Alumnus 1: ...as far as my own experience, there was some times when I was elected international president there were chapters that were seated that...walked out.

M: At the time of election?

Alumnus 1: At the time of the announcement of the election results.

M: Wow.

Alumnus 1: Ha. On both my terms. Reelected president. There were some chapters that walked out again when I was announced the winner.

This particular alumnus served in the capacity of (inter)national president in the early 2000's, and emphasized that he won the election during a time where racial tension was not notably high. He continues to explain how he was received by not only his own organization, but other fraternities and sororities as well:

When I was international president, I went to a gathering and conference for all other national fraternities and sororities, and we were all meeting in the same place and same location. And, I had just become my national president. My executive director was with me and we went to a reception and a woman who was president of a national sorority came over to us and introduced herself and she first talked to our executive director and then she looked at me. I stuck my hand out to introduce myself and said "I'm..." and I started to introduce myself and even before I finished my name she said "oh I know who you are. You've been the talk of this conference." I responded to her by saying "how so?" and she said "oh, we had heard that your organization went this far and elected you as the international president." And she then turn to the executive director who had been serving our organization for a while and said "how did your organization do this? What happened. And I'm asking in a positive light because I think more organizations should be doing what had happened in yours."

The reaction of other interfraternity leaders highlighted that a predominately white organization electing an African-American as (inter)national president was groundbreaking and certainly unprecedented. Also provided in this anecdote is the notion that other organizations wanted this celebration of diversity to infiltrate their organization, and sought advice on how to do it. In a powerful message, Alumnus 1 indicates how the then Executive Director of Gamma Fraternity explained his election:

"We had an election, and the best man won."

Amidst the obvious disapproval of some fraternity men who walked out during Alumnus 1's election and reelection as (inter)national president, the fact remains that the leader was

elected by the convention floor via a majority vote. It seems as if progress towards equality was exemplified by Gamma Fraternity through that very election. Interestingly, the other alumni interviewed would both reference this particular alumnus' election as testimony to the progressive mentality of the organization as a whole. Alumnus 3 indicated:

It's gone along fine. I mean, we had a black, international president—as far as I know—of any organization. Um, and he was a very popular president. And he served two terms. Um. I think our organization is very open, quite frankly. And I don't think a person's color, or orientation, or religion plays a factor. I really don't. In most of our chapters...

Yet, was this culture of acceptance with minor setbacks always commonplace with Gamma Fraternity? Were there times of avid prejudice or apparent discrimination as dominant behavior? To answer this, I asked each participant whether they thought there was a time when the fraternity was less than accepting of diverse men. Each man indicated that there were darker periods in Gamma's history informed by their own experience. The example given by Alumnus 2 holds much relevancy:

Well not personally, but I know that historically it was not as accepting. We would in the early 1900's reject petitioning groups because they had Jewish members. Um, certainly we would reject someone if they had that--I know of a particular petitioning group that had an Asian in it, and this goes back—uh, in the early 50's, and the international organization was willing to accept the petitioning group but not him.

In this example, religious and racial intolerance is exemplified in terms of membership expansion. Interestingly, this testimonial is not found in the published comprehensive history, or anywhere else in the organizational documents reviewed.

Alumnus 1 highlights the racism he witnessed during his time as president, and the chagrin of members when he told them what he was experiencing:

I also found—and I obviously don't want to knock my own organization—but I have to tell the truth. I was surprised during my terms like I told you in being regional governor, international president, I was more shocked with the racism

that I saw or witnessed within my organization than outside of it. That kinda—and I'll use the term, “knocked the wind out of ya” haha. I mean to when your shown that more inside your organization than from outside of the organization, and we say we're even celebrating it within our organization. And—yanno, and people are surprised when I mention that I was experiencing racism inside the organization. I almost felt like saying to some people “how dare you be surprised?” “How DARE you be surprised!” And like I said that kind of left a mark to what I felt like now, experiencing the racism from within the organization than from without. And yanno, I said this is kind of funny because I looked at our organization's founding and our national creed and all that stuff and the commitments and I said “should I be experiencing this?” and I came up with a resounding “no” I shouldn't be. But I am, and that's OK because it's gonna end up making me a stronger person. And if I have to fight within the organization--- than it's gonna make me.

Here, Alumnus 1 is detailing his internal struggle with addressing this issue and identifying the dichotomy that exists between what the organization says it stands for, and what is actually being enacted. His experience shapes his perspective on the topic of diversity, and impacts his level of trust in the organization itself.

Finally, after trying to collect information on how the organization functioned in the past in terms of discrimination and diversity, I asked whether the leaders were content with where the organization was and where it is now. Their responses were both insightful and genuine.

Alumnus 3, in his current role with the organization, speaks from a reactionary perspective, in that he believes things are going well because there are no situations to prove otherwise:

Well, that's a difficult question for me to answer because of course I'm going to say “yes” because there are not problems popping up through my E-mail or through yanno people rattling the cage saying “there's a problem there's a problem there's a problem.” So, I'm content in that sense. Am I content in saying that every undergraduate chapter is being non-discriminatory and open? It's hard for me to answer that because I don't know what every chapter is doing. I can only go by what my board is telling me is going on, and what I hear through the grapevine. Now if I hear—for example, I heard of one chapter who will not be named had a racial incident. And needless to say we jumped all over that to see what was going on. Yanno, in my eyes, there's not tolerance for that and I sent that message to my board instantly. Um. I feel very good that the chapters in my organization are diverse and welcome all kinds of people.

Similarly, Alumnus 2 indicated his contentment for how things have gone thus far:

Well first of all your initial question is am I content. And I would say that I am pleased with our progress. Have we arrived to the point of being color blind, religion blind, yanno and so on? We have not. Yanno, but as long as we continue to make progress, uh. I'm pleased. And I think we've come a significant—yanno, I like to use the concept, if the standard is perfection, uh, we're wanting. If the standard is reasonable to expect and be able to achieve, I think we're doing very well.

Alumnus 1 provides a rather more skeptical response to how the fraternity has managed diversity:

First of all from my experience, I think these chapters can do a whole hell of a lot more of even recruiting these men. (Pause) And—and I don't mean just recruiting and putting them in, but I think even at our international level we could be doing a whole of a lot more to even celebrate those kind of things. I know some people think, even from my own experience, let's not make a big deal out of it and, and I agree with that to an extent, but I don't think it's something we have to hide in the back of the room either. Yanno you gotta find that balance between the two.

What's most notable about all three of these responses is this notion of *attention to diversity*.

Alumnus 2 mentioned blindness to race, religion, and other factors. Likewise, Alumnus 3 mentioned a racial incident and talked about how there's no *tolerance* for these kinds of issues.

Alumnus 1 argues that more needs to be done to recruit diverse men. The common denominator in all three of the responses is that the men have affirmed this issue of discrimination and diversity as a key issue by suggesting that the organization still has progress to be made. Part of that progress is achieving acceptance through policy. This concept will be addressed more thoroughly through the findings related to study question 3.

#### **4.4.4 Section summary**

This section provided data that addressed the second study question, which asked how fraternities have historically reacted to diverse men. These data, mixed with the comprehensive

review of literature suggest that each organization, and specific chapter, has dealt with this issue in varying ways.

The survey data yielded interesting findings as 9 respondents (35%) indicated that religion and sexual orientation were dealt with properly by the fraternity at the (inter)national level, and 8 respondents (31%) suggested the same in terms of race. Locally, 18 respondents (82%) stated that they have witnessed chapter members silencing hate speech, though only 3 respondents (14%) indicated that they have heard chapter members using hateful slurs. It would seem here that the members of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter are actively discouraging hateful remarks.

The focus group of the Chapter's executive board provided notable data that is worth repeating. Leader 1 provided an instance where a former executive board member stepped down from his position due to perceived racism. The other members of the focus group were quick to respond and discredit the anecdote, suggesting that such behaviors are not tolerated by the chapter anymore. This exchange is notable as the participants were growing in their defense of their chapter's reputation.

Finally, the experience of Alumnus 1 as highlighted in the individual interviews included members walking out of the convention meeting where he was elected as (inter)national president due to his race. The other alumni participants indicated that they would only know negative reactions to race if it were brought to their attention. In this sense, unreported instances of racism, anti-Semitism, or homophobia could still be occurring with little to no oversight of it at the (inter)national level.

The next segment provides interesting findings from collected data that addresses the third study question.

## **4.5 FINDINGS RELATED TO STUDY QUESTION THREE**

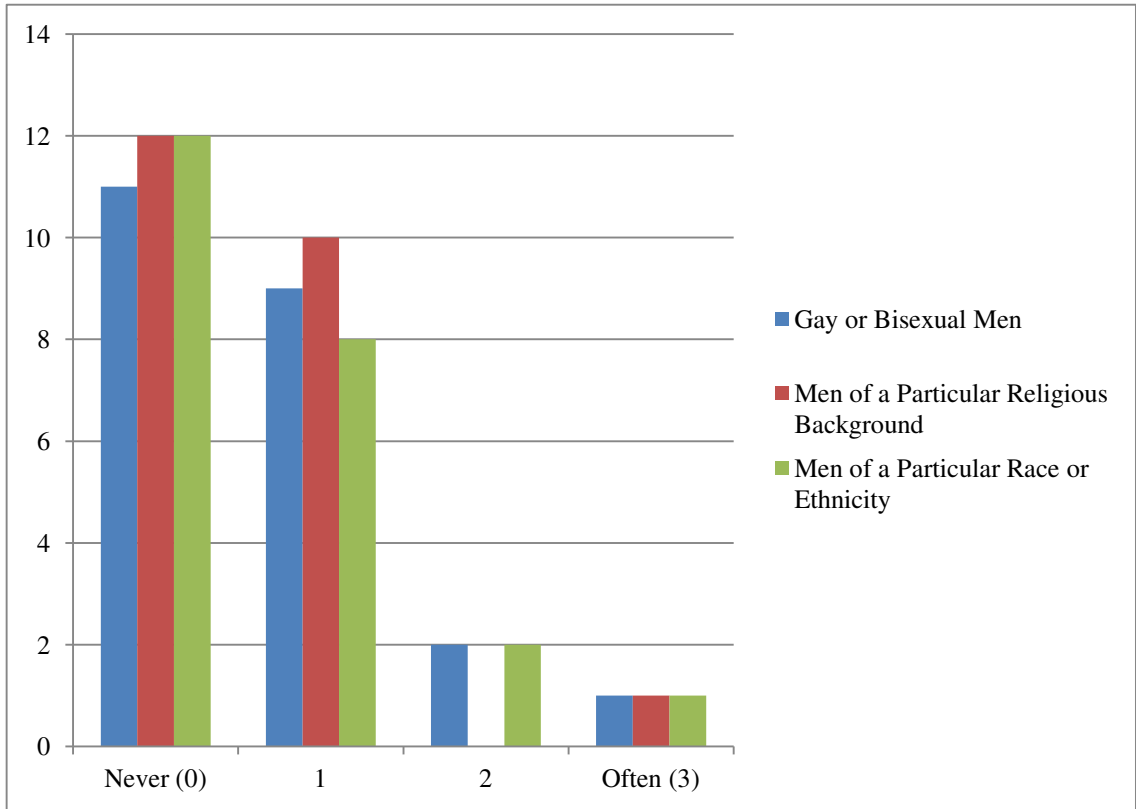
The third question posed in this study is “What are active fraternity men’s perspectives on the effectiveness of anti-discrimination clauses in fraternal legislation in protecting the interests of diverse members?” This study question is answered drawing upon the data collected in the focus group, interview, and survey processes. This section is organized by the data collected via each instrument. The section begins with the findings of the survey, followed by the focus group protocol, and finally expresses notable data from the interview protocol.

### **4.5.1 Effectiveness measured by the survey**

The survey asked respondents a number of questions aimed at collecting data on their perspectives of the utility of anti-discrimination clauses in fraternity policy. The following figures will present interesting numerical findings from the survey.

In order to gauge how fraternity men perceive the utility of anti-discrimination clauses, it was important to have them identify any instances of discrimination, harassment, or bullying within their chapter and how these were or might have been affected by the policies in place. Using a numerical scale (0 to 3 where 0 is never and 3 is often), the fraternity men were asked to identify the frequency of an active member making insensitive and disparaging remarks about men of different races, religions, and sexual orientations. Figure 12. presents the findings of the respondents:

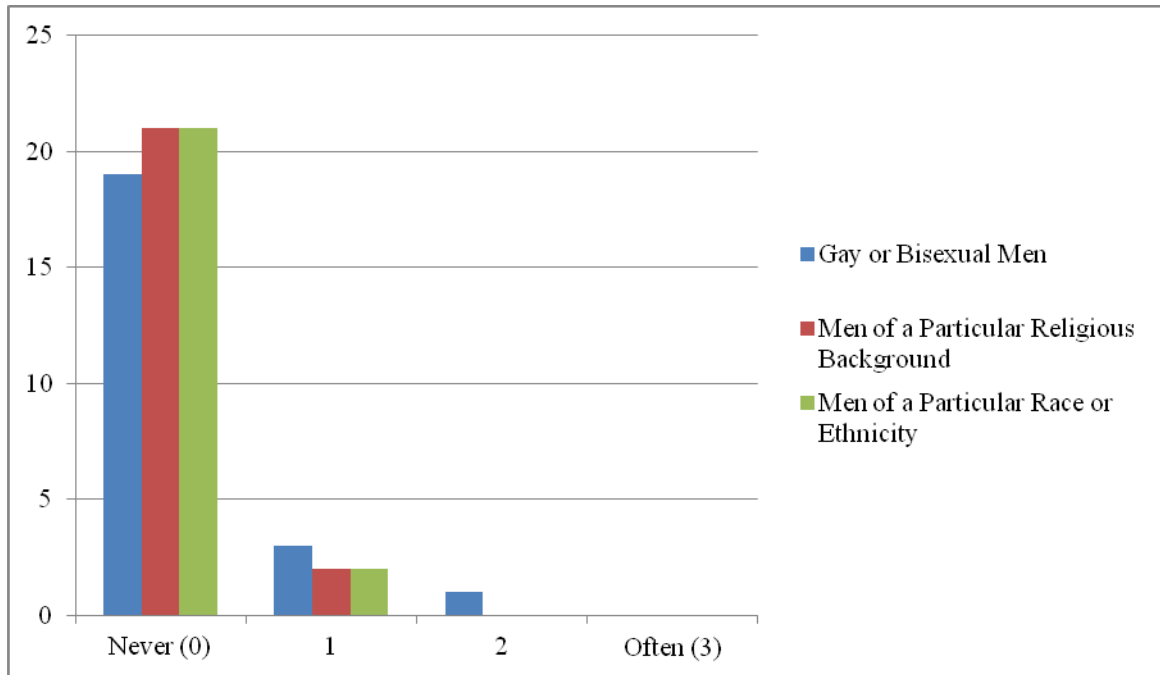




**Figure 12.** Active Member Disparaging Remarks Concerning Minority Men

Notable is the fact that on the grounds of race, religion, and sexual orientation, 1 respondent (4%) noted that these comments are made often for each classification of member. Twelve respondents (46%) stated that they have never heard an active member say any disparaging about men of a particular racial or religious background. Also, no respondent (n=0; 0%) indicated a score of 2 for men of different religious backgrounds, which could be a result of respondents feeling polarized on the issue (either never or often with no degree in-between). These data show that consensus is not reached on this matter, and that though a majority of respondents indicated that they never or rarely hear comments being made, some have witnessed such behavior.

Along similar lines, the survey asked the respondents to rate the frequency of alumni members making disparaging remarks about men of different races, religions, and sexual orientations. Figure 13. reports these findings in a similar visual representation.

