

ID 499

Senior Honors
Thesis

AN ANALYSIS OF THE
BALL STATE UNIVERSITY FRATERNAL STRUCTURE
AND PROJECTIONS FOR ITS FUTURE

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INTRODUCTION

The main goal throughout this thesis is to provide feasible advice on research that can be implemented by the fraternities at Ball State University to enhance their chapter's operations and to promote continued improvement and success in the future.

Many of the areas could easily be covered, but it is advisable to concentrate on a few specific areas that need immediate attention:

1. Rush
2. Why some fraternities are doing better than others.
3. The importance of the Interfraternity Council.
4. Public Relations

In the following pages, an attempt is made to describe the present situations, analyze the problems, and make some projections for the future.

A sincere appreciation is expressed to Dean Collier for his cooperation, advice, and friendship, during the Spring Quarter of 1977, but also my previous association with him.

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RELATED REFERENCES

Johnson, Clyde S., Fraternities In Our Colleges (Upsilon Chapter 20, Rushing and Pledging.) Geo. Banta Co., Inc., Menasha, Wisconsin, 1972.

In Chapter Upsilon 20 the theme is "The Name Of The Game Is Rushing." The author states that although recruiting can be detrimental to those not accepted, it is a vital process for the perpetuation of satisfying organization's health. Referring to rushing as "the chapter's life blood," the author discusses the opinions of various authorities on "Rush Week" and gearing it to individual campus needs. The potential problems within the undergraduate chapters in relation to legacies and alumni recommendations are discussed, along with the importance of the chapter's Rush Committee. In addition, blackballs, scholarship and housing are referred to.

Leland, Leland F., Leland, Wilma S., & Johnson, Clyde S., The College Fraternity. Leland Publishers, Inc., Saint Paul, Minnesota, 1952.

Although this book is almost 25 years old, it offers the reader pertinent information concerning fraternities for a period of 175 years. The authors not only give a historical account as to the origin of college fraternities, but follow their growth pattern as "the world's greatest youth movement." The emphasis of the book is placed on the leadership, achievement, aid to education, and philanthropy that college fraternities have provided at their respective campuses, communities and to society in general throughout their history....and will continue to do so in the future.

Logan, James C., Rushing The Golden Key. Leland Publishers, Inc., Saint Paul, Minnesota.

The author very capably outlines the basic organizational structure and guidelines that can be utilized very effectively under any rush system. He stresses looking for "potential" in rushees, and encourages using actives, pledges, alumni, and parents in rush. Emphasis is placed in the book on Spring and Summer Rush with concentrated contact all summer. The author suggests various means

to attract rushees, i.e. singing, cleanliness, and use of nicknames. The importance of selling the rushee's parents, along with promptly issuing bids to pledges are two additional ideas left with the reader.

Robson, John W., The College Fraternity and Its Modern Role. Geo. Banta Co., Inc., Manasha, Wisconsin, 1956.

The writer, attempts to give a broad objective explanation of the college fraternity in order to offset the misconceptions that many people, especially high school students and parents, may have by answering frequently asked questions with statistical data and testimony of qualified authorities. The author admits that the fraternities have not done too well in communicating their message. The newspapers and magazines unjustly report the few misdeeds and abolishments of fraternities on some campuses, while hiding the achievements, contributions and installments which occur on the vast majority of college campuses. The importance of and leadership roles in society by fraternity alumni is also cited.

Thomas, Ray C., The Fraternity House. Leland Publishers, Inc., Saint Paul, Minnesota.

An extensive report on all aspects of building and operating a chapter house is given by the author. Ideas on the raising of finances and the preliminary work even before the actual fund drive begins is outlined. The writer stresses the neccessity of "good will relations" with the chapter's alumni members through regular newsletters and the prompt answering of any alumni correspondence. Alumni are important not only for their financial contributions to a chapter or a building fund, but for their knowledge and active participation in the formation of an Alumni Board to assist in the planning and managing of a chapter house. Information pertaining to taxes, building codes, and insurance is also presented for the reader.

