More Alike Than Different:
The Changing Shape of Successful Fraternity and Sorority Life

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Who are you?
Why are you here?
What do you want?
The State of Affairs

Greek Life’s “Quiet Crisis”

Many international leaders, interfraternity politicos, and alumni recognize the downward trajectory of men’s groups. Women’s groups have remained far stronger.

Most inter/national membership numbers have declined or held steady in the last 5 years.

Private and public universities have discovered new, legal means to remove fraternities and sororities from their campuses.
“Kids Today”

Our generation, the Millenial generation, is uniquely suited for Greek life. We are multi-tasking, goal-oriented, and ambitious. We also crave structure more than past generations such as Gen Xers or Boomers.
Good Artists Copy, Great Ones Steal

Universities are replicating the Greek experience in living and learning communities across America. The result is close, but not close enough to allow them to shut down Greek communities…yet.
Do people believe what we say we are about?

Intent ≠ Impact

Guess?

Credibility:
- Trust
- Respect

How does this relate to our continued existence at RPI? To our reactions to the Greek Life Commons Agreement?
How many of you believe that Greeks have a negative image?

Where does it come from?
Cheat on your girlfriend
not on your FRAT
If you find this shirt on your girlfriend’s floor, please return to:

PI KAPPA PHI
FALL RUSH 2005
"...SO WHAT IF WE'RE NOT TRUE GENTLEMEN..."
Positioning Your Chapter

Within Rensselaer

Rensselaer educates the leaders of tomorrow for technologically based careers. We celebrate discovery, and the responsible application of technology, to create knowledge and global prosperity.

Scholarship, leadership, career success, discovery, innovation, responsibility, knowledge generation, global prosperity (service)
Positioning Your Chapter

Within the Greek Life Commons

Participation
CLASS Programs, Sophomore-Year Experience, Faculty, Academic Success, Greek Life programs…

Housing Standards

What are you already doing?
Positioning Your Chapter

Within the Greek Life Commons

Faculty Adviser, faculty relations program (dinners, scholarship judging, etc.) academic programs (study hours, grades monitoring), career guidance (alumni talks, resume/networking workshops)

Greek life programs (Greek Week, recruitment, Greek Leadership Summit, special events), Awards of Excellence

Signature Thrusts: biotechnology, information technology, energy security, nanotechnology, media and the arts (participate in sharing of research projects among members at chapter meetings, create chapter bands or other artistic groups, support other on-campus organizations)

General campus involvement (support athletics, community service, student organizations, jobs on campus, mentor programs, etc.)

Make your house a place alumni/ae would actually like to visit.
Positioning Your Chapter

Why?

- To demonstrate excellence and values-based leadership.
- To demonstrate our value in the 21st century.
- To recruit new members in ways we have never considered.
- To transform our relationship with RPI from extracurricular to co-curricular.
- To support the development and future prospects of our members.
- To hold in trust a tradition at RPI that stretches more than 150 years into the past.

Remember, there is an old Malay proverb that “Little by little, a mountain is built.” Don’t expect change to be immediate!
Leading Change

Failure to communicate change within the context of an organization is the primary reason most chapters cannot implement what delegates learn at conferences.

Build a coalition of brothers or sisters first; tell one or two everything you have learned and let them share common objections with you – work with them to formulate responses.
Leading Change

Develop a vision and strategic framework that creates a sense of urgency and/or inspires your chapter to action (this can also include finding the right influencers).

Never doubt yourself but be sure to anchor what you are doing in the culture of your chapter. Remember, you are a leader because you chose to be HERE.

Identify potential barriers before creating a plan of action.
Discussion

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