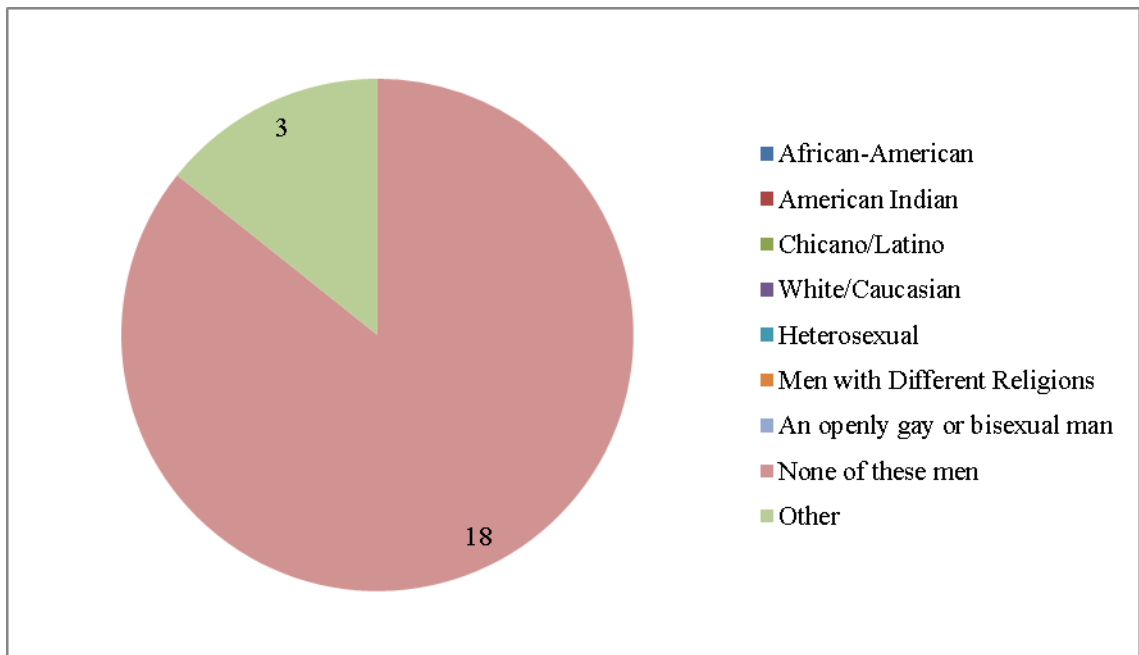


**Figure 13.** Alumni Member Remarks Concerning Minority Men

Most notably from this representation is that there is no data indicated for the “often” or score of 3. Likewise, sexual orientation seems to be the most common target for negative remarks, as 1 respondent (4%) indicated a score of 2, and 3 respondents (12%) indicated a score of 1. The data suggests that alumni members may make fewer comments, but comments concerning sexual orientation are the most prevalent. Yet, it should be noted that alumnus members of fraternities are typically observed by active members through alumni-specific events or in advisory roles, so this data is only indicative of what the respondents have heard in the past and not conclusive concerning all alumni members’ behavior.

Next, respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they have ever felt discriminated against, even subtly, in their chapter. If a respondent indicated a response of “yes,” they would be taken to a separate page of the survey that inquired about what they believed was the primary reason for this and in what form the discrimination or harassment was expressed. Twenty three respondents (88%) indicated that they have not felt discriminated against or harassed in their chapter, and 0 (0%) respondents indicated that they have. Three participants elected not to answer this question.

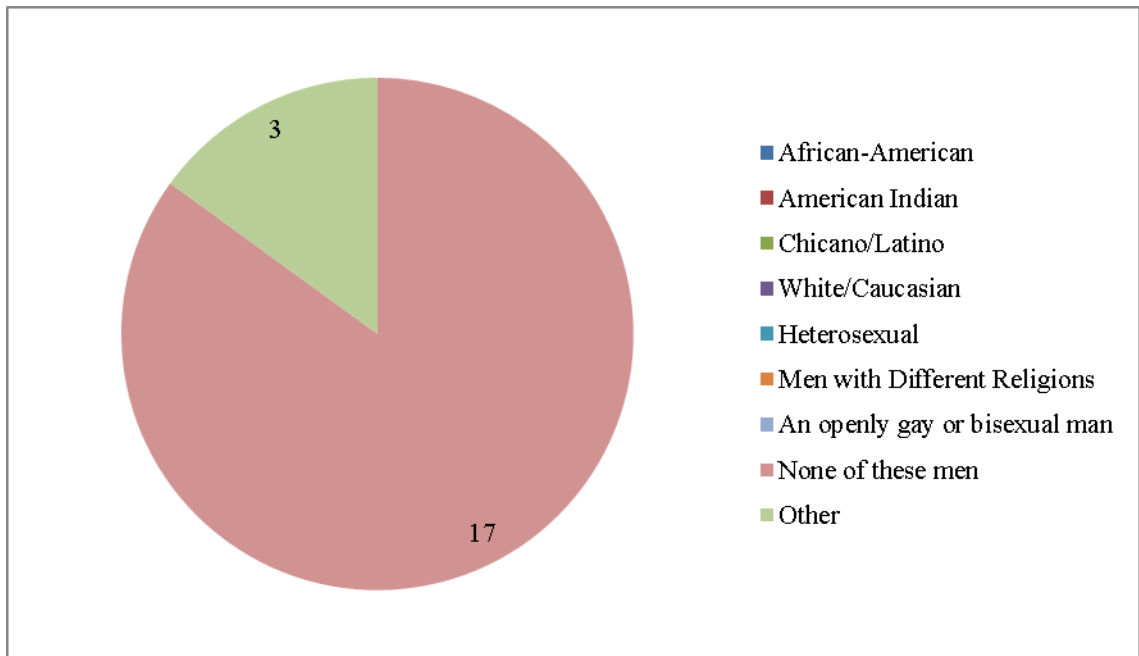
Furthermore, the survey provided a list of minority populations and asked which of these men, if any, would respondents not feel comfortable extending a bid of membership to and initiating. Figures 14. and 15. provide the responses to these prompts:



**Figure 14.** Extending a Bid of Membership

For this question, 18 respondents (95%) indicated that they would not deny a bid of membership to a man of any of these particular diversities. Though 3 men (16%) indicated “other,” they did not provide clarification in the open-ended prompt that followed. This data indicates that a vast

majority of respondents would not deny a man an opportunity of membership based on this reason alone.



**Figure 15.** Comfort Levels Initiating Minority Men

Along similar lines, 17 respondents (89%) indicated that they would not deny formal initiation into the fraternity to any of these men based on their diversity. Again, 3 respondents (16%) indicated “other” but did not specify as to what their opinion on the matter was.

The relevancy of these questions is foundational; they posit prejudice in the recruitment and membership selection process. The data furthers the notion that the chapter may be comprised of members who are progressively thinking, or at the very least not comfortable making a decision on the basis of race, religion, or sexual orientation.

Next, the survey asked whether or not chapter members have witnessed a man rallying *in favor* of a man due solely to his particular diversities (e.g. recruiting a man just because he’s gay) or witnessing a man rallying *against* a man due solely to his particular diversities (e.g. voting no just because a man is Jewish). The data shows that 22 respondents (85%) indicated that they

have never witnessed a fellow chapter member rallying against a man due to his diversity, as opposed to 1 respondent (4%) indicating that they have. The data also shows that 18 respondents (69%) indicated that they have not seen a fellow chapter member rallying in favor of a man based on his diversities, though 5 respondents (19%) indicate that they have. This finding shows that in the few occurrences where this has happened, men were more likely to use a person's diversity for promotion over discrimination.

Finally, the survey asked five open-ended questions, where respondents were given the space to qualify an open response. Three of the five questions provided data relevant to this study question. Qualitative data was "chunked" together based on emergent themes and patterns to make analysis more manageable (Rubin and Rubin, 2009). An example of this data analysis strategy can be viewed in Appendix I. For clarity, this section is further broken down by the following survey question:

*In your opinion, what is the purpose of anti-discrimination clauses in fraternity bylaws?*

In total, there were 20 responses (77%) to this question. Several key words emerged in the responses that have been labeled as themes. The three prevalent themes are "protect" "constitution" and "ensure". Some notable responses include:

- It is to protect the rights of groups of people who have historically been discriminated against by fraternities and society in general. Fraternities originally started as social clubs for straight rich white protestant men, and they discriminated against other groups such as Jews, racial minorities, and homosexuals. The clauses in fraternity bylaws today are put into place to aid the elimination of these discriminatory policies. Unfortunately, this is not the case at many fraternities; although this is not the case for my chapter. While I have been a member, and as long as I am an active alumnus, this chapter will never discriminate against any man. Membership shall be extended to man who meets are requirements of character, personality, academics, and leadership; no other criteria shall be used and these criteria will not be used as a veil for discriminatory policies.

In this response, the respondent not only defines what an anti-discrimination clause is, but he also provides a brief historical context for the clauses, and then personalizes his response to how he views his chapter. As he indicated, the purpose of the clause is to “protect” the rights of the minority students.

Another respondent indicated:

- To ensure that the fraternity is not allowing its chapters to openly act in ways inconsistent with the principles of morality taught in the fraternity ritual.

Here, the policies are there to “ensure” that fraternity members are living up to its organization’s principles and values. A more direct approach to “ensuring” certain behaviors is found with these responses:

- To ensure that bids are extended on a fair basis
- To ensure that we are bidding men based on the quality of character and not on issues such as race/religion/sexuality

This respondent is delineating from a general sense of how people interact interpersonally, and into the realm of policy actually impacting how decisions are made within the organization.

In terms of those respondents who invoked the organization’s constitution, several statements concerning their utility as a function of law proved to be data rich:

- To not exclude any members basic rights as given by the constitution.
- To explicitly state that our fraternity will not discriminate against anyone based on race, creed, sexual orientation, etc. It also provides an enforceable clause that can be used to reprimand chapters and individual brothers who break it. I have never seen that done however, as we never had an issue with discrimination in my experience so far.

- To put rules that, in my opinion, should be evident to all in writing.

These responses suggest that anti-discrimination clauses are policy-related issues and are to promote the basic rights afforded to all Gamma members. These examples have shown that respondents find these clauses to be relevant and at the very least understand their purpose.

Another question aimed at identifying whether or not active men believed that the clauses were working in protecting minority men. Below is the survey question employed to collect this data:

*Do you believe that anti-discrimination clauses protect minority populations? Why or why not?*

A total of 19 (73%) of respondents provided an answer to this question. The question is asking for a “yes” or a “no” response followed by an explanation. Six of these responses (32%) were in the affirmative with no caveats provided. A few examples of responses include:

- Yes, because the power of the courts.
- Yes, it makes members more open to them
- I believe they can, because institutional policies trickle down to individual beliefs. On an individual level, if a minority is discriminated or harassed for their minority status, the presence of an anti-discrimination clause empowers them to speak against it. Without such institutional foundation, the person has much less power.

Those that answered in the affirmative cite various reasons why the clauses function effectively, including being backed by common law or the law of the land, or the clauses’ ability to influence members’ prejudices.

Next, 11 respondents answering this prompt (58%) indicated that though the clauses could protect minority populations, there are other factors involved. In this sense, the clauses should work in theory, but not necessarily in practice. Sample responses include:

- Theoretically yes, but in practice, not really. If a fraternity is full of homophobes, its members, won't let a gay man join (because of his orientation), even if their reasoning suggests it's for a different reason.
- In practice, yes, but various chapters can choose to follow or ignore bylaws. Very similar to hazing (which our chapter does not support, condone, or use), discrimination is something most if not all (inter)national fraternities have prohibited but still takes place in certain chapters. I believe the culture of a social fraternity inevitably is a larger contributing factor that relates to discrimination rather than bylaws.

Finally, 2 respondents (11%) indicated that no, these clauses do not work. The respondents state:

- No. People seem to act according to their beliefs regardless of these clauses.
- No, I believe the actives will vote to bid based on values and principles, whether they are pro or anti diversity.

These responses are noteworthy because they admit to the notion that members of the organization, as people, have certain beliefs and value systems and that policy is ineffective in changing this. This idea is often the core belief behind discrimination, and the idea that policy should change perspective has become a fundamental argument in diversity in Greek life (Syrett, 2009). If a man has prejudices, are these not his to have? Gamma Fraternity, according to its espoused values, would say no. Yet, these respondents are not necessarily agreeing with that argument, but have accepted the idea that policy may not be the best way to protect minority populations. The next question on the survey directly dealt with this issue and addressed whether anti-discrimination clauses are foundationally relevant. The instrument asked:

*Do you believe minority populations need to be protected via national and chapter bylaws? Why or why not?*

For this question, 19 respondents provided a qualitative response. The responses to this question were more polarized than the question previously asked, with 10 respondents (53%)



answering in the affirmative, 2 respondents (11%) indicating yes, but not in the Greater Metropolitan Chapter, and 7 respondents (37%) indicating that they do not need to be protected.

In answering in the affirmative, the following select responses highlight the rationale as to why minority students need to be protected by anti-discrimination clauses:

- Yes, the protection allows nationals and chapters to force brothers and chapters to treat everyone fair Since [sic] the laws don't work in a lot of cases
- Yes. It is necessary for these clauses to be embodied so that if chapters want to affect change, they have a legal means to do so.ly [sic] if they do not want to themselves.
- Yes, because discrimination does occur and chapter bylaws that prohibit this behavior can be used to discipline chapters that do not comply.

These respondents are suggesting that the policy “forces” certain behaviors of members. In this case, the respondents are advocating that this *forcing* is necessary as a means to gain compliance. This idea is not included in Interligi’s (2010) notion of organizational compliance, as compliance to a policy, though mandated to be in good standing with an organization, is not “forced” upon a member. Should an organizational member not wish to comply, they may leave the organization. The same principle is invoked here, yet the interpersonal bonds built within Greek-lettered organizations often makes it difficult for a man to disassociate (Syrett, 2009; Rhoades, 1994).

Next, 2 respondents (11%) indicated that minority populations should be protected but that it is not a relevant issue for the Greater Metropolitan Chapter. The respondents state:

- Perhaps at the national level, i'm [sic] not sure how other chapters are. The [GMU] chapter does not need protections for minority populations, the brothers are extremely accepting and comfortable with members of different backgrounds/sexual orientations.
- With our chapter no, but I believe the reason they are at that level is to keep the lesser chapters accountable by a law

These respondents praise their chapter as competent in dealing with issues of diversity and one even continues to suggest that “lesser” chapters need these clauses more than they. This concept of *need* is profound, as these clauses are occurring at the (inter)national level and may not be relevant to a particular chapter. Yet, does this mean that the policy is not relevant for other chapters? Could the Greater Metropolitan Chapter one day need these policies? These questions do not seem to concern the sampled members of the chapter.

Finally, 7 respondents (37%) indicated that the minority men do not need to be protected through law. The respondents state:

- No. Greek organizations have their own unique personalities that will not be influenced by any bylaw. If a person is worried about being discriminated against if they join a certain organization they should find another one to join.
- No, I believe that people in our world today make too large of a deal about the protection of minorities, because personally I do not view any member of a minority differently due to their minority. I believe any stereotypes that are thrown at any member of a minority is brought upon themselves due to their own actions or words
- No, I believe that the men of the chapter need to have the values instilled in them. It can be written in the by-laws, but if the entire chapter is not embracing of diversity, the by-laws will serve little relevance and actives will simply ignore them and vote the way they initially would

These responses are interesting because they invoke a very real debate in terms of the protection of minority populations. The first and third responses are organizational, in that they dualistically present expectations of membership; if one does not like a policy of an organization, he should simply leave. This is a fair assessment, though as suggested earlier, it is often difficult to leave an organization that promotes interpersonal relationships.

The second response deals more with perception. The respondent indicates that he does not view a person based solely on his or her diversity, so there should be no organizational policy

that makes him comply with something that is not relevant to him. The other part of his statement has to do with this notion of stereotyping. Duckitt (1992) presents the psychological notion of disgust, and suggests through an empirical study of various control groups that there is little to nothing that can be done to reverse the psycho-social feelings of prejudice in a person, but much that can be done to create an inner-argument with one's self that keeps feelings tamed (Duckitt, 1992). So, in this case, the respondent is indicating that a stereotype is brought on by the minority population and that the population is responsible for the treatment they then experience. Though not the focus of this study, this notion of individual prejudice may prove itself to be a foundation for future research.