RUSH

"The Lifeblood of the Greek System"

Formal Rush or Fall Rush

The Autumn months annually bring the changing of the leaves, the beginning of classes and the close to the Summer months -- and an important time of the year to the Ball State University Greek system.

Each fall the fraternities begin their major recruitment of formal rush for the selection of prospective members. The success of these few weeks means not only the continuance of each fraternity, but the scope and nature that each of the chapters will take in the future years.

Recently there has been some setbacks in the Fall rush due to the lack of forethought and planning. Pledge classes are starting out much smaller than a few years ago, and ending with fewer pledges being initiated.

This situation became widespread and severe the past academic year. This forced the fraternities to re-evaluate and admit to "common" problem and attempt to find a solution. How did fraternities get to the point of losing numbers? Is a mandatory Round Robin the answer? This was the plan used some years ago, or was the newer open rush concept a working idea? How long should a Fall rush last, or should Interfraternity Council stay out of rush planning?

These are some of the questions which are needed to be asked by each fraternity president in an attempt to construct a rush program that would be adaptable to the University and acceptable by the fraternities.

Table 1

Question	Yes	No	Don't Care
1. Do you want Fall rush to be co-ordinated by IFC?	15	0	2
2. Do you want a Round Robin?	14	2	2
3. If yes, do you want it to be mandatory?	8	8	2
4. Do you want rush to be between four to six weeks long?	14	2	2
5. If yes, should the final two to three weeks of the quarter be a closed period?	6	2	10
6. Should Winter and Spring Quarters be totally open?	15	0	2

As the above table indicates, the majority of Ball State fraternities favored the Round Robin concept, but were evenly split on whether it should be mandatory for a rushee in order to pledge.

A set period of four to six weeks when all fraternities would be rushing was favored in order to help all rushees know the time span of the rush period. Hopefully this provides the atmosphere much more conducive to assisting the Greek system along with the individual organizations which compose the Greek system.

A majority realized the importance of the Intrafraternity Council in rush, and the open concept to be used during the informal rush months of Winter and Spring Quarters.

Utilizing the valuable information gathered in this poll, and after talking with others, the following rush schedule for fall 1977 is being suggested.

1977 Fall Rush Schedule

September 7 - 23

1. Intense Publicity
2. Posters and Banners
3. Daily News Ads
4. Greek Convocation
5. Sign-up Tables (Cards provided with Round Robin information)
6. Activities Night
7. Campus Radio Stations

Rushee lists will be distributed to all fraternities as soon as available. Names are provided by: Ball State Applications, Summer Orientation, and Sign-up Tables.

September 24 - Round Robin (non-mandatory)

A non-mandatory Round Robin means that a rushee will not be required to participate in the Round Robin in order to pledge; but all rushees will be encouraged to participate.

A letter of invitation and reminder will be sent to all rushees via campus mail on or about September 20.

Schedule of Events Include:

1. Meet at University Hall at 10:00 A.M. for a brief talk on Greekism and Rush, along with a multi-media which will be presented before dividing into groups.

2. Group leaders will escort their group to each fraternity's location for a period of approximately fifteen minutes. Each fraternity should announce their own rush schedule at this time.

Note - Group leaders will be an equal number of representatives from each fraternity. The actual number will depend on the number of rushees that register for Fall rush.

September 24 - November 4 - Rush Period

Each fraternity is to set its own rush schedule and pledge night(s) sometime during this period. IFC will announce the general Rush Period, but each fraternity is to announce its own Rush Schedule during the Round Robin sessions.

Winter and Spring Quarter Rush

Each fraternity will design its own program during these two quarters.

General Requirements:

1. Each fraternity will be required to turn in a copy of its tentative Rush Schedule to the IFC office one week prior to the Round Robin.
2. Whenever a pledge class is selected, a list of pledges' names must be reported to the IFC office. Copies of these reports will be distributed to fraternities in order to up-date their master rush list.

For a successful rush and a successful year, complete support will be needed from all fraternities.

The above rush schedule was thoroughly discussed at

the Presidents' Council meeting on March 30th, at the Phi Sigma Epsilon house. The proposal was unanimously recommended and sent to the IFC for approval. The following week the members of the Interfraternity Council met at the Sigma Chi chapter house, discussed and adopted the Rush Schedule as provided.

