FRATERNITY & SORORITY HAZING: A PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE TO RELEVANT RESEARCH & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PREVENTION

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Hazing remains prevalent on college campuses. It is a threat to the health and safety of college students, in particular, fraternity and sorority students. Fraternity and sorority life professionals are often faced with the growing pressures and challenges to prevent hazing on their campuses. This paper is intended to serve as a resource for fraternity and sorority professionals to align practice with research findings and research-informed guidance about hazing prevention.

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Hazing continues to undermine the health and safety of students, their groups, and the larger communities in which they operate. Humiliating, degrading, or having the potential to be physically and/or emotionally harmful, hazing is at odds with the missions of educational institutions and national/international organizations and undermines ethical leadership development and practice. As such, many campus and national/international organization leaders have heeded the call to action to prevent hazing. Despite these concerted efforts, however, hazing persists. Analyses of high-profile and lesser-known cases have illuminated the social complexity of hazing behavior and the limits to traditional prevention approaches.

Research can help us to better understand the complex and nuanced factors contributing to, and mitigating or eliminating, hazing behaviors. A developing knowledge base about its prevention holds promise for providing fraternity and sorority professionals with data-driven approaches to guide more effective practice. This white paper is intended as a comprehensive, yet concise review of the literature on the topic of fraternity and sorority hazing and its prevention. In writing this, our goals were to provide readers with a snapshot of the research and to delineate its practical applications for practitioners committed to hazing prevention.

Literature Review

Whether it was the wearing of certain attire, paddling, forced alcohol or food consumption, competition between first-year and upper-class students, or brutal "pranks" between students, hazing is an unfortunate thread woven into the fabric of college campuses since their early history (Syrett, 2009; Nuwer, 2020; Trota & Johnson, 2004). At least one hazing death has occurred every year in the United States since 1959, with the vast majority occurring within fraternities (Nuwer, 2020). Calling attention to the horrific and deadly incidents of hazing is vital for alerting the public to the problem of hazing and catalyzing change-making initiatives. However, limiting our focus to these types of incidents may have an unintended effect of eclipsing the broader range of harm that can occur from hazing and the diversity of students, families, and communities who are impacted by it.

Hazing, any activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers them regardless of a person's willingness to participate (Hoover, 1999), can be understood within a spectrum of interpersonal violence that includes alcohol consumption, humiliation, isolation, sleep deprivation, and sexual acts serving as common behaviors (Allan & Madden, 2008, 2012). In a national survey of 11,482 students, Allan and Madden (2008, 2012) found that over half (55%) of all college students participating in a campus organization experienced hazing in their college career. Fraternity and sorority members were one of the most likely group members to experience hazing, with 73% of members reporting they experienced behaviors meeting the definition of hazing. Rates of hazing among varsity athletes were comparable at 74%, with club sports (64%), performing arts organizations (54%), and service fraternities and sororities (50%) following in prevalence (Allan & Madden, 2008, 2012).

The body of knowledge about hazing in the context of fraternity/sorority membership has grown over the previous 15 years. With several tragic hazing deaths making headlines, researchers are increasingly turning their attention to this important topic. However, prior to 2005, the literature was somewhat sparse, in part because hazing, which is grounded in secrecy and deception and rife with social desirability bias, is quite difficult to study. Connected to this, hazing is often overlooked as a problem to be solved. Minimization and normalization contribute to it often being

invisible or eclipsed except in extreme cases. Also, the absence of federal funding specifically designated for research about hazing means the literature is growing at a slower rate than other areas, such as substance abuse. A monograph by Biddix et al. (2014) reviewed more than 1,500 eligible studies about fraternity and sorority members and experiences between 1996 and 2013. Among those studies, Biddix et al. identified 300 methodologically sound, peer-reviewed studies to synthesize. Only 2% of these studies addressed fraternity and sorority hazing experiences. While the focus of this white paper is the fraternity and sorority experience on college campuses, no literature review would be complete without also drawing from studies of other college students, athletes, high school students, and military environments.