#### **4.5.2 Effectiveness measured by the focus group protocol**

During the focus group interview, the participants spoke at length concerning how diversity is received by their chapter membership. As indicated previously, the Greater Metropolitan Chapter prides itself on its high level of multiculturalism and commitment to diversity. To determine the executive board's perceptions on the utility of anti-discrimination clauses, I simply asked if the group agrees that minority men need to be protected. The answer was a resounding "absolutely." As a follow up, I asked whose responsibility it was to protect minority students, assuming that the anti-discrimination policy is being followed. The responses were notable:

Leader 4: All of our responsibility, I think. Yanno, I can say with confidence that if any of our brothers felt that there was an issue with that and anyone in the chapter or a group as a whole was doing something to hurt the rights of protected groups, or were doing something discriminatory that they would be addressed by the chapter. Or, if not, I would feel confident in saying a lot of our brothers would stand up and say something.

Leader 8: And just to piggy back off of what he said, I think also the usage of the expectations of the fraternity as a whole is really common in this chapter, for one

brother to push another brother and say, do not disobey this expectation or I challenge you to correct your behavior. I would have a much more favorable impression of a brother in that regard.

The two student leaders are highlighting the notion that the organization self-regulates and polices its members' behavior. Reaching this point in an organization is difficult as it often requires confrontation and setting an example. Yet, each member being responsible to each other in taking anti-discrimination from policy to practice is an important trend.

Next, I asked the executive board whether or not the current policies and standards that are in place within the organization were enough to protect minority students. Keeping with the theme of not casting a judgment on others, Leader 8 gave the sole response of the group:

We can only speak for our chapter at hand and we are utilizing the bylaws fully to protect brothers in our chapter. And I'm not speaking for this university as a whole or for this organization nationally, but here, because of who we are, we attribute protecting diverse men to the best of our ability and we kind of enjoy working together to do so.

This response is noteworthy because it brings the question I posed back into the realm of interpersonal relationships. Essentially, this leader is saying that anti-discrimination and protecting minority members is the responsibility of all fraternity members in the given chapter. This particular chapter has been able to capitalize on this process and develop their brotherhood from working collaboratively.

### **4.5.3 Effectiveness measured by the interview protocol**

Similarly to the focus group protocol, I asked each alumnus I interviewed whose responsibility it was to protect minority students and whether or not the current policies in place were enough. Much like the data collected in the focus group, the interview data proved noteworthy as well.

Alumnus 3 provided a metaphor that summed up his position that the alumni leadership needs to be leading by example to promote change in the organization:

If the North South Chapter says we don't like yellow flowers, yanno if the leaders of that chapter are saying we don't like yellow flowers, then the undergraduates are not going to like yellow flowers, they're just simply not gonna let it happen. But if the leaders of the North South Chapter say "hey, we like yellow flowers, they're great flowers, and they're welcome, they're just another flower in the group of flowers." Then, I think the undergraduates will be more receptive to that. I think that especially in today's world, the leadership of the organization has to be sending the right message down through the organization to the undergraduates.

This metaphor of "yellow flowers" stands for a particular diversity of a given member. According to Alumnus 3, if the leadership does not set an example, the undergraduate members will not follow suit.

Alumnus 2 presents a more dualistic vision that the organization is responsible in protecting minority students. When asked whose responsibility this was, Alumnus 2 indicated:

L: Well, the cute answer is all [Gammas]. Yanno, certainly the governing board, the staff, yanno have to comply with the organization's laws.

M: Do you believe your organization has a responsibility to protect these students?

L: Oh yes. When it puts these anti-discrimination policies in its law, it has accepted this obligation.

At a foundational level, all members of the organization are now obligated to help protect minority members due to the fact that the organization has codified anti-discrimination clauses. In this sense, regardless whether one believes in the spirit and/or letter of the law, they are required to support the action of the organization, and promote its initiatives.

Finally, Alumnus 1 attributes this responsibility to protect minority men to a more personal justification:

Well, it goes on to each member and to everyone who's in my organization. Because of the obligations they swore [sic] to when they joined. I think that just falls under being a decent human being.

Resounding what Alumni 2 and 3 have said, Alumnus 1 believes that protecting minority men is a responsibility of the members of Gamma, not only on that premise, but also on the principle that human decency requires ensuring equity of opportunity and the promotion of justice for all people. As stated previously, college fraternities provide the opportunity for numerous interpersonal relationships to be formed. Yet, as reminded by Alumnus 1, a member's humanity should never be ignored.

#### **4.5.4 Section summary**

This section provided findings concerning fraternity men's perceptions of utility concerning anti-discrimination clauses in fraternity bylaws. Across all three instruments, the participants' opinions were direct.

From the survey, a relatively large number (n=7; 37%) of respondents indicated that they did not feel as if legislation was the best means of protecting minority men in college fraternities. Few (n=2; 11%) suggested that the clauses may work in theory, but that it simply was not relevant for their particular chapter because the active men do not have negative experiences with diversity. Likewise, the focus group data reaffirmed this, as Leader 8 credited the chapter alumni with creating an accepting atmosphere.

Finally, the alumni leadership provided interesting insights into whose responsibility it is to protect minority men in college fraternities. Alumnus 1 indicated that protecting minority men is a testament to being a "decent human being." Alumnus 3 took a more organizational approach and stated that leaders must set an example of inclusiveness with hopes that it will

trickle down to the general membership. Regardless, the data affirmed the notion that the active fraternity men did not see the clauses as relevant to their chapter, where the alumni leadership believed that the clauses are necessary, but that there are higher purposes for creating an environment of inclusion.

The next section presents findings relevant to study question four, and ends the data reporting section of the chapter.

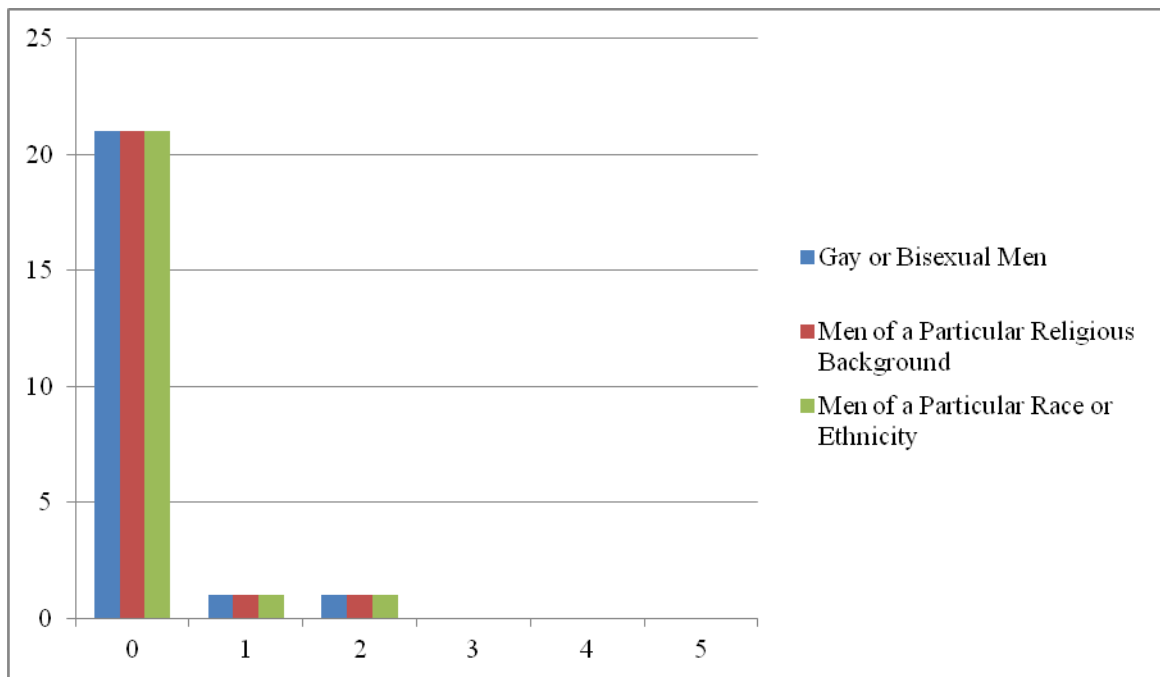
## **4.6 FINDINGS RELATED TO STUDY QUESTION FOUR**

The final question posed by this study is “What are active fraternity men’s perspectives on the effectiveness of anti-discrimination clauses in fraternal legislation in contributing to a sense of belonging among chapter members?” This question is interested in determining whether or not fraternity men perceive anti-discrimination policies as effective in building a stronger sense of brotherhood in an organization. This section presents findings across the various instruments employed in this study. It begins with an analysis of the survey data, followed by findings reported in the focus group and interview protocol.

### **4.6.1 Reported findings from the survey**

The survey asked various questions aimed at understanding the current state of chapter affairs in terms of brotherhood. Though this concept of *brotherhood* may be vague, its use in the study relates to a sense of belonging and positive experiences as witnessed by members. Some of the questions asked members to identify if there were any recent fraternity events where certain

minority would not feel welcomed. Using a numerical scale from 0-5, the survey asked fraternity men to identify the number of times they have been present at a fraternity event where men of different races, religions, or sexual orientations would feel unwelcome. Figure 16. visually depicts these findings:



**Figure 16.** Welcoming Fraternity Events

In this representation, the data shows an overwhelming number of respondents (n=21; 81%) indicating that there has not been a time where men of different races, religions, or sexual orientations would not feel welcomed. A fewer number of respondents (n=1; 4%) indicated that there have been 1 or 2 times where a man of the same would not feel welcome. From this data, it is safe to assume that affiliating with the Greater Metropolitan Chapter of Gamma Fraternity would provide a minority student with a welcoming atmosphere.

Next, the survey asked whether respondents believed that anti-discrimination clauses contribute to a sense of belonging amongst chapter members. Respondents were given an open-



ended field where they could input their responses. As done in previous sections, the qualitative data will be organized in a bulleted format for clarity.

A total of 16 respondents (62% of original 26) answered this question. Of those 16 respondents, only 5 (31%) answered in the affirmative, 2 (13%) indicated that they could not say, and 9 (56%) respondents indicated that they did not.

Of those respondents indicating that the anti-discrimination clauses do, in fact, contribute to a sense of belonging, the following exemplars share common themes:

- Yes! Everyone feels that they won't be discriminated here in the fraternity.
- Yes they feel welcome and safe
- Yes, It's something we can always point to as an important ideal in our chapter and in the fraternity on a national level.

These respondents suggest that the anti-discrimination clauses make chapter members feel as if they are protected by the organization. Likewise, one of the responses suggests that this is a policy that the organization can be proud of, and that minority students may feel welcomed due to the fraternity's commitment to them.

Conversely, the 9 respondents (56%) who stated that the clauses did not contribute to a sense of belonging have strong opinions as to why:

- No. A sense of belonging comes from having a great brotherhood that respects everyone for their differences. If brothers are just tolerant because of rules, it won't change how they actually feel.
- No, discrimination has never been an issue in our chapter and I do not think many actives have even read our anti-discrimination clause - namely due to the fact that bidding based on race/religion/ethnicity has never been an issue with our chapter.
- No. Our chapter has many brothers who are openly homosexual or bisexual as well as many brothers of various ethnic background, race, and religion. An anti-discrimination clause did not affect the chances of us

extending membership to these individuals. I believe these clauses exist in order to discipline rather than to encourage diversity.

- I don't think anti-discrimination clauses have ever added to the positive sense of belonging that defines our chapter. We have created a very positive and accepting culture that is passed on through exemplary action of our brothers that is built upon the diversity we already have. I don't imagine that most people ever think about the anti-discrimination clause in the bylaws.

The latter three responses are specifically directed towards the Greater Metropolitan Chapter. Since these men have never seemingly experienced discrimination, or that the Chapter has not had to deal with the issue, the clause is not relevant to them, and thus is not credited with providing to the sense of belonging in the chapter. The first response, however, discusses this notion of *tolerance* versus *acceptance*. Sue and Sue (2007) and Talbot (2003) discuss that a part of multicultural competency development is moving beyond this notion of tolerance (in that one chooses not to negatively react to a minority) to acceptance (where one has no adversity towards a person based on their particular diversity). This respondent is suggesting that having a policy to promote tolerance does not change prejudice and discrimination. Perhaps in this respondent's opinion, there is a better way to promote acceptance.

Exploring this idea further, another question posed to the survey participants was asking if fraternity bylaws are the best means in protecting the rights of minority populations. The open-ended responses of these participants will be organized in a like-fashion above.

A total of 19 (73% of the original 26) respondents answered this question. Of that 19, only 4 (21%) of respondents indicated that fraternity bylaws are the best means of protecting minority populations. The remaining 15 respondents (79%) indicated that they are not.

On the side of the affirmative, a few respondents indicated that fraternity bylaws are the best means of protecting minority populations because:

- Absolutely, yes. Bylaws are established on a chapter by chapter basis, and as such reflect the values and social attitudes of those within each chapter. Thus, they are more likely to be respected as there is a more personal connection to their establishment. While it is very important that each fraternity's international headquarters take a stance on diversity issues, but the most effective means of protecting these groups is through measures passed by their own peers.
- I believe fraternity bylaws protecting minority populations are the best means to protect minorities, within fraternities. Bylaws are held to high regard in my chapter, and assuming other chapters do the same, this is why.

These respondents suggest that fraternity bylaws are a part of organizational culture and that they are binding agreements that the members will uphold. Likewise, they are mutually discussed and agreed upon, so their presence is indicative of an accepting organization.

On the other side are those respondents arguing against bylaws as an effective means. As there are a number of responses, the data was organized based on emergent theme. In this sense, the themes I used for data analysis included “intolerance” and “culture”. Below are a few examples of fraternity men’s perspectives:

In terms of organizational culture,

- No, although I do not believe that they are unnecessary. As I've said in a previous answer, fraternity culture dictates these sort of actions, and each chapter of a social fraternity certainly varies between different universities. Ultimately, it is the individuals who comprise these chapters that form the culture. These individuals, especially those who are viewed in good standing (such as Executive Board members and alumni), are the greatest influence on culture. As a social fraternity develops culture, it will continue to perpetuate itself by attracting members who identify with the culture of the organization. I believe it is extremely hard to change the culture of an organization that has grown over many years and has defined itself through the participation and contributions of members who identify with the culture.
- I think a chapter culture based on anti-discrimination and inclusion is the best means to protect minority populations in greek [sic] life. Fraternity bylaws are a necessary foundation of that culture but without the culture and enforcement would do nothing.

- Best thing is to foster a culture of acceptance; bylaws contribute [sic] to that culture, but are not in and of themselves sufficient [sic]

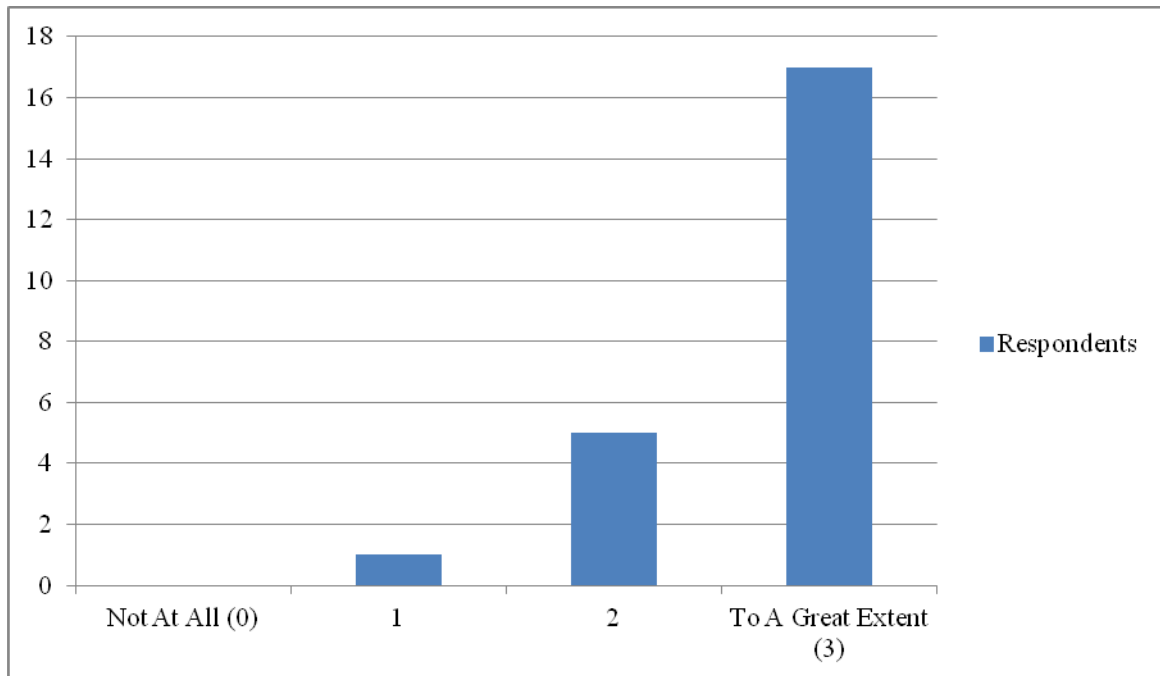
In terms of tolerance,

- No, as stated earlier, they keep people from saying insensitive and intolerant things, but they don't [sic] stop people from acting or thinking in intolerant ways.
- No, ultimately culture of the fraternity is the best way to protect it. If brothers are open and accepting, then these rights will be protected regardless of the bylaws. Conversely if the brothers are bigoted than minority rights will be trampled regardless of the bylaws.