The rush program for the coming Fall Quarter every fraternity has agreed to support. Plans need to be formalized for 1978, and 1979, and 1980.

Summer Rush

A Projection for the Future

Rush for Ball State University should have no beginning and end. Whether one realizes it or not - rush needs to be a year around process.

A somewhat structured formal rush is necessary, but good organization, concentrated effort during the summer months would insure an effective fall program. This may be accomplished in a number of ways.

1. Individual fraternity members in their own communities.
2. Better organization during the University's Summer Orientation Program.

Individual fraternity members in their own communities by contacting graduated high school seniors in one's area during the summer would be an excellent means to stimulate

interest in the Ball State fraternal system. The lists of those planning to attend Ball State could be requested from the high schools and/or the Office of Admissions of the University.

If one or more members of a fraternity called or visited a prospective rushee from their own community at the rushee's house, it would give the fraternity men a chance to inform the incoming freshmen and an opportunity to meet, impress, and enlighten "Mom and Dad" on the advantages. Many fine, potential fraternity men never receive the opportunity to belong to a fraternity because of their parent's misconceptions of Greek life. Fraternities may not realize the influence of parents, and the importance to inform them as well as their sons!

Ball State Summer Orientation Program

Ball State's Summer Orientation Program is by far the most superior program of its kind of any university in the state, if not the nation. It provides both the incoming freshmen and their parents with a busy, but relaxed two day session to obtain information and ask questions they may have concerning the University expectations.

Since fraternities and sororities play a major role on campus, and that they are more than just another campus organization - they are a lifestyle. It would be well to have the

Orientation Program and the Greek organizations enhanced by a more active Greek participation during the summer program.

The ideal situation would be to hire a competent member of a Greek organization, at student wages, to make a short presentation during the Orientation Program each afternoon.

This presentation could be listed, with permission from the Orientation committee, as one of the options in the afternoon of the first day of the two-day session. Interested and inquisitive parents and students could attend and be informed about what fraternities and sororities are really like.

The presentation could consist of a short multi-media depicting the various aspects of Greek life. Professionally designed posters advertising the rush schedules, and listing the philanthropic projects of the past year would also enhance the session. Brochures should be made available, along with an opportunity to register for the Fall rush if the student so desired.

Although the social aspect and its importance should be presented in the talk, the scholarastic achievements, grade ratios, philanthropic projects, and the University sponsored activities should be stressed and supported in a factual manner.

It is believed that a program of this nature would enhance Ball State University and the Greek system. As presented earlier, parents could once again become involved

with the presentation and it could alleviate many of their concerns, as well as the new Ball State matriculates.

A program of this magnitude would take a concentrated effort on behalf of the IFC and Panhellenic Council, and would be beneficial. Hopefully, a new program along these lines could be implemented in the near future.

Why Are Some Fraternities Making It Better Than Others? Obviously, some fraternities are doing better than others. It is because some memberships are larger than others?

In order to attack this puzzling question, I asked the fraternities for specific data concerning their financial obligations and their membership. The results on Table 2 are as follows:

All statistics listed were as of the completion of Winter Quarter, 1977.

1977 Fraternity Information
Ball State University

Fraternity	Rm. & Board	Meals/Week	Chapter Dues	House Occupancy	Member-ship
Alpha Tau Omega	100.00/mo.	2 Mon.- Fri.; 1 Sat.& Sun.	20.00/out 15.00/in	12	44
Beta Theta Pi	50.00/mo.	None	20.00/Fr.; 19.00/So. 17.00/jr.; 13.00/Sr.	20	39
Delta Chi	91.00/mo.	None	Included	15	22
Delta Tau Delta	130.00/mo.	Eve. Only Sun.-Thurs.	Included (18.00)	35	37
Lambda Chi Alpha	145.00/mo.	3/daily; except Sun.	Included	38	55
Phi Delta Theta	50.00/mo.	None	20.00/out 17.00/in	13	41
Phi Sigma Epsilon	140.00/qtr. 25.00/out	None	34.00/qtr.	10	24
Sigma Alpha Epsilon	135.00/mo.	Lunch & Dinner/ 5 days	Included	33	43
Sigma Chi	145.00/mo.	19/week	50.00/qtr.	51	85
Sigma Nu	55.00/mo.	None	18.00/mo.	12	41
Sigma Phi Epsilon	160.00/mo.	19/week	Included (20.00)	48	49
Sigma Tau Gamma	150.00/mo.	2 Mon.- Fri. 1 Sun.	Included	13	20
Theta Xi	95.00/mo.	None	Included (25.00)	18	23