Among the body of literature, fraternity and sorority hazing research often seeks to answer several broad questions:

- What exactly constitutes hazing? How do student and administrator definitions of hazing differ?
- Why does hazing happen?
- What are the outcomes of hazing?
- How do identity characteristics such as race or gender impact hazing participation, attitudes, and outcomes?
- Why does hazing persist?

The following pages will explore each of these questions.

What constitutes hazing? How do student and administrator hazing definitions differ?

In general, hazing is defined as any activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group (such as a student club or team) that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers, regardless of a person's willingness to participate (Hoover, 1999; Allan & Madden, 2008, 2012), although not all scholars agree on this definition (e.g., Cimino, 2017). However, studies indicate there is often a wide gap between student experiences of hazing and their willingness to label it as such (Allan et al., 2019; Allan & Madden, 2008; Campo et al., 2005; Hoover, 1999). In a recent study of nearly 6,000 college students (*n*=5880) at seven U.S. universities committed to hazing prevention, 26% of those belonging to clubs, teams, and organizations reported experiencing behavior that

met the definition of hazing but only 4.4% identified they were hazed when asked directly (Allan et al., 2019).

In the literature, hazing has been framed in a number of ways. Some researchers consider hazing to have the potential for physical and/or emotional harm (Allan & Madden, 2008). Cimino (2011) refers to hazing as the costs of joining, while others have described it as exerting power over others (Holman, 2004), a form of symbolic interaction between group and individual identity (Sweet, 1999), or as regulated violence (Malszecki, 2004).

Informed by state law in 44 of the 50 states, the kinds of hazing that are deemed illegal are often egregious. For example, the state of Massachusetts lists "whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, drug or other substance" as examples of hazing activities (Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 269, § 17, 1985), yet fails to describe some of the more nuanced examples of hazing that are more commonly seen among college populations such as manual servitude or sleep deprivation.

Not surprisingly, this lack of a consistent, common definition may translate to students' misunderstanding. There is some agreement among students and administrators on some of the more egregious forms of hazing such as forced consumption of alcohol (Ellsworth, 2006; Hoover, 1999). However, beyond its extreme forms, there are a diversity of views about what behaviors constitute hazing among students. Ellsworth (2006) identified differences among student organizations (fraternities, sororities, marching band, ROTC, and NCAA athletes) with regard to whether they identified certain activities as physical or psychological hazing or both. While an expert panel of administrators helped curate the list of hazing activities for Ellsworth's study, there was not shared agreement among the students that these activities were hazing. In a subsequent study (Allan & Madden, 2008), nine of 10 students who experienced hazing did not label it as such when asked directly. Related terms are sometimes misunderstood or used inconsistently. For example, the terms hazing and initiation often are intertwined. Initiation and hazing, while not mutually exclusive, are distinctly different. An initiation is some form of ceremony or ritual that fosters a developmental and identity forming process of being accepted formally

as a member of an organization (Turner, 1974; van Gennep, 1960). Hazing occurs within some initiation rituals, but not all initiation rituals are hazing, and not all hazing is initiation. Similarly, hazing and bullying are sometimes used interchangeably yet have different meanings. Hazing is specific to inclusion in a group context whereas bullying can happen between individuals outside of a group context. Some hazing can involve bullying behavior, but bullying is not necessarily hazing (Allan & Madden, 2012).

The fact that students can clearly identify harmful activities as hazing and struggle to problematize less egregious activities as hazing (Ellsworth, 2006; Hoover, 1999), suggests that students see the potential for harm as a condition of hazing. While studies indicate that approximately 75% of fraternity/sorority members (Allan & Madden, 2008; Campo et al., 2005; Owen et al., 2008) experienced some form of hazing, many of these students may show difficulty problematizing activities that did not personally cause them or their close peers harm.

Why does hazing happen?