These comments provide an interesting context to this study, as they provide insight into what contemporary active fraternity men think about organizational bylaws. The first set of statements talk about fraternity culture and that meaningful change stems from the evolution of culture. The respondents are discussing the subjective nature of group dynamics, and point out the flaw in objective measures (in this case bylaws) to change behavior. Combined with this is the notion of intolerance, where the 2 sampled respondents suggest that though culture changes may be a part of it, a persons' values or bigoted nature will rarely be affected by organizational policy. In a sense, these members will simply not comply. Interestingly, however, is this notion of a bigoted member "trampling" on minority rights. This seems to go against the notion that the Greater Metropolitan Chapter polices itself, as informed by the focus group data in previous sections. Yet, has there been any instance that would deter a brother from having a positive experience with this chapter? The survey sought clarification to this, as well.

The last two questions on the survey are relevant to active members' sense of satisfaction with their fraternity experience. Figures 17. and 18. highlight respondents' answers.

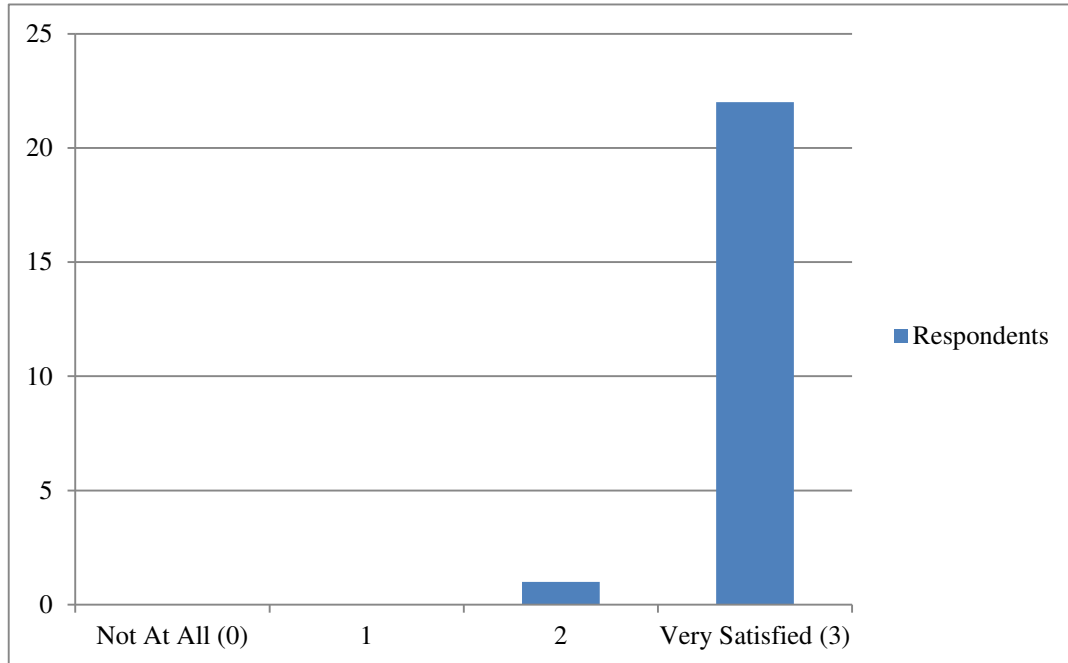
Participants were asked to rate to what extent they experience a sense of belonging or community within the fraternity. Figure 17. visually depicts their answers:



**Figure 17.** Experiencing a Sense of Belonging

In this figure, 17 respondents (65%) indicated that they experience a sense of belonging to a great extent. Five respondents (19%) rated their experience a 2 out of 3, and 1 respondent (4%) rated his experience a 1 out of 3. These data show that a vast majority of men in the Greater Metropolitan Chapter are experiencing a strong sense of belonging.

Likewise, I was interested how satisfied members were with the diversity that exists within the chapter. Figure 18. visually depicts the level of satisfaction based on the selections of the respondents:



**Figure 18.** Satisfaction with Chapter Diversity

For the final question on the survey, 23 respondents (88%) provided an answer. A vast majority (n=22; 85%) indicated that they were very satisfied with the diversity in their chapter.

Conversely, only 1 respondent (4%) rated their satisfaction as 2 out of 3. The data indicate that an overwhelming majority of active men are satisfied with the level of diversity that is currently in the chapter. Perhaps these data will be reinforced by other instruments employed in this study.

The next section details the findings reported from the focus group interview.

#### **4.6.2 Reported findings from the focus group protocol**

The focus group interview focused predominately on how the executive board perceived the utility of anti-discrimination clauses in protecting minority populations. Though a lot of information on this perspective was reported in the previous section concerning their utility,

there are few data points that identify how the executive board thought that the clauses contributed to a sense of belonging in the chapter.

When asked if a man with a different race, religion, or sexual orientation would feel welcome in the Greater Metropolitan Chapter, the participants responded confidently with affirmations. When probing for more information, I specifically asked for a situation where a man of a different race would feel welcomed by the chapter. Leader 8 stated:

I think we value the fact that people come from diverse backgrounds because we do know that they bring something different to the chapter, a different perspective to the chapter. Um. That's almost an asset to the chapter, to have a diverse background, we really value that.

Here, a leader suggests that members of the chapter would be welcoming of a diversity, and that a minority member would be placed in high regards as his experience would benefit the chapter. The leader goes on to state that the Chapter is received positively both on campus and (inter)nationally:

Nationally, I think we're recognized for our diversity and I would say that some other chapters are envious of the things we've achieved.

The sense of confidence of the executive board highlights a general sense that matters of diversity are less prevalent in their chapter due to their acceptance of minority men. In this sense, it can be assumed that the executive committee feels as if the sense of belonging and brotherhood amongst chapter members is high.

#### **4.6.3 Reported findings from the interview protocol**

Finally, the interviews conducted with the alumni members provide data-rich insights into how diversity is appreciated within Gamma Fraternity at (inter)national levels. To further explore this

notion, I provided a time at the end of the interview for the alumnus member to have the last word on this topic. The responses are reflective, and seemingly sincere.

A common theme among all three responses is that the alumni emphasize brotherhood as informed by their own experience. For example, Alumnus 3 recalls his time as an undergraduate and how the openness of his chapter framed the way he views diversity today:

I know my chapter—we had—and that’s back in the 80s. Yanno, I was initiated in 1985, we had an extremely diverse chapter. That was, quite frankly, one of my favorite things about it. We had anything you could imagine in there. It was great. It made for a very positive fraternal experience, because we had everybody...I mean, I called it the “regular guy fraternity” because everyone was a part of it, and we all just cared about how we treated each other and brotherhood.

This notion of being “regular guys” is intended to be all encompassing of college men, regardless of their individual diversity. Alumnus 3 continues to state:

Brotherhood is blind in my opinion. Brotherhood is blind to color, it’s blind to orientation, Brotherhood is blind to religion; Brotherhood is brotherhood. And I don’t think you can have a great fraternity until that idea is preached and acted on. Brotherhood is about comradery [sic]. Brotherhood is about the organization. Brotherhood is about the ritual and tradition, Brotherhood is about lifelong engagement. And the other stuff at the end of day does not and should not matter.

Again, this notion of being “blind” to diversities is an interesting phenomenon. Claiming to be blind to what makes someone a minority often negates the diversity of experience they may have (Syrett, 2009). Yet, the spirit of what Alumnus 3 is saying is quite powerful—that if a fraternity is going to focus on values, it should not emphasize physical or cultural diversities.

Next, Alumnus 1 chose to close his interview by providing an anecdote of when he was an undergraduate initiate and there was a former Ku Klux Klan member in the same chapter. In his anecdote, Alumnus 1 emphasized that it was the common bond of the fraternity that forced the two men to interact, and even discuss their differences:

...and he said “well I can tell that the organization has become a huge part of who you are, whether you’re a black man or white man.” And I said “Yes.” And he



said “Ok, that’s fine. And knowing you now, and watching you come through our process, I can’t say that I love black people, but I know now that I have to look at individuals instead of judging a race as a whole. And I said “Well, I can’t ask for much more than that because I have grandparents that have given me some kinds of history, so if you’ve been raised with that kind of stuff, yanno, you’re supposed to hate blacks or whatever, I don’t think you’ll ever change that. So I’m very happy to hear you sittin’ here saying to me man to man that at least by interacting with me, you acknowledge you have to look at the individual a little more. Yanno to me, that’s a major stepping stone.”

Alumnus 1 does not believe he would ever be given an opportunity to discuss that topic with a man he now calls “brother” had it not been for his experience in Gamma Fraternity.

Finally, Alumnus 2 emphasized that he feels as if college fraternities are a:

...microcosm of our society and that it has the strengths and the weaknesses of our society. But I believe more of the strengths and far fewer of the weaknesses. But it is still going to be impacted greatly by the culture of the local campus.

In this sense, college fraternities are made up of men hailing from differing backgrounds, with different beliefs, value systems, and diversities. Alumnus 2 has identified the relevancy of this particular study—that college fraternities are a relevant social group that is reflected of the campus and community culture around them. Perhaps there is something to be said about the men of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter of Gamma Fraternity, or about Greater Metropolitan University itself.

#### **4.6.4 Section summary**

This section provided interesting findings in terms of the fourth study question, which asked what fraternity men’s perceptions are of anti-discrimination clauses contributing to a sense of belonging among chapter members. Exactly 5 respondents (31%) indicated that yes, the clauses do, in fact, contribute to the sense of belonging, where 9 (56%) stated that they do not. In the focus group, Leader 8 posits that the chapter feels as if diverse men add value to the

organization, so that it is a good thing that they are protected, yet it is the welcoming environment of the chapter that provides that feeling.

Lastly, Alumnus 3 stated during an interview that “brotherhood is blind.” And that tolerance for a diverse man “should not be an issue.” These data suggest that all of the men find value, meaning, and worth in having diverse men in the organization. It is here where the utility of the clause is either credited, or not credited for the sense of belonging shared by minority members.

As there were various emergent themes that have come forth through data collection, it is important that these themes are examined more closely. The next section discusses how noteworthy data were triangulated across instruments.

#### **4.7 DATA TRIANGULATION**

Mertens (2010) posits that data triangulation is a test and method used to ensure the validity to both qualitative and quantitative studies. In this study, employing data triangulation assisted with identifying emergent themes across a multi-instrument research design. Core questions were framed in similar ways and were asked of survey respondents, as well as focus group and interview participants. The data suggest that the questions were not leading and did not need to be reframed as data-rich answers were collected across instruments.

As this study dealt with fraternity men’s perceptions, many of the questions posed to participants aimed at revealing their opinions, feelings, and biases. Similar questions existed across instruments, but three questions stand out as integral to this study. This section highlights the core questions and presents relevant findings across the instruments.

#### 4.7.1 The responsibility to protect minority men

A foundational element to this study was to establish whether or not fraternity men believe that minority men need to be protected, and if so, how fraternities should go about doing so. Overwhelmingly, respondents across instruments indicated that Gamma Fraternity should protect minority men, but that organizational bylaws may not be the best way to do so. This implication is explained in further detail in Chapter Five; however, it is important to see how the provided data led to this conclusion as triangulated to the varying instruments.

Table 10. presents the fundamental question “Whose responsibility is it to protect minority men?” and details how the answer was addressed across the study instruments.

**Table 10.** Data Triangulation: Protecting Minority Men

<i>Whose responsibility is it to protect minority men?</i>			
<b>Survey</b>	<b>Focus Group Interview</b>	<b>One-on-One Interview</b>	<b>Document Review</b>
Respondents suggest that it’s a shared responsibility among fraternity men	Leaders of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter indicate that it’s a shared responsibility among fraternity men	The alumni suggested that organizational leaders need to move the organization forward	The fraternity’s convention has taken action on issues of diversity
<b>Interpretations</b>			
1.) Responsibility has been assumed by fraternity men to protect minority members 2.) Members agree that protecting minority men is necessary 3.) Leadership is needed to move the organization towards progress and Gamma Fraternity has had said leadership			

Noting that the instruments focused on different populations, very interesting findings concerning this question have evolved. First, the active men of Gamma Fraternity have stated in both the focus group interview and the survey that protecting minority men is necessary and is a responsibility of all fraternity men. In this sense, they have assumed that responsibility as members of the organization. Relating this data to the conceptual framework of the study, it is

here where members of the organization are complying with a policy to change a behavior (see Figure 5.), which is a core element of Interligi's (2010) model of organizational compliance.

Likewise, the alumni identified that organizational leadership is necessary in order to move the organization along towards progress. Specifically, Alumnus 3 suggested that the leaders of the organizations should lead by example and if they are practicing inclusion, then the active members will follow suit. The document review identified that Gamma Fraternity has addressed issues of diversity over time through fraternity conventions. This is indicative of this shared responsibility. Still, whether it is the responsibility of active or alumni members, the participants agreed that protecting minority men is a fraternity-wide responsibility.

#### **4.7.2 Codifying the protection of minority men**

Another key element of this study is determining how fraternity men perceive the utility of anti-discrimination clauses in terms of protecting minority men. Building off of the key question above, if the fraternity men established the notion that minority men need to be protected, is the codification of an anti-discrimination clause an effective method in doing so?

Table 11. identifies emergent themes that stemmed from asking this core question to various populations across the study instruments.

**Table 11.** Data Triangulation: Effectiveness of Protecting Minority Men

<i>Are anti-discrimination clauses protecting minority men?</i>			
<b>Survey</b>	<b>Focus Group Interview</b>	<b>One-on-One Interview</b>	<b>Document Review</b>
Respondents indicate that the clauses work in theory but are not credited with practical success	Leaders of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter credit chapter alumni with creating a welcoming environment	Alumni respondents perceive the clauses to be highly useful	Gamma Fraternity has continuously added classes to its protection clause
<b>Interpretations</b>			
1.) Active members determine relevancy for the clauses based on chapter culture 2.) Alumni leadership believe that the clauses hold the organizational accountable to its members 3.) The issue is still relevant as protected classes are continuously being added to the (inter)national bylaws			

Most notably in posing this question is the difference in the opinions of active and alumni men. Many respondents of the survey (n=15; 79%) indicated that the fraternity bylaws were not the best means in protecting minority men, though the anti-discrimination clauses work *in theory*. Stated differently, the clauses are listed to protect minority men, but if fraternity men do not obey policy, protection will not occur. According to the active members, their chapter's inclusive nature is credited to the protection of the organization's minority members. Conversely, the alumni generally agreed that the clauses were useful and held the organizational accountable to social progress.