* MEMBERSHIP STATS DO NOT INCLUDE PLEDGES

* ONLY FRATERNITIES WITH HOUSES ARE LISTED (5 OMITTED)

The preceding table indicates that the largest "active" memberships belong to: Sigma Chi 85; Lambda Chi Alpha 55; Sigma Phi Epsilon 49.

A closer study of the table reveals that these same three fraternities also have the most extensive meal plans, along with reasonable and competitive room and board rates.

The one thing that the table doesn't show is that each of these fraternities have:

1. alumni/housing board
2. housemother

This is much more than coincidence, it's a very significant fact.

Alumni Boards

It is believed that alumni boards and housing boards, are the most frequent untapped resource for the future growth of the Ball State fraternities.

The statistics show that the fraternities that are doing the best with their memberships and house facilities do have alumni input; although those houses who do have alumni boards are not utilizing them to their fullest potential.

The knowledge and experience that many local alumni can and are willing to offer may save chapters a great deal of money, but will definitely assist in smoothing out the daily operations of a chapter.

The establishing of alumni boards will attract many other alumni members into more active alumni roles which can ob-

viously lead to increased financial support.

The contacts that many local alumni have in the area can assist the chapter whenever major decisions must be made.

The list of positive and constructive additions that alumni boards can provide to chapters is endless. Quite a few undergraduates are surprised by most alumni members who are interested and concerned with the undergraduate chapters, and would enjoy being invited to participate in the chapter again.

It is believed that the untapped alumni resource will have to play a major role in the future of the Ball State fraternities. The sooner that the fraternities realize this, the faster will be the growth, development, and the success for each chapter, and the Greek system.

Housemothers

The other common factor between the three fraternities at the top of the chart was that of employing a housemother. A housemother can be extremely advantageous to any fraternity. Not only can a housemother sew buttons and type papers, but they are mature adult women with whom members may confide and receive assistance. The mere presence of a housemother is a reminder of the common courtesy and respect that everyone should be treated. In addition, a housemother is a

symbol of authority and can help teach young men to apply their college experiences in preparation for the community in which they will reside.

Some housemothers serve as bookkeepers, part-time cooks, secretaries, and the like for the chapters who are fortunate enough to have housemothers.

Recruiting able housemothers may be a problem. If a fraternity really decides they want and need a housemother, and really searches for one, they are available. The Office of Associate Dean of Students can be of assistance.

A minimal salary and the decorating of a room or two is a small price to pay for the many benefits that a housemother can offer a fraternity. Many chapters are doing quite well without housemothers; a fraternity can be enhanced even more with one.

It is expected that someday every house on campus will employ a housemother, or housefather, and they will not regret the addition.

The Interfraternity Council

What is its role and where is it going? It is a known fact that the Ball State Interfraternity Council has not been as effective in recent years as it could or should have been. The major drawback to the organization has been the lack of regular attendance and participation by the individual fraternities.

After careful thought for a long period of time about this problem, a restructuring proposal changing the membership of IFC has been provided to the chapters. The proposal calls for the responsibilities of each fraternity's representation in IFC to be automatically delegated to the chapter's vice-president which will eliminate the office of IFC representative. The restructuring proposal passed the Presidents' Council on April 12, 1977, and was sent to the IFC for consideration. The proposal is as follows:

IFC Restructuring Proposal

Whereas.....

Fraternity presidents are considered the most knowledgeable about their own chapters, and thus would be ideal as their chapter's Interfraternity Council representative, but

Whereas.....