There are many explanations for hazing, viewed through the lenses of sociology (e.g., Hollmann, 2002; Keating et al., 2005; Kiesling, 2005, Montague et al., 2008), psychology (e.g., McCready, 2019; McCreary et al., 2017; Parks et al., 2013; Parks & Southerland, 2013), anthropology (e.g., Sweet, 2004; Cimino, 2011, 2013, 2017), public health (e.g., Allan & Kerschner, 2020a; Langford, 2004), folklore (e.g., Dundes & Dundes, 2002; Mechling, 2008), criminology (e.g., Alexander & Opsal, 2020; Parks, Jones, & Hughey, 2015), and organizational behavior (e.g., DeSantis, 2007; Parks, 2012; Parks & Laybourn, 2017; Perlow, 2018). Many of these theories are rooted in the socio-psychological research on students and their identity development through group interaction. The reasons for hazing can be organized into six primary functions: (a) a rite of passage; (b) a tool to align individual and group identity; (c) a mechanism for exerting power and dominance; (d) a tool to discourage freeloaders; (e) a tool to build group cohesion, and (f) a mechanism of moral disengagement.

Hazing as a rite of passage. Rites of passage in many cultures mark the transition between childhood and adulthood. Typically, fraternity and sorority membership takes place in this transitional

time when students in their late teens and early 20s are forming their identities as college students and young adults. During this time, many traditional-aged students experiment with their identities, views, personal boundaries, and ethical decision making (Arnett, 2004). According to some scholars, students who endure hazing as part of the joining process, demarcate themselves as members from non-members (Donnelly, 1981; Johnson, 2011; Nuwer, 1999; Sweet, 2004). For many, the process of establishing one's adult self happens concurrently with the fraternity and sorority membership rite of passage, thus, fraternity/sorority and identity can become intertwined (Arnett, 2004; Sweet 2004).

Hazing as a way to align individual and group identity. Hazing also helps reinforce shared identity characteristics as new members reshape their own identities in order to fit with the group (Allan & DeAngelis, 2004; Bryshun, 1997; Hollmann, 2002; Sweet, 2004). Through receiving symbols such as t-shirts and decorative paddles and through shared experiences, including hazing, students cement their affiliation. Once the individual and group identity are aligned, students will work to maintain group norms and protect the group as an extension of their own identity, including supporting unpopular ideas or engaging in detrimental activities such as hazing (Addelson & Stirratt, 1996; Waldron, 2008). Hazing, in effect, inexplicably intertwines meaning of the self with the fraternity or sorority identity.

Hazing as power and dominance. Hazing is also the exertion of power over new members as a mechanism of dominance and control (Holman, 2004; McCready, 2019) and a way to build status among other organizations (DeSantis, 2007; Nuwer, 1999). Those groups that emphasize hierarchical dominance tend to have more supportive attitudes toward hazing (McCreary & Schutts, 2019). Hazing is fundamentally about power, whether that be through controlling access to basic needs like sleep and hygiene or contact with out-group members, or it be coercive in a way that compels new members to engage in undesirable activities. Hazing serves to amplify the proxemic power differential between leaders and aspirants and as a result, those who are "hazed are less likely to pose any threat to the power structure because they have conformed to the group by following orders and placing themselves in compromising positions for the

perceived good of the group" (Allan & DeAngelis, 2004, p.73). Hazing also helps groups assert status and social power to external groups. Additionally, the perceived toughness of a new member program can also determine organizational status (DeSantis, 2007).

Hazing as a tool to discourage freeloaders. Hazing also requires sacrifice demonstrated by the willingness to give up freedoms, take reputational risks, endure discomfort or embarrassment, and experience physical or emotional pain, as seen in the case of branding, sexual assault, or paddling for example (Addelson & Stirratt, 1996; Jones, 2000; Malszecki, 2004; Martin & Hummer, 1989; Keating et al., 2005; Wellard, 2002). These sacrifices are compelled through some of the same strategies employed by cults or gangs: social control and isolation, indoctrination of beliefs, requiring compliance to certain rules or codes of behavior, and the use of fear to intimidate (Hollmann, 2002; Nuwer, 1999). Through hazing, the organization employs dishonesty, control, and lying to increase the sense of sacrifice among aspirants in order to: (a) guarantee all members to have sacrificed equally (Jones, 2000); (b) prevent freeloaders from reaping the status and benefits of membership in the organization (Cimino, 2011, 2013); and (c) create greater psychological commitment and attraction to the group (Keating et al., 2005; van Raalte et al., 2007).

Hazing as a tool to build group cohesion. Those who are hazed often express the belief that a challenging new