In general, Gamma Fraternity seems to find use in anti-discrimination clauses as the organization's convention has added protected classes to its (inter)national constitution and bylaws. This highlights the notion that there must be members of the organization that view the clauses as effective as new classes are being added beyond what is mandated by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

### 4.7.3 Establishing a sense of belonging

Finally, the third core question asked addressed how anti-discrimination clauses contributed to a sense of belonging among fraternity members. Though the term a *sense of belonging* is vague, this question allowed respondents to identify how effective anti-discrimination clauses are in providing this welcoming environment to minority men.

Table 12. identifies how participants view the clauses and their ability to contribute to a sense of belonging.

**Table 12.** Data Triangulation: Contributing to a Sense of Belonging

<i>How do anti-discrimination clauses contribute to a sense of belonging?</i>			
<b>Survey</b>	<b>Focus Group Interview</b>	<b>One-on-One Interview</b>	<b>Document Review</b>
Respondents indicate that chapter members are welcoming to diverse men	Leaders of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter indicate that chapter members foster a sense of inclusiveness	Alumni 2 and 3 suggest that more chapters are welcoming than discriminatory	Gamma Fraternity was one of the first white organizations to integrate as early as [1955]
<b>Interpretations</b>			
1.) A welcoming environment is contingent upon the behavior of active men 2.) Gamma Fraternity has taken strides to address the issue of diversity and anti-discrimination 3.) The clauses are less responsible for a sense of belonging as opposed to the inclusive nature of active members			

In answering this core question, participants had a more unified perception. The active men indicated that their chapter has a high sense of belonging among members, but that the credit for this is attached with the alumni of the chapter, who promoted inclusiveness during their time as active members. Likewise, the alumni leaders suggested that there were more welcoming chapters within the organization than non-welcoming chapters. This notion of inclusiveness is supported by the organization’s history, as the document review identified Gamma Fraternity as one of the first organizations to integrate.

#### **4.7.4 Summary of data triangulation**

As Mertens (2010) asserts, data triangulation is both a methodological tool to ensure validity of data, and to identify emergent themes across instruments. In this study, triangulation was used to ensure that questions were framed effectively in terms of gathering data-rich responses, as well as ensuring that the questions were not leading participants to a particular answer.

Consequently, data triangulation also led to various emergent themes that are worth noting. Though some of these themes were introduced in this section, they will be discussed at length as implications of the study in Chapter Five.

### **4.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter reported notable findings across various instruments used in this case study. The chapter was divided first by a contextual document review, followed by the reporting of data relevant to the four study questions of the case. Much of the data provided in this section yielded emergent themes and ideas that will be further discussed in the next Chapter.

Data reported in this section identified that members of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter of Gamma Fraternity were confident in their opinion that their chapter hardly struggles from negative impacts of diversity. The data supported this claim with few numerical instances suggesting otherwise. Along similar lines, the survey proved that participating chapter members knew what an anti-discrimination clause was, but did not necessarily read it in their organization's by-laws. This presents an interesting theme in exploring the espoused versus the enacted realities of organizational policy formation.

Finally, the data shows that fraternity men shape their perspectives based on the experience they have had during their time in the organization. No data showed a dominant sense of prejudice or tendency towards discrimination.



## **5.0 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter is focused on discussing the results presented in Chapter Four, providing the implications of the study, the limitations to the study, and making recommendations for future studies. The chapter is broken up by these subsections, beginning with the emergent themes found within the data, and their implications.

### **5.2 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The data has yielded some important implications that can be used to further student affairs practice, specifically around this general problem space. As data was being analyzed, the following key items confirmed parts of the limited knowledge in discourse concerning this issue, as well as established new knowledge in this particular field, specifically when it comes to determining whether or not organizations have successfully protected the interests of minority students. It is my hope that the following implications can inform decision making at various organizational levels, or, at the very least, ignite conversation surrounding this topic, and make headway for progress and change.

This subsection is organized in the following way: first, the general issue of diversity is explored, followed by what respondents indicated were the major classifications of protected classes. Next, the section highlights the dichotomy that emerged between a fraternity man *reading* versus *understanding* organizational policy, and ends with a discussion where the data suggest that fraternity bylaws are not perceived to be the most effective way to protect minority men.

### **5.2.1 Diversity as a socially sensitive issue and a challenge for research**

The comprehensive review of the literature has identified that topics of race, religion, and sexual orientation are generally socially sensitive issues, and adding this element of an exclusionary organization to it has yielded some interesting results. When preparing for this study, I turned to the literature to see how other researchers dealt with this issue, specifically in terms of data collection and reporting. Continuously, the issue of anonymity and risk reduction stood at the forefront of each study's limitations. Since the topic can be incriminating and intimidating for some people, avoidance and failure to participate are often key challenges to studies in this problem space.

In terms of this study, however, the low participation rate is worthy of discussion. Some may view the fact that only 40% (n=26) of the invited sample (n=65) participating in the survey as troublesome, where a majority of active members have not provided their perceptions or answers to the survey questions. Due to the anonymity of the survey, I was not able to test for non-response bias, which would have included linking data to respondents, and then determining whether or not particular populations were engaged or disengaged with certain survey questions. To this argument, one could suggest that the findings of this study cannot accurately represent

the majority of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter, but rather only the 40% of members that have participated. I would have to agree. Yet, the low respondent rate has been forecasted by researchers who have previously completed empirical studies, so admittedly, I was well aware of this risk going into the dissertation.

I took this risk because I felt as if there were numerous factors that could increase my chances of having a higher participation rate of active fraternity men. First, I thought that if the (inter)national organization would support the study, the chapter would be inclined to participate. After securing a letter of support from the Executive Director and attaching it to the invitation E-mails, skepticism of the members was still a pressing issue.

Second, I thought that being a fraternity man and relatively close to the active chapter members in age would establish a stronger credibility with the younger members and motivate them to participate as a “favor” to a fellow student and fraternity man. Instead, the undergraduates did not particularly embrace me as a fellow fraternity man and felt as if I was an outsider to their culture, even though I am very well versed in Gamma Fraternity’s values and policies. Mertens (2010) highlights that when a researcher immerses him or herself in a culture to better understand phenomena, they are often met with this challenge of being viewed as a *stranger*. In this case, I misinterpreted what I thought would be a simple connection.

Finally, I maintained a specific frame with this study where I consistently noted that I was not seeking to psychoanalyze or judge any participant’s particular diversity. In fact, the only time when a participant was asked to identify descriptive information about himself was during the first part of the survey—where all demographic responses were anonymously collected. In retrospect, I doubt I would again ask the participants for this information as the focus of the study was not to link how diverse members, specifically, felt about anti-discrimination clauses,

but the more general question of how fraternity men perceive the clause's utility. Yet, the demographic information did provide a working background of the make-up of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter—that even in a smaller sample, the organization is not homogenized. I thought that if I maintained this frame, and de-personalized the study, more invitees would be willing to participate as they would not be identified or incriminated. Ultimately, I do believe the chapter took opposition in talking about its diversity leading a majority of men not to participate.

### **5.2.2 Race, religion, and sexual orientation as major classifications**

During the review of the literature, I noticed that the few times where diversity in Greek life was addressed, the foci of the study were predominately centered on race, increasingly concerned with sexual orientation, and rarely focused on religion. As highlighted by the data detailed in Chapter Four, when asked to give an example of a protected class, almost all of the participants in the interview and focus group interview identified race, religion, and sexual orientation. Some participants went beyond this, but typically these three classifications of people were vocalized:

Alumnus 2: Well certainly race, religion, sexual orientation. I think marital status—is a protected class in our law.

Leader 3: Protected classes are citizens who are protected legally and they won't have discrimination against them. So like, you can't discriminate against them in the workplace and it's like, veteran status, age, marital status, sexual orientation, race.

Leader 8: Religion.

Leader 3: Religion. Like whether or not they have a disability—uh, and I'm not sure about that.

The interesting finding here is that race and religion have been standard protected classes since the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, but sexual orientation is still not a protected class at the time of this study.

However, a reason for the participants to consistently cite sexual orientation in this context is because Gamma Fraternity does list it as a protected class. As mentioned previously, this must have been done by an internal motivation as protecting this class is not mandated by common law. In referencing such motivation, Alumnus 2 made a very interesting statement:

I think in recent years someone wanted to champion a protected class that we had not covered and uh, if I remember specifically a phone call -- our conversation with an alumnus who felt that [Gamma] was allowing discrimination against a protected class and um, it was real ironic because his feeling of our insensitivity was based on only one class. When I mentioned other classes we had yet to get to, he was not interested in those. And I said, yanno there's a degree of hypocrisy to wanting to champion or holding [Gamma] to task for one class and not having interest in other classes who have yet to be protected. And um, he had to admit that yes, his definition of discrimination for his purposes was narrow. I said, well, I find that interesting.

Alumnus 2 suggests that an alumnus member was pushing for the protection of a given class, and was met by this notion of singularity. In a sense, this alumnus did not know why the alumnus member was advocating the protection of one class over a number of other classes the organization has yet to protect. However, this "narrow" definition of discrimination is often how social change occurs. The trend, at least historically, is systemic: a community (be it the gay community, the African American community, etc.) rallies for liberation, gains support and political influence, laws are passed or decreed by the courts, and ultimately society accepts the social change (Kaplin & Lee, 2007).

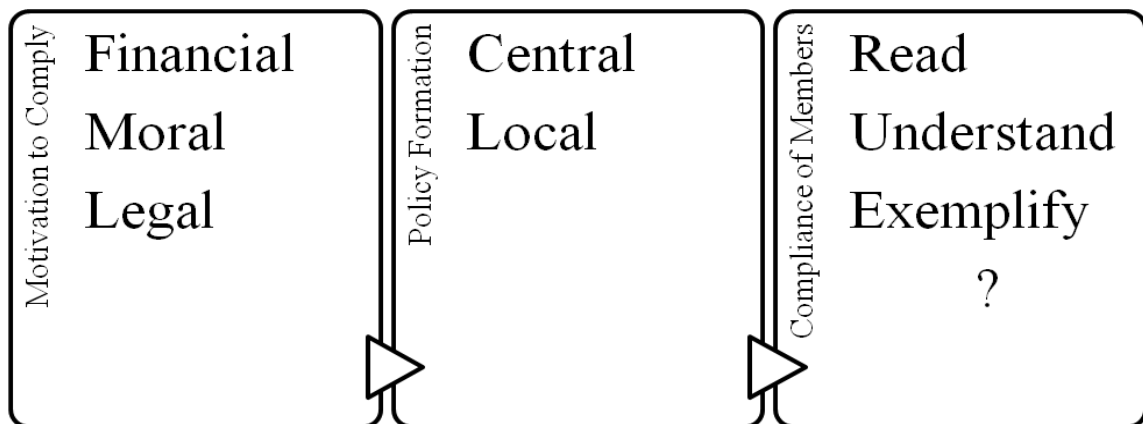
Regardless, this study shows that when the men of Gamma Fraternity think of anti-discrimination, they tend to cite race, religion, and sexual orientation as the main classifications

of people. Perhaps this is because these are the minorities that are most prevalent in chapters or society. For whatever reason, the men seem fixated on these classes in this context.

### **5.2.3 Reading versus understanding organizational policy**

Another key element that emerged through the data is the numerical discrepancy in men who are aware of the anti-discrimination clause in organizational policy against the men who claim they have read and understood it. Fifteen respondents (58% of the total n=26) indicated that they are aware of the anti-discrimination clause within the organization, with 8 respondents (30%) saying they were not aware. However, 13 respondents (50%) stated that they have not read the policy, meaning that up to 5 respondents (19%) could be aware of the clause, but not have read it.

Ultimately, this leads to the discussion of why organizational policy is needed in the first place. Throughout this dissertation, I have alluded to the notion that some organizations have added anti-discrimination clauses to their bylaws to comply with state and federal law. I also have identified that failure to comply with such a law can result in the loss of college fraternities tax exempt benefits. The motivation to have such policies is present. Yet, the data shows that some members simply are not reading the policies. Figure 19. visually depicts organizational policy formation informed by this study's data:



**Figure 19.** Motivations to Legislate

In this model, the literature has informed why organizations have anti-discrimination clauses (Syrett, 2009). Using the conceptual framework of Interligi’s (2010) notion of compliance, the organization legislates centrally or locally, and members are expected to comply to ensure a particular behavior (in this case, preventing discrimination). Yet, the data shows that many of the alumni leaders were not aware of discrimination, not because it was not happening, but because they were not made aware of a particular issue from active members. For example, when asked about chapter’s violating the anti-discrimination policy, Alumnus 2 indicated:

Uh, I can’t think of anything directly. Let’s see. There was a chapter that decided something recently. I forget what it was now. I think it was—uh--discriminatory against one of our protected classes and we quoted [Gamma] Law and they were passing a bylaw that would infringe on the rights of a protected class, so we told them that this bylaw was, uh, in conflict with [Gamma] Law and had to be, uh, stricken. Um. To my knowledge they did so.

The issue was not memorable to the alumnus, and a follow up to the discrimination was not evidenced as he ended his testimony with “to my knowledge, they did.” Keeping in mind the

alumnus' role in the organization, it is safe to assume that if the matter was a priority, he would be well versed on the situation. Alumnus 3 indicated something similar:

Without naming them [discriminatory chapters], of course, not openly. They know that would be a problem if they came out and addressed the organization's board by saying "we don't like this." I think that there may be some chapters that would discourage the new member from joining if they don't fit a certain profile. But I think that group is in the minority of chapters. I really do. The chapters I've ever acted with are really, a very diverse group.

Here, there is evidence that organizational leaders know that discrimination is happening, but they do not actively seek addressing it unless it becomes a notable problem. So, to what level do members know and understand the organizational policies? The data did not show evidence of that being a top priority. In fact, only one alumnus indicated that he was pleased with an undergraduate chapter requiring new members to learn organizational laws and policy:

Alumnus 2: We have had a chapter where individuals being inducted have called into question things that were said in our ritual that were contradictory to our organization's law, because that chapter requires all new member to read [Gamma] Law. That's pretty significant.

Significant, yes—the norm? No. This one exemplary chapter requires new members to read and engage with the law, yet a larger number of chapters may not. The point here is that the organization seemingly does not emphasize learning anti-discrimination clauses or its intention, yet is complacent in assuming that members are engaged in understanding organizational policy with no means of assessment.

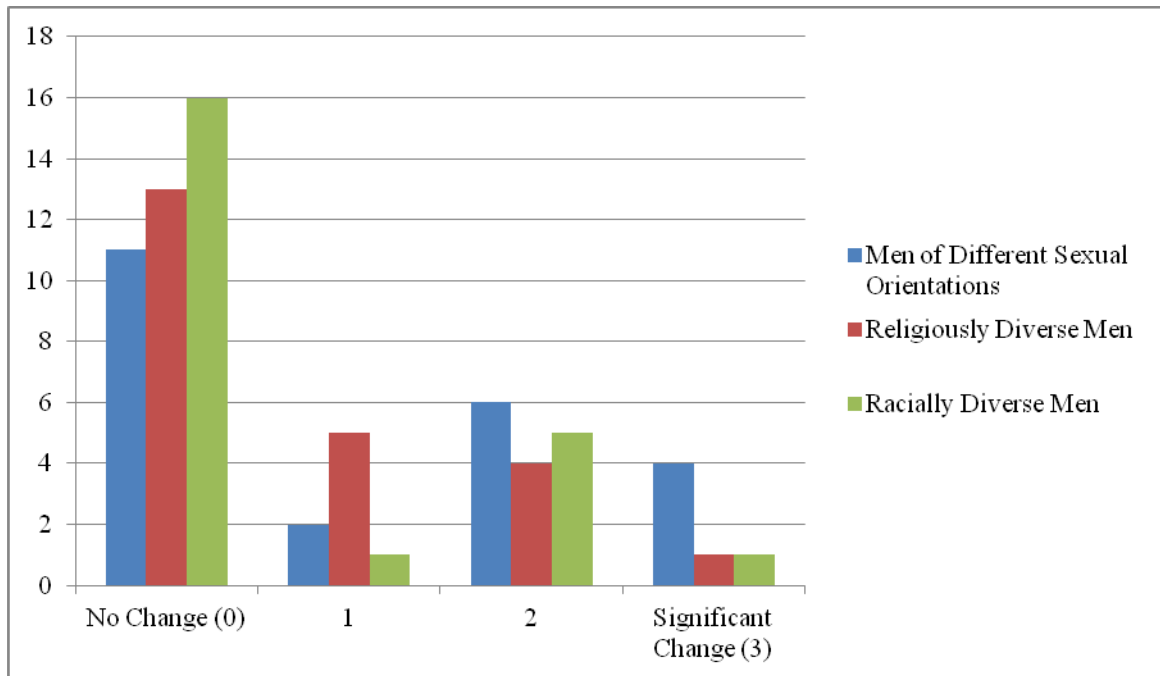
#### **5.2.4 Fraternity bylaws are not effective in protecting minority students**

Finally, and possibly most relevant to the ultimate purpose of this study, the data indicates that a vast majority of fraternity men sampled (n=15; 79%) do not believe that fraternity bylaws are an effective tool in protecting minority populations. Respondents' qualitative responses highlighted



in Chapter Four indicate why they believe this is so, but each response carries a general theme: the members do not feel as if the policy is relevant to their chapter. The men of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter of Gamma Fraternity affirmed the notion that their chapter simply does not discriminate. No member has provided a qualitative response that states that their chapter is discriminatory, even though there has numerically been 1 respondent (4%) indicating a low score of satisfaction with the sense of belonging exemplified by the chapter.