Fraternity presidents are assigned many other responsibilities for their own chapter's operations, the time would not permit added assignments.

Whereas.....

IFC has been less effective in past years due to lack of

regular attendance, and

Whereas.....

The office of IFC representative normally isn't sought after by some fraternity members, and

Whereas.....

Close cooperation among fraternities, and regular effective IFC meetings are essential for fraternity prosperity, and

Whereas.....

The vice-president of each fraternity should be knowledgeable about his chapter, along with being responsible, but is normally not assigned too many duties, and therefore... it is proposed that the responsibilities of each fraternity's vice-president be delegated as the fraternity's representative to IFC effective September, 1978.

Provisions for 1977-78

The elected IFC officers for 1977-78 are to remain the same.

Whether or not this is the best answer to the lack of attendance and pressing problems of IFC, it will be a feasible alternative. If IFC isn't functioning properly, then rush and other possible coordinated efforts will suffer.

It is essential that the Ball State fraternities become more aware, open and honest with each other than in the past. Many people may be surprised, but many chapters do have the same problems. Many more ideas should be shared and solutions considered if the fraternities were more cooperative with each other. Cooperation and competition can exist at the same time.

The key to this essential cooperation is the Interfraternity Council and the Presidents' Council. Both bodies need

to meet and talk openly on a regular basis. It would be ideal if the IFC could meet every other week and the Presidents' Council once a month. Both groups should schedule their meetings in the various fraternity houses on a rotating basis. This should provide an atmosphere much more conducive for honesty among Greeks rather than a room in one of the University's buildings.

Presidents' Council

Part of the responsibilities with this thesis project in the Associate Dean of Students' Office was the organizing of the meetings of the Presidents' Council. This council met three times this past spring - twice for business meetings and one social gathering. Each of the meetings were held in the evenings as a designated fraternity house. Minutes of the meetings are attached as a matter of record.

Fraternity Presidents' Council Spring Meeting
 March 30, 1977
 Phi Sigma Epsilon House

Fraternities Present: Delta Chi, Delta Tau Delta, Kappa Alpha Psi, Lambda Chi Alpha, Phi Delta Theta, Phi Sigma Epsilon, Sigma Chi, Sigma Nu, Sigma Phi Epsilon, Sigma Tau Gamma, Theta Chi.

Fraternities Absent: Alpha Phi Alpha, Alpha Tau Omega, Beta Theta Pi, Omega Psi Phi, Sigma Pi, Theta Xi.

1. Each fraternity president received a folder containing the most recent minutes of IFC, an up-dated listing of fraternity presidents, and a Change of Officers form.
2. Since there were many new presidents in attendance,

everyone introduced themselves in order to become acquainted with each other.

3. Presidents were reminded that the 2nd week reports were due to Associate Dean's Office and the Change of Officers forms were due in the Student Programs Office.

4. The 1977 Fall Rush Proposal was discussed thoroughly and unanimously approved.

5. Future meetings and topics were set:

1. Tuesday, April 12 - Restructuring of IFC for membership.
2. Tuesday, April 25 - Summer Rush programs that would be needed.

6. The Associate Dean of Students commented on the necessity of the fraternities working together, along with the importance of taking pledges who have respectable scholarship. It was strongly encouraged that all fraternities utilize a much neglected resource, the Alumni Boards and/or Housing Corporations.

7. Meeting was adjourned.

Fraternity Presidents' Council Spring Meeting

April 12, 1977

Delta Tau Delta House

Fraternities Present: Alpha Tau Omega, Beta Theta Pi, Delta Chi, Delta Tau Delta, Omega Psi Phi, Phi Sigma Epsilon, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, Sigma Chi, Sigma Nu, Sigma Phi Epsilon, Sigma Tau Gamma, Theta Xi.

Fraternities Absent: Alpha Phi Alpha, Kappa Alpha Psi, Lambda Chi Alpha, Phi Delta Theta, Sigma Pi, Theta Chi.

1. Each fraternity president received a folder containing the most recent minutes of IFC, the minutes of the past Presidents' Council meeting (March 30), copies of the newly adopted Rush Schedule for next fall, and the 7th week reports. The 7th week reports are due no later than Monday May 2.