Although a majority of respondents have indicated that bylaws are not effective means to protect minority men, this issue of *relevancy* still emerges as essential. Why do the members feel as if anti-discrimination clauses are not essential for their chapter? Are they confident that the chapter will never discriminate? Has their view of diverse men changed because of the organization's policy? The survey asked one question that aimed at understanding how fraternity men's attitudes have changed since their affiliation with Gamma Fraternity. Figure 20. visually depicts the responses:



**Figure 20.** Changing Attitudes Towards Minority Men

As depicted, a large number of men indicated that they came to Greater Metropolitan University, and more specifically, Gamma Fraternity with a determined attitude towards minority men. 16 respondents (62%) indicated no change in regards to how they view race, as 13 respondents (50%) indicated no change with men of different religious backgrounds. Similarly, 11 respondents (42%) suggested that their attitude has not changed towards men of different sexual orientations. This question did not ask if their attitude changed from positive to negative—yet given the other responses, it is safe to assume that these men are suggesting that they never had a negative opinion towards minority men, and that the fraternity did not change that opinion into a more positive perception. Conversely, however, 1 respondent (4%) stated that they have had a significant change in attitude towards men of different races and religions since joining Gamma Fraternity, and 4 respondents (15%) suggested that their opinion of men of different sexual orientations has changed since their affiliation. Here, one can deduce that the fraternity

experience, through the diversity of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter, has positively changed the attitude of a member towards minority men in a dramatic way.

Still, no credit of this is given to organizational policy or bylaws. Instead, and most notably, the chapter members correlate this notion to “just the way it is” in the organization:

Leader 8: See I think. Personally, I think diversity is something for us is such a full on commitment in that we want diverse people--we want different types of people in our chapter--that it isn't even discussed like it's just important to our chapter.

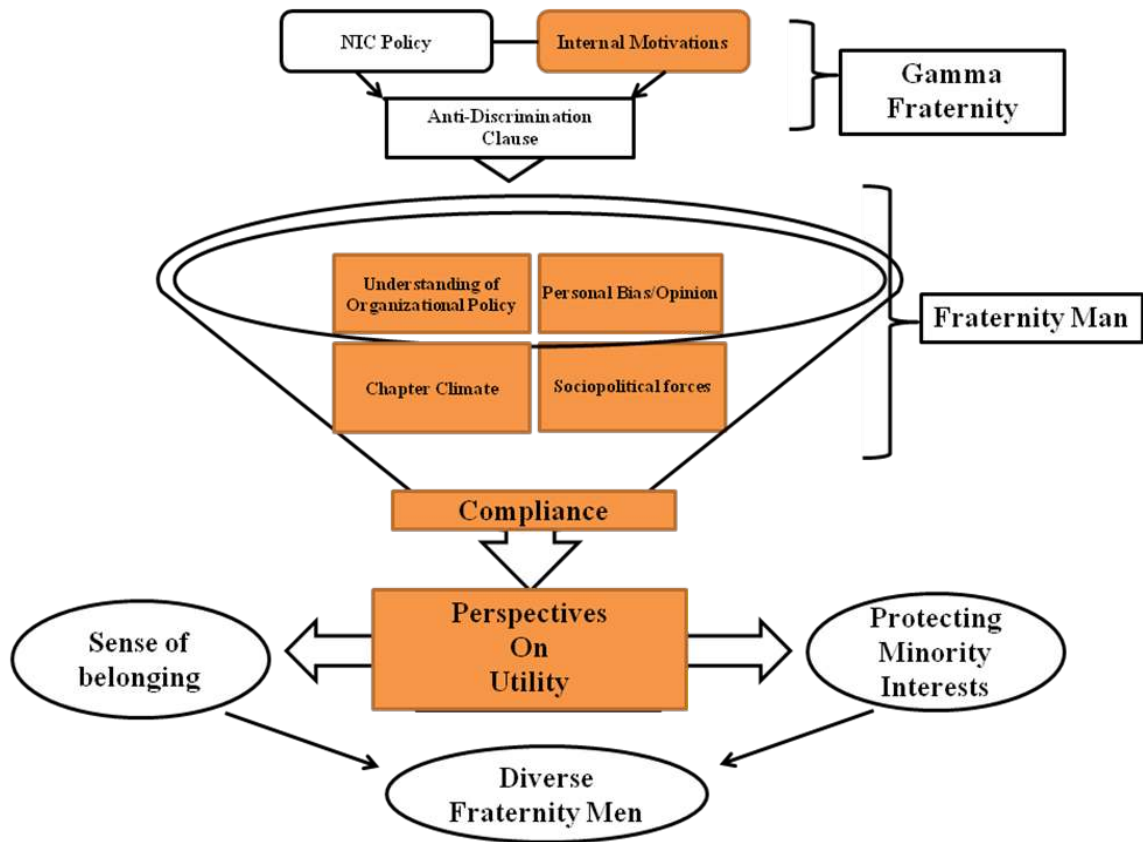
This leader suggests that diversity has become *commonplace* in the organization, and that it just is not discussed because there is seemingly no one suffering negative effects from harassment or discrimination.

This notion of chapter climate is an interesting phenomenon that has emerged in the data, and foundational to the framework guiding this study. The next section will connect the findings of the study to the original conceptual framework (Figure 5.) used for the study, and incorporate this phenomenon into its core.

### **5.3 CONNECTING DATA TO THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

After data collection, analyzing, and reporting, interesting parallels to the conceptual framework presented in Chapter Two emerged. The conceptual framework, as informed by Interligi's (2010) groundwork of organizational compliance, indicated that shared governance and internal motivations of members caused the formation of anti-discrimination clauses, and that enactment of this policy would affect organizational members who have their own biases, understanding of policy, and sociopolitical factors. Complying with the policy would not only protect minority interests, but also contribute to a sense of belonging for minority men within the organization.

Though this framework proved to be useful in framing this case, the data collected in the study presents another dimension to this frame. Figure 21. depicts this alteration:



**Figure 21.** Findings Related to Conceptual Framework

This framework does not differ greatly from the original framework, but is more specific to this case. For example, “shared governance” from Figure 5. is now “NIC (North American Interfraternity Conference) Policy” since that is the conference with whom Gamma Fraternity shares governance. Likewise, “internal motivations” is highlighted in this framework because the data collected in the document review and across the instruments suggest that in the case of Gamma Fraternity, members’ internal motivation to codify anti-discrimination is much greater than mere compliance with NIC policy. This is evidenced by Gamma Fraternity protecting two additional classes outside of what is required by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Fraternity’s protection of more classes beyond race, religion, and national origin which are

classes required by the NIC. Still, these motivations have caused Gamma Fraternity to establish an anti-discrimination clause for its members to obey.

Next, “chapter climate” has been added to the elements relevant to the fraternity man who is expected to comply with the anti-discrimination clause. The focus group interview and the survey both provided overwhelming data where respondents and participants indicated that the appreciation of diversity found in their chapter is due to the generally accepting chapter climate. Leader 8 in the focus group interview credited the alumni of the chapter for making inclusion a priority for the future men of the Greater Metropolitan Chapter of Gamma Fraternity. Therefore, chapter climate is seemingly a factor in terms of compliance with the policy.

Finally, though there were many respondents that stated that their inclusive chapter is responsible for the sense of belonging felt by all members, a number of respondents (n=6; 32%) still stated that the clauses were necessary and responsible for protecting minority men. Due to this data, the conceptual frame does not change in terms of compliance or the perceptions of effectiveness from the original framework provided in Figure 5.

Essentially, the conceptual framework helped shape the case and assisted in the development of informed research questions. In turn, the data helped inform the frame with new elements not originally expected to be relevant.

#### **5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

As with any piece of empirical research, several limitations have been identified at various stages of the case study. I have taken the opportunity to reflect on these limitations not as indicative of my inability to conduct research, but as learning opportunities for future research. Being aware

of my own strengths, limitations, and challenges as an educational researcher has helped me frame not only the apparent limitations due to the research design of this study, but also what can be done differently in future research. The next few sections will highlight these areas of improvement.

#### **5.4.1 Anonymity**

Substantially, measuring perspectives of any individual in regards to the diversities of others has proven to be a difficult task. The Institutional Review Board has approved this study as *exempt* insofar that the data cannot be traced back to a participant and that no identifiable language can be used to classify participants or the organization. This anonymity was also a stipulation set forth by the fraternity's Executive Director who felt as if the study would be useful, but did not want to attach the organization's name to it.

The core limitation that anonymity has caused in this study is that though the organization's reputation is shielded from negatively charged responses, there were many aspects of the organization that could not receive praise. The document review identified the organization as a pioneer and the first general fraternity to incorporate diversity in a number of settings (e.g. bylaws, standards for membership, and recruitment practices). However, I was unable to report these findings because they could potentially identify the organization. Similarly, I was unable to directly cite documents as a reader could easily take the citation, perform a basic search on the internet, find the source, and ultimately identify the organization. Therefore, the use of codes and paraphrasing became the standard. This limits the validity of the data collection method because there is now no way for the statement to be checked for

accuracy. The reader must rely on my ethos and credibility as a scholar-practitioner to assume what is presented is the *truth* to the best of my knowledge.

#### **5.4.2 Institutional self-protection**

As inferred earlier, the Executive Director of Gamma Fraternity specifically asked that the organization remains nameless, as this topic is socially sensitive and could potentially impact the organization's reputation depending on the responses of participants. Similarly, many participants positively prefaced many of their negative claims in an attempt to indemnify the organization from blame or responsibility. This is an example of institutional self-protection, where members of an organization protect its name and reputation from negative perceptions through various rhetorical techniques. The presence of this protection can skew data, as respondents may provide bias claims. Ultimately, one must keep this in mind when reading data and making subsequent truth-claims.

#### **5.4.3 Need for more delineation of instruments**

This study is also rather large in terms of a sample. Essentially, I was working with two core populations, active members and alumni, in hopes of providing more context to the fraternity men's perspectives. To collect data, I used four instruments—document review, a focus group interview, a survey, and an interview protocol. At times, data management was overwhelming, and because my time was split across these instruments, there were numerous missed opportunities for further probing in terms of seeking clarification of an answer.

As I was transcribing the interviews, it was obvious that certain responses needed more exploration. Using what Rubin and Rubin (2009) identify as probing questions, I could have had participants “unpack” their answers to provide clarity or more information on a particular phenomenon. Because data collection was at times vast, these opportunities became more noteworthy as the study progressed.

The study could have yielded relevant findings utilizing one or two of the instruments. A survey of the active membership, followed by a follow up focus group interview could have provided pertinent data to answer my study questions. Likewise, I often questioned whether or not the alumni population included in the interview be limited to alumni from the Greater Metropolitan Chapter. What perspective could these alumni have given that the select alumni that participated could not have in terms of chapter culture? This study could have used further delineation to state that it was a case study focused on the Greater Metropolitan Chapter of a Gamma Fraternity and all participants would be from that chapter instead of the mixture of samples currently in place. This could provide more information on the actual sampled chapter of the organization and better streamline results.

#### **5.4.4 Threats to validity**

As this study used various instruments, it is important to consider the threats to validity associated with each of them.

Fink (1995) suggests that there are limitations to the numerical inferences made with surveys. For example, a question asking respondents to rate where they *strongly agree* or *strongly disagree* holds high risk to the data validity as respondents may have varying opinions concerning the strength of the choices present. It is possible that given the numerous instances



where respondents indicated “other” but did not provide descriptive information when prompted that they felt as if they could not give a solid response. If this were the case for the majority, what exactly is the data depicting? Also, this survey was cross-sectional in that it was administered one time. It should be noted that respondents were given only one opportunity to provide their answers. Perhaps the findings would be stronger if the study involved a longitudinal survey design where changes in perceptions could be tracked.

Next, Rubin and Rubin (2009) discuss *bias* as an indicator for threats to validity in interview data. If the participants viewed me as a diverse fraternity man, they may have been more inclined to provide information they think I wanted to hear instead of what they actually believed. This notion of *reputation* is described in detail in the following section. There is also an opportunity for some participants to vent their feelings concerning the topic, especially if it is a topic that is not often addressed. The most obvious depiction of this rested with the interview with Alumnus 1, an African-American, who had more negative things to say about the organization than Alumni 2 and 3 who are both Caucasian. Alumnus 1 would often preface his answers in the following way:

I also found—and I obviously don’t want to knock my own organization—but I have to tell the truth...

There is some element of “voice” that this study gave to participants. How the participants and respondents chose to use it proved to be a notable element to the study.

#### **5.4.5 Increased sensitivity of participants**

As noted in Chapter Three, there were several challenges that halted data collection at the beginning stages of the case study. These challenges stemmed from the increased sensitivity of the participants concerning the topic of anti-discrimination and diversity within their chapter.

The active men were worried that any negative experiences of members would detail the Greater Metropolitan Chapter as unwelcoming of minority men. In this sense, image and reputation were the leading factors for the chapter's involvement.

After yielding to the chapter's faculty advisor on whether or not to participate, chapter members were rather skeptical, and the low participation rate (n=26; 40% of original 65 invitees) could point to an unwillingness to discuss the topic of anti-discrimination. Likewise, the executive board members who participated in the study were rather quiet, with only a few members answering questions, and a nearly unified front in terms of question responses. In fact, when one leader would provide a negative example, other members would glare at him and immediately offer a dissenting opinion, or call into question his ability to speak on a particular issue. The energy in the room was combative, and this limited the amount of information they were willing to share.

### **5.5 FUTURE RESEARCH**

Though this study utilized three different populations and used mixed methodology to collect data, the field of student affairs in higher education could benefit through further research in the general problem space of diversity in Greek life. The following sections highlight potential

future studies that could employ similar methodologies to develop new knowledge on how minority populations function in Greek lettered organizations. As Syrett (2009), Windmeyer and Freeman (1998), and Windmeyer (2000) highlight, this topic can move beyond personal narrative as data and into empiricism with the support of scholar-practitioners.

### **5.5.1 Adding an additional study question**

The data I collected in this study was interesting, but there were more opportunities that would be of particular interest to explore. It would be fascinating for someone to conduct a similar study where the focus is not on the perceptions of utility of anti-discrimination clauses in the general sense, but how certain kinds of members view them. For example, if a respondent identifies as gay on a survey, cross referencing his answers with someone who identifies as heterosexual might yield some interesting findings. The general research question for a study like this may be similar to “Do minority men view anti-discrimination clauses differently than non-minority men?” This study was concerned with the more general sense of perception since there was no like-study in the discourse. A study focused on how minority men view this protection would require a separate theoretical frame as the study is more focused on the individual and his development over his view of policy. Yet, as I had difficulty collecting data, I wonder if any solid claims could be warranted by a more specific study.