2. Presidents were informed that the Ball State Physical Plant has requested that all fraternities take care of

the equipment requisitioned from the University.

3. A proposal for the restructuring of IFC was presented. After a thorough discussion, the proposal was approved and sent to IFC for further consideration.

4. IFC president, announced that the Assistant Director of Student Programs, called a meeting of all Greek organization presidents on Thursday, April 14, at 4:30 p.m. in the Korina Room of the Student Center. The topic to be discussed; Cooperation and Contractural Agreements Between Fraternities and Sororities.

5. The candidate for SA president, asked to speak to the group and encouraged voter participation in the run-off election of Thursday, April 14.

6. The Associate Dean of Students commented on fraternities' behavior in the spring, in reference to lawn keggers and on fraternity relations and problems with the community. It was reported that if the residents are concerned about the situation and unpleasant problems in the future could be avoided.

7. A comparative study on the room/board charges and on chapter dues of each fraternity has been completed. Copies were made available to the presidents.

8. The last Presidents' Council Meeting of this year will be held on Tuesday, April 26, at 8:00 p.m. at the Sigma Chi house.

9. Meeting was adjourned.

Public Relations

A book could be written on the importance of public relations to fraternities at Ball State. Recent articles and editorials in the Daily News have presented a bleak picture of the Greek structure. On the national scene, the newly released movie, "Fraternity Row", portrays an unfortunate, harrassing incident from out of the past.

Many of the allegations and rumors about fraternities are glittering generalities without merit, especially concerning the fraternities at Ball State. Physical harrassment and dehumanization is for the most part a thing of the past. The writing about the positive and constructive things that fraternities are involved with, the community projects, wouldn't sell papers or tickets to the movie houses.

The writer is proud of the philanthropic nature of Ball State Fraternal Chapters. Many months of planning and sweat raise thousands of dollars annually for local and national organizations. Service projects are done on a regular basis for many worthwhile Muncie establishments. Many fraternities have special programs and incentive awards to push toward the academic excellence of a house. Many pledge classes have study programs, and are assigned community projects.

The fraternal activities are positive contributions to the university, the community, and to the community in general. How often does one read about this aspect of frater-

nities in the newspaper, or see it on a screen? Sadly, this does not happen very often.

It is vital that the fraternities of the University work diligently the coming years on their relations with the community by publicizing their philanthropic efforts and their scholastic achievements. Several suggested methods to accomplish this are:

1. IFC and Panhel work for a Greek correspondent on the Daily News. A majority of University activities are sponsored by the Greeks, with the proceeds donated to a charitable cause.
2. Utilize the Public Information Service at the University to its fullest. The Public Information Service at Ball State has an excellent rapport with the Muncie and hometown papers, along with being cooperative with student organizations.
3. Appoint a brother to be a liason with the local newspapers and radio stations.

It is important that members of the University and the community know much more about the positive aspects of the fraternities in the coming years. The Greek system owes it to itself to show all aspects of fraternity life by publicizing their endeavors. The fraternities will benefit from such activities, the recipients benefit, and it is time to let others know.

CONCLUSION

Fraternalities, and the Greek system as a whole, have progressed consistently since 1919 when they were first organized at Ball State, and many new chapters have been established since 1946. As pointed out, the further implementation of several programs which have been proposed can and would serve to improve and enhance the entire Greek system.

The three areas which need immediate attention are Rush, the Interfraternity Council, and Public Relations. For Greeks to survive at Ball State there is undoubtedly a vital need for the promotion and organization of a stronger rush program. The rebirth and restructuring of the Interfraternity Council could provide Greeks with the organization and harmony which is almost nonexistent today. Finally, the area of Public Relations requires a concentrated effort on the part of all Greeks to advertise and promote the multitude of programs which benefit not only the students, but also contribute to the prosperity of the community, state, and national organizations.

It is hoped that soon in the future these ideas will become a realization. The present Greek system can offer many things to many people. Until some of these concerns are acted on, the true potential of Greeks at Ball State will remain virtually untapped.

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