### **5.5.2 Case study of fraternities and sororities**

This study delineated rather specifically to not only fraternities, but one particular social fraternity in the North American Interfraternity Conference. Perhaps a similar study using the

same delineation would benefit the Pan Hellenic Council (sororities) and the National Pan Hellenic Council (historically black organizations). The studies could identify the needs and processes of those individual councils, as this study has, and collect information on how those organizations handle issues of diversity. Are there differences in how women view diversity as opposed to men? Are there empirical studies available that discuss homophobia, anti-Semitism, and racism within female moral development? Likewise, in reference to the historically black organizations, Hughey (2008) and Kimbrough (2005) present this notion of black culture and masculinity as a developmental factor in black organizations. How does this function as a catalyst for acceptance or rejection of diverse men? How do black Greek-lettered organizations view white members? The field of student affairs would benefit from studies like these.

### **5.5.3 Case study of associate members**

A key population that I have purposely left out of this study is associate members, or *pledges*, depending on an organization's vernacular. As these men are typically enrolled in a six to twelve week educational/probationary period, they can provide direct insight as to how the organization is communicating its standards, values, and laws. Yet, with the potential presence of hazing and the promotion of inferiority from an active member to an associate, how can a researcher control for a response that is manufactured instead of genuinely offered? How can a researcher protect these students from feeling as if they are at risk if they offer unfavorable data? These issues were much broader than the focus of my study, but are still relevant for practitioners. In fact, the associate member is one of the most critical populations in Greek life. His development and education sustain the organization, as he grows into an active member. His

perspectives can more thoroughly examine the utility of organizational policy, specifically around this problem space.

#### **5.5.4 Comparative analyses of various chapters within a given organization**

This study was a single unit case study of one chapter within a given organization. The findings of the study are limited to the experiences of that particular chapter in the context of the institution where the chapter is recognized, and the men that are representative of the chapter at the time of data collection. A study comparing two or more chapters across institutions may help provide relevant context in terms of how the organization is perceived at various campuses, and what the needs of those students are. Likewise, examining how organizational policy is implemented in various campus cultures may provide more sound data on how bylaws function to protect minority students. What factors go into fraternity members' understanding of policy? Does the *kind* of student matter in terms of understanding? How do institutions support students in learning their organizational policies? Do private schools focus more heavily on accountability or the promotion of diversity than their public counterparts? These questions could provide further insight into this phenomenon and help improve practice.

#### **5.5.5 Comparative analyses of single chapters across various organizations**

Along similar lines of thinking, a study could commence that comparatively analyzes single chapters of varying organizations at a given institution. For example, how is this topic of anti-discrimination and diversity addressed by an organization like Gamma Fraternity and a historically Jewish organization? What impact does an organization's history have on its

contemporary interpretation of policy? Foundationally, how does an organization's history shape its policy? Can a large enough of a sample be included that will provide generalizable results? If a chapter is local, how is accountability reached and enforced? What elements do local organizations bring to this discussion of organizational policy and compliance?

### **5.5.6 Case study of organizational alumni leadership**

One key population in this study was that of fraternity alumni. Yet, as the three men that participated in this study provided a breadth of individual experience, a study that focuses on this population directly could provide further insight. The interview protocol in this study asked alumni to identify exemplar undergraduate chapters or chapter members who are well versed in fraternity bylaws. What is the likelihood that alumni members understand their organization's law at advanced levels? How does this understanding impact them now that they are not active members of the organization? How are organizational values upheld after the college years?

### **5.5.7 Seeking diverse men as sample**

This study was not concerned with individual diversities of the active membership. However, if the study was to seek out men of different races, religions, and sexual orientations, how different would the findings be? The data collected in this study showed that a number of men did not feel as if anti-discrimination clauses were necessary as they were not relevant to their chapter. Due to anonymity, I have no way to link that response to a particular respondent, yet, is this person considered a minority student? Are they in the dominant culture? How do perspectives change based on individual experiences with diversity?

### **5.5.8 Including the educator's perspective**

Finally, another population that was not included in this study is that of the Greek professional. How do alumni members who work in student affairs view this issue? Are they well versed in the theories and applications of student affairs practice in terms of multicultural competency? Does this competency matter? How are student affairs professionals intervening to prevent anti-discrimination? Who do they believe has the responsibility to protect minority students? Do they have any perspectives on organizations they have worked with (inter)nationally that are not accepting? This perspective, much like mine, connects this study with administrative and policy studies in education—do we know enough, and if so, how are we using knowledge to better impact the college student experience?

## **5.6 CLOSING**

In closing, I want to share a few words on lessons learned and moving forward with the results of the study. At the beginning of this dissertation, I provided a personal narrative where my interest in this problem space of diversity in fraternity life took shape. As a fraternity man, educator, student, and student affairs professional, I always found it to be my responsibility to promote social justice and advance equity amongst all students that I am lucky enough to come into contact with.

This study highlighted that though this particular chapter seems to be on the right track of moving college fraternities from exclusionary to practicing inclusive excellence, the topic itself remains as controversial, disconcerting, and complex. Though I am confident that the anonymity

provided to participants reduced risk and prevented any harm from reaching them, I am disheartened that the organization could not be praised openly for the landmark decisions it has made in previous years.

If progress is to be made, and minority students are to be accepted, integrated, and valued, then at some point we as a society will need to demystify the sensitivity surrounding diversity. Much like that fraternity man at Kent State University, I do believe that many people still view diversity in a dualistic fashion—“anything but white.” But if this case has proven anything at all, it is that the nexus between how we think and how we behave comes down to personal motivation. Perhaps now is the time that we motivate our students to speak openly, honestly, and earnestly, so that *progress* can take its turn.



## APPENDIX A

### GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<i>Category</i>	<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Source</i>
Basic Information	Active Member or Brother	An undergraduate or graduate student who is a member not in financial arrears to the fraternity and who enjoys the right to vote	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Basic Information	Alumnus ( <i>pl.</i> alumni)	A member of the organization who is not active, in good standing, and has commenced from the university	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Basic Information	Associate Member or Pledge	A man who is not a full member of the organization and is in a period known as new member education.	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Basic Information	Chapter	A group of active members who enjoy full rights and privileges as an established entity of the larger organization	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Basic Information	Colony	The initial and probationary term given to a group of active members at a recently expanded to college or university	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Basic Information	Inactive Member	A member who normally meets active qualifications but is in arrears with the organization due to financial reasons, academic probation, or criminal guilt	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Basic Information	Initiation	Being formally inducted into membership	Anson & Marchesani, 1991; Rhoades, 1994

Basic Information	International Fraternity	A fraternity who has chapters and/or colonies in more than one country	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Basic Information	Local Fraternity	A fraternity with one chapter, found exclusively on a particular campus	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Basic Information	National Fraternity	A fraternity with more than five chapters in the United States	Anson & Marchesani, 1991; NIC Standards, 2012
Basic Information	Recruitment	A 24/7 period of bringing in new members to consider joining	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Basic Information	Ritual	The ceremony of initiation where secrets of the organization are expressed	Anson & Marchesani, 1991; Rhoades, 1994
Basic Information	Robert's Rules of Order	The standard operational practice of fraternities that maintains the order of the chapter during business meetings	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Basic Information	Rush Week	A formal period of recruitment events that typically ends with the passing out of bids	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Basic Information	Rushee	A student who attends rush week events and is interested in membership	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Basic Information	Social Fraternity	Unlike a professional organization, service organization, or an honor society, a social fraternity does not require members to be of a certain major or particular interest. Standards of membership are depicted based on each organization's vision, mission, and goals	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Basic Information	Values Based Recruitment	The standard of looking beyond a person's outward expression and recruiting solely based on the values system the person presents.	NIC Standards, 2012
Foundational to Study	Codification	The process of making into organizational law, a standard, bylaw, amendment, clause, or statute.	Kaplin & Lee, 2007

Foundational to Study	Diversity	Defined in literature against white, Christian, and heterosexual norms; Any person not included in the dominant culture	Rhoades, 1995; Syrett, 2009
Foundational to Study	Rights & Interests of Diverse Fraternity Men	Alluding to the notion that non-white, Christian, and heterosexual fraternity men are treated with a sense of equity in all aspects of normative fraternity life	Syrett, 2009; Hughey, 2008
Functions	Chapter Bylaws	Local standards, policies, and codes that coincide with national standards, policies, statutes, and codes	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Functions	Chapter Meeting	The official business meeting of the active chapter members, typically held weekly	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Functions	Colonization	The process for starting a chapter of an organization on a particular campus	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Functions	Constitution (Organizational)	The legal and operating framework and foundation of the organization	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Functions	De-pledge	The action of an associate member leaving the organization after he has accepted a bid of membership but before his formal initiation	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Functions	New Member Education or Pledging	The period of learning where new members are taught the ways of the fraternity and are prepared for full membership	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Functions	Bid of Membership	A formal invitation from the Brotherhood to join the organization.	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Governance	Convention	The [typically] biannual event where all chapters send delegates to vote on fraternity business at the (inter)national level	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Governance	Executive Committee	Those officers that lead the organization at local and international/national levels. Typically a President, Vice President, Secretary, and	Anson & Marchesani, 1991

		Treasurer	
Governance	International Officer	An alumnus member serving in a position of international service	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Governance	Judicial Board	A hearing board made up of active men that interpret chapter bylaws	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Governance	Quorum	At least 50% +1 of an organization assembled at one time; required for conducting business	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Governance	Regionals	Caucuses of chapters and colonies in certain regions of the United States and Canada	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Organizational Oversight	Fraternity Insurance Purchasing Group (FIPG)	The official insurance group of NIC affiliated organizations	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Organizational Oversight	Greek Advisor	The title of the student affairs professional who coordinates fraternity and sorority affairs at a college or university	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Organizational Oversight	Headquarters	The central location of the organization	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Organizational Oversight	Interfraternity Council (IFC)	The governing board for social fraternities at each college or university campus	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Organizational Oversight	National Pan Hellenic Council (NPHC)	The assembly of nine historically black fraternities and sororities	Syrett, 2009
Organizational Oversight	North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC)	The assembly of 75 international and national fraternities that represent the interests of the general social fraternity and has oversight of key governance issues related to fraternities	Anson & Marchesani, 1991
Organizational Oversight	Pan Hellenic Council (PHC)	The assembly of international and national sororities that has oversight of key governance issues of sororities	Anson & Marchesani, 1991

## APPENDIX B

### FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

*Introduction:* Thank you all for your time and for agreeing to be a part of this study. As a fraternity man, myself, I believe that studying perceptions of how we protect minority brothers' interests can help us achieve a brighter sense of brotherhood. I want to reiterate that I can ensure anonymity in terms of my data collection and reporting, but cannot guarantee confidentiality. Your participation is voluntary, and you may elect to answer any, all, or none of the questions that I am about to ask. Nothing in this interview, however, is personally-charged. I will not be asking questions about *your* diversities, as that is not the focus of the study. Instead, I am interested in your perceptions and beliefs concerning the issues. I would ask that you please keep this information to yourselves, as some information may be sensitive. Are we comfortable so far? Ok, let's begin...

1. Tell me about your fraternity experience. What are some of the leadership positions you have held?
2. In what year of your college career did you join the organization?
3. In your estimation, about what percent of active members are involved in chapter activities?
4. I'm interested in talking with you about the concept of diversity. What have been your experiences in talking about diversity? Have you spoken with other fraternity members about this topic?
5. The study is concerned with protected classes. Are you familiar with protected classes, and do you know of the classes that your fraternity's national constitution protects?
6. Are any of you aware of any additional classes your own chapter's bylaws protect?

7. Let's talk about this group of student-leaders. Can we discuss to what degree you believe the executive committee has read and understands your national constitution and bylaws?
  - a. The active chapter?
  - b. Your chapter's alumni?
8. Have any of you been to (inter)national conventions or regional meetings? Based on your experiences and interactions with brothers and alumni from other chapters, how welcoming would you consider your fraternity at a national level to be with men of difference races, religions, or sexual orientations?
9. Along similar lines, would you consider your fraternity at a chapter level to be welcoming to men of difference races, religions, or sexual orientations?
10. Experiences can differ, and sometimes new members bring new ideas. But, in your interactions and experiences in your chapter, can you describe any instances where active fraternity men have been less than accepting of someone based on race? How about alumni?
11. How about on the basis of religion?
12. Sexual orientation?
13. So, do we agree that protecting the interests of these men is important? In your opinions, whose responsibility is it in protecting the interests of men of different races, religions, and sexual orientations?
14. Since you are all leaders of the organization at an undergraduate level, your opinions and perceptions are important. How do you think the fraternity should go about protecting the interests of men of different races, religions, and sexual orientations?
15. What do you think your fraternity's reputation is on campus in terms of how you interact with men of different races, religions, and sexual orientations?
16. Is there anything else significant on this topic that you'd like to mention?

## APPENDIX C

### INTERVIEW PROTOCOL WITH ALUMNI LEADERS

*Introduction:* Thank you for your time and for agreeing to be a part of this study. As a fraternity man, myself, I believe that studying perceptions of how we protect minority brothers' interests can help us achieve a brighter sense of brotherhood. I want to reiterate that I can ensure anonymity in terms of my data collection and reporting, but cannot guarantee confidentiality. Your participation is voluntary, and you may elect to answer any, all, or none of the questions that I am about to ask. Nothing in this interview, however, is personally-charged. I will not be asking questions about *your* diversities, as that is not the focus of the study. However, you should know that I have purposely selected certain alumni leaders because they are *diverse* on the basis of race and religion. The study also includes the issue of sexual orientation, but as that is not something that is disclosed on a personal basis, it is neither my intention to ask your orientation, nor is it something you should feel obliged to indicate. You are welcome to if you so desire. Instead, I am interested in your perceptions and beliefs concerning the issue of diversity, and how the fraternity has dealt with the issue during contemporary times, and/or your terms of service. I would ask that you please keep this information to yourself, as some information may be sensitive. Are we comfortable so far? Ok, let's begin...

1. Obviously, you've given a number of years of your own life, many on a volunteer-basis to serve your fraternity. Can you tell me a bit about the roles you have played within the fraternity? What is your role in the fraternity today?
2. In what year of your college career did you join the organization?
3. I'm interested in talking with you about the concept of diversity. What have been your experiences in talking about diversity? Have you spoken with other fraternity members about this topic?
4. The study is concerned with protected classes. Are you familiar with protected classes, and do you know of the classes that your fraternity's national constitution protects? Do you know of any undergraduate chapters that protect other classes outside of what is listed nationally?

5. I'd like to talk about how the fraternity has handled issues of race, religion, and sexual orientation. What are some landmark decisions the fraternity has made, and in your perception, how did chapter members handle it?
6. There will be people who are showing some resistance. Do you have any insights on resistance to policy changes?
7. Without naming them, can you think of any chapters or colonies who have been less than welcoming to men of difference races, religions, or sexual orientations?
8. During your time of service, have there been any other landmark decisions or actions in relation to race, religion, or sexual orientation worth noting? Perhaps in the United States' history?
9. Based on your experiences and interactions with brothers and alumni from other chapters, how welcoming would you consider your fraternity at a national level to be with men of difference races, religions, or sexual orientations at this point in time? Can you recall a time when it was different?
10. As a fraternity leader, what are your thoughts on whose responsibility it is in protecting the interests of men of different races, religions, and sexual orientations?
11. Are you content with how things have gone? How should the fraternity go about protecting the interests of men of different races, religions, and sexual orientations?
12. Another key part of this study involves fraternity men's understanding of policies and bylaws. Can you tell me to what degree you believe the executive committee has read and understands your national constitution and bylaws? Any exemplar undergraduate chapters or other alumni members that are well versed? Can you account for why this may be?
13. Before I let you provide any other information you'd like me to know, I am curious as to what you think your fraternity's reputation is nationally in terms of how you accept and protect men of different races, religions, and sexual orientations?
14. Is there anything else significant on this topic you'd like to mention?



## APPENDIX D

### SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR ACTIVE MEMBERS

Instructions: Please complete the following questions by selecting the appropriate response. Your participation in this survey, though appreciated, is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from participating at any time. Similarly, this survey is anonymous. Please avoid identifying yourself at any point during this survey. The survey will last approximately 15-20 minutes. Thank you for participating!

#### *Part 1: Demographic Information*

##### **1. What is your current student status?**

- Full-time undergraduate student (12 or more credits per sem.)
- Full-time graduate student (9 or more credits per semester)
- Part-time undergraduate student (less than 12 credits per sem.)
- Part-time graduate student (less than 9 credits per semester)
- Other: (Please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

##### **2. What is your current academic standing?**

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Graduate: (Please specify)\_\_\_\_\_
- Other: (Please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

##### **3. In what academic year did you join your fraternity?**

- 2006-2007
- 2007-2008
- 2008-2009
- 2009-2010
- 2010-2011

- 2011-2012
- 2012-2013
- Other: (Please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

**4. What age range best describes you?**

- 18-20
- 21-23
- 24-25
- Other: (Please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

**5. What is your religion?**

- Christian
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Islam
- No religion
- Other: (Please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

**6. Please indicate the primary racial/ethnic group with which you identify. (If you are of a multi-racial or multi-ethnic background, indicate that group with which you identify most of the time.)**

- African American/Black
- American Indian/Alaskan Native/Aleut
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Chicano/Latino/Hispanic
- Middle Eastern
- White/Caucasian
- Other: (Please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

**7. What is your sexual orientation?**

- Gay
- Bisexual
- Heterosexual
- Other: (Please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

**8. In what setting did you spend most of your life before coming to this college/university?**

- Large city or metropolitan area
- Rural area or town
- Small city

*Part Two: Diversity in the Chapter*

**Please fill in the circle that corresponds with the number of times you have heard a fellow chapter member make an insensitive or disparaging remark about (0- Never, 1 2, 3- Often):**

- 9. Gay or bisexual men .....0 1 2 3
- 10. Persons of particular religious backgrounds..... 0 1 2 3
- 11. Persons of particular racial/ethnic backgrounds..... 0 1 2 3

**Please fill in the circle that corresponds with the number of times you have heard an advisor and/or alumnus make insensitive or disparaging remarks about (0- Never, 1 2, 3- Often):**

- 12. Gay or bisexual men ..... 0 1 2 3
- 13. Persons of particular religious backgrounds..... 0 1 2 3
- 14. Persons of particular racial/ethnic backgrounds..... 0 1 2 3

**Please fill in the circle that corresponds with the number of times you have been present at your fraternity- affiliated events where the following would not feel welcome:**

- 15. Gay or bisexual men ..... 0 1 2 3 4 5
- 16. Persons of particular religious backgrounds..... 0 1 2 3 4 5
- 17. Persons of particular racial/ethnic backgrounds..... 0 1 2 3 4 5

**18. Have you ever felt discriminated against or harassed (even subtly) in your chapter?**

- Yes
- No

**If yes:**

**18a. What do you believe was the primary reason that you were discriminated against or harassed? (Please mark only the primary one)**

- Because of my race or ethnicity
- Because of my religious beliefs
- Because of my sexual orientation
- Other: (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**18b. In what form was the discrimination or harassment mainly expressed? (Select all that apply)**

- Actual physical assault or injury
- Anonymous phone calls
- Glances
- Ignoring
- Threats of physical violence

- O Verbal comments
- O Written comments
- O Subtle forms: (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- O Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Generally speaking, how much contact would you say that you had with people of the following backgrounds prior to coming to this university?**

**(0- None, 1 2, 3, 4- Frequent)**

19. Men of different racial backgrounds.....0 1 2 3 4

20. Men of different religious backgrounds.....0 1 2 3 4

21. Men of different sexual orientations.....0 1 2 3 4

**22. Check the type of men you WOULD NOT be comfortable extending a bid of membership to:**

- African American/Black
- American Indian/Alaskan/Aleut
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Chicano/Latino/Hispanic
- White/Caucasian
- A heterosexual man
- A person with different religious beliefs than yours
- An openly gay or bisexual man

**23. Check the type of men you WOULD NOT be comfortable initiating:**

- African American/Black
- American Indian/Alaskan/Aleut
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Chicano/Latino/Hispanic
- White/Caucasian
- A heterosexual man
- A person with different religious beliefs than yours
- An openly gay or bisexual man

*Part 3: The University & Fraternity: Dealing with Diversity*

**This university thoroughly addresses campus issues related to (0- Strongly Disagree, 1 2, 3- Strongly Agree):**

24. Race or racism ..... 0 1 2 3

25. Religious beliefs or harassment ..... 0 1 2 3

26. Sexual orientation or homophobia..... 0 1 2 3

**At the international level, your fraternity thoroughly addresses issues related to (0- Strongly Disagree, 1 2, 3- Strongly Agree):**

- 27. Race or racism .....0 1 2 3
- 28. Religious beliefs or harassment ..... 0 1 2 3
- 29. Sexual orientation or homophobia..... 0 1 2 3

**30. Identify which of the following actions you have witnessed fellow ACTIVE members engaging in:**

- Challenge others on racial/ethnic/sexually derogatory comments
- Feel disapproval for a display of public affection by a gay couple
- Feel disapproval for a display of public affection by a heterosexual couple
- Get to know people from different cultures and groups as individuals
- Refuse to participate in comments or jokes that are derogatory to any group or culture
- Repeat a comment or joke about a religion other than your own
- Repeat a derogatory comment or joke about Gays or bisexuals
- Take action to silence hate speech or rhetoric

**Please rate how your attitudes towards the following groups of people have changed since you joined this fraternity. (0- No change, 1, 2, 3- Significant Change)**

- 31. Racially diverse men.....0 1 2 3
- 32. Religiously diverse men.....0 1 2 3
- 33. Men with different sexual orientations....0 1 2 3

*Part Four: Governance and Bylaws*

**34. Until taking this survey, were/are you aware that your organization has an anti-discrimination clause protecting certain classes of men?**

- Yes
- No

**35. Have you read your (inter)national organization’s policy on anti-discrimination?**

- Yes, I have read and it and am comfortable in saying that I understand it
- Yes, I have read it but am not comfortable in saying that I fully understand it
- No, I have not read it

**36. Have you ever knowingly voted against a man for a bid of membership due to his race, religion, or sexual orientation?**

- Yes

No  
I don't know

**37. Would you ever knowingly vote against a man for a bid of membership due to his race, religion, or sexual orientation?**

Yes  
No

**38. Have you ever witnessed another chapter member rallying support AGAINST a potential member due to the potential member's race, religion, or sexual orientation?**

Yes  
No

**39. Have you ever witnessed another chapter member rallying support IN FAVOR a potential member due to the potential member's race, religion, or sexual orientation?**

Yes  
No

**40. What is the purpose of anti-discrimination clauses in fraternity bylaws?**

OPEN ENDED

**41. Do you believe that anti-discrimination clauses protect minority populations? Why or Why not?**

OPEN ENDED

**42. Do you believe minority populations need to be protected via national and chapter bylaws? Why or why not?**

OPEN ENDED

**43. Are fraternity bylaws the best means for protecting the rights of minority populations? Why or why not?**

OPEN ENDED

**44. Do you believe that anti-discrimination clauses contribute to a sense of belonging amongst your chapter members? Why or why not?**

OPEN ENDED

**45. To what extent do you experience a sense of belonging or community in your fraternity?**

To a great extent  
 To some extent  
 To a small extent  
 Not at all

**46. How satisfied are you with your experience regarding diversity in your fraternity?**

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

## **APPENDIX E**

### **REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE SURVEY**

Greetings!

My name is Matthew Richardson, and I am a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh. For the past few years, I have been researching and familiarizing myself with the topic of Fraternity life, and have decided to investigate this problem space through my dissertation. I am writing to invite you to participate in my doctoral dissertation study.

The purpose of this research study is to determine the perspectives of fraternity men concerning the effectiveness of anti-discrimination clauses in fraternity law to protect minority member interests and contribute to a sense of belonging.

For that reason, I will be surveying active fraternity men from your chapter and asking them to complete a brief (approximately 15 minute) questionnaire.

If you are willing to participate, my questionnaire will ask about background (e.g., age, race, years of education, religion), as well as about your perceptions on your organization, its bylaws, and diversity.

There are no foreseeable risks associated with this project, nor are there any direct benefits to you.

This is an entirely anonymous questionnaire, and so your responses will not be identifiable in any way. All responses are confidential, and results will be kept under lock and key. Your participation is voluntary. This study is being conducted by Matthew Richardson, who can be



reached at 412.XXX.XXXX or MRR54@pitt.edu, if you have any questions. You can access the survey by clicking the link below:

[Dissertation Study Survey](#)

Thank you for your participation!

Matthew R. Richardson  
[MRR54@pitt.edu](mailto:MRR54@pitt.edu)

## **APPENDIX F**

### **REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE FOCUS GROUP**

Greetings!

My name is Matthew Richardson, and I am a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh. For the past few years, I have been researching and familiarizing myself with the topic of Fraternity life, and have decided to investigate this problem space through my dissertation. I am writing to invite you to participate in my doctoral dissertation study.

The purpose of this research study is to determine the perspectives of fraternity men concerning the effectiveness of anti-discrimination clauses in fraternity law to protect minority member interests and contribute to a sense of belonging.

For that reason, I will be conducting a focus group interview of your chapter's executive committee to last about 1 hour at a mutually agreed to private location on campus.

If you are willing to participate, the interview questions will ask about your background (e.g., age, race, years of education, religion), as well as about your perceptions on your organization, its bylaws, and diversity.

There are no foreseeable risks associated with this project, nor are there any direct benefits to you. This is an anonymous focus group interview, and so your responses will not be identifiable. Ahead of time, please note that I will be encouraging each of you to not use identifiable language that could identify yourself or others in the organization. The focus group interview will be voice-only recorded. All responses are confidential, and results will be kept under lock and key. Your participation is voluntary. This study is being conducted by Matthew Richardson, who can be reached at 412.XXX.XXXX or MRR54@pitt.edu, if you have any questions.

Attached, please find a letter of support from your organization's executive director. Please review this and call me with any questions.

Thank you for your participation!

Matthew R. Richardson  
MRR54@pitt.edu

## **APPENDIX G**

### **REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE INTERVIEW**

Greetings!

My name is Matthew Richardson, and I am a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh. For the past few years, I have been researching and familiarizing myself with the topic of Fraternity life, and have decided to investigate this problem space through my dissertation. I am writing to invite you to participate in my doctoral dissertation study.

The purpose of this research study is to determine the perspectives of fraternity men concerning the effectiveness of anti-discrimination clauses in fraternity law to protect minority member interests and contribute to a sense of belonging.

For that reason, I will be conducting an interview of alumni of your organization.

If you are willing to participate, the interview will ask about your background (e.g., age, race, years of education, religion), as well as about your perceptions on your organization, its bylaws, and diversity.

There are no foreseeable risks associated with this project, nor are there any direct benefits to you.

This is an anonymous interview, and so your responses will not be identifiable. Ahead of time, please note that I will be encouraging you to not use identifiable language that could identify yourself or others in the organization. The interview will be voice-only recorded. All responses are confidential, and results will be kept under lock and key. Your participation is voluntary. This study is being conducted by Matthew Richardson, who can be reached at 412.XXX.XXXX or MRR54@pitt.edu, if you have any questions.

Attached, please find a letter of support for the study from your organization's Executive Director. If you would like to participate, please E-mail me back to schedule an interview time.

Thank you for your participation!

Matthew R. Richardson  
MRR54@pitt.edu

## APPENDIX H

### CERTIFICATE OF INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD COMPLIANCE



## University of Pittsburgh *Institutional Review Board*

3500 Fifth Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213  
(412) 383-1480  
(412) 383-1508 (fax)  
<http://www.irb.pitt.edu>

### Memorandum

To: Matthew Richardson  
From: Sue Beers, PhD, Vice Chair  
Date: 1/14/2013  
IRB#: [PRO13010115](#)  
Subject: A Case Study Examining the Codification of Anti-Discrimination in the American Fraternity Movement

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The above-referenced project has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board. Based on the information provided, this project meets all the necessary criteria for an exemption, and is hereby designated as "exempt" under section 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2).

Please note the following information:

- If any modifications are made to this project, use the "**Send Comments to IRB Staff**" process from the project workspace to request a review to ensure it continues to meet the exempt category.
- Upon completion of your project, be sure to finalize the project by submitting a "**Study Completed**" report from the project workspace.

## APPENDIX I

### SAMPLE SURVEY QUALITATIVE DATA GROUPING ANALYSIS

cCode	Response
oP	I do because, as much as I disagree with it, there is still discrimination prevalent in different regions of the country.
oP	I do. As I said in the previous post having the clause in the bylaws sets the precedent for the members of the chapter to follow. Even though I don't believe every chapter that features an anti-discrimination clause is going to necessarily follow it, I do believe that they are a generally positive thing.
PP	No because title IX does that already.
oP	No I do not, I believe each chapter should be responsible for that.
oP	No, because it shouldn't even be an issue.
oP	No, I believe that people in our world today make too large of a deal about the protection of minorities, because personally I do not view any member of a minority differently due to their minority. I believe any stereotypes that are thrown at any member of a minority is brought upon themselves due to their own actions or words
oP	No, I believe that the men of the chapter need to have the values instilled in them. It can be written in the by-laws, but if the entire chapter is not embracing of diversity, the by-laws will serve little relevance and actives will simply ignore them and vote the way they initially would
oP	No. Greek organizations have their own unique personalities that will not be influenced by any bylaw. If a person is worried about being discriminated against if they join a certain organization they should find another one to join.
oP	Perhaps at the national level, i'm not sure how other chapters are. The [GMC] chapter does not need protections for minority populations, the brothers are extremely accepting and comfortable with members of different backgrounds/sexual orientations.
oP	Since the laws don't work in a lot of cases yes. It is necessary for these clauses to be embodied so that if chapters want to affect change, they have a legal means to do so.
oP	the bylaws should be conformed for equal opportunity for everyone, not to just assess the needs of the minority.
oP	With our chapter no, but I believe the reason they are at that level is to keep the lesser chapters accountable by a law

## APPENDIX J

### SAMPLE INTERVIEW CODING ANALYSIS

Obviously, you've given a number of years of your own life, many—if not all- on a volunteer-basis to serve your fraternity. Can you tell me a bit about the roles you have played within the fraternity? And What is your role in the fraternity today?			
Interviewee	Response	Keywords	Code
1	<p>Um as an undergraduate member I was an officer—I was the vice president and secretary. And new member trainer of my...chapter. Um I stayed involved as an alumnus after I got my career started by becoming a chapter advisor, um for a starting colony of my organization and I have since been a chapter advisor of three different groups and have served on 7 advisory boards of my organization of 7 different chapters. I then went on to become a regional, um, officer, which by being a regional officer, I became a member of the international board. I then became international secretary and then international president, serving two terms each.</p> <p>And my current position after stepping away from being on my international board for almost 15 years I am now currently the [chapter advisor] of two of my organization's chapters.</p>	Involvement, Board	1-1-I
This study is concerned with protected classes. Are you familiar with protected classes, and do you know of the classes that your fraternity's national constitution protects?			
1	Yeah, I have an idea of what protected classes are, and uh, yes I've actually been around for the change of my fraternity---taking and actually changing in my		



	fraternity what actual protected class coverage.		
M	Ok, can you give me an idea of the one's your organization specifically protects:		
1	Uh, race, creed, and we now—and am very proud to say we do protect sexual orientation.	Classifications	1-2-C
Do you know of any undergraduate chapters that protect other classes outside of what is listed nationally?			
1	(Pause) mmmmm. I'm not sure, but I see several of my chapters, um, and their not protected but I mean, I mean, I've seen some of our chapters not be afraid to take people that are—I'll use the term physically handicapped.	Exemplar	1-4-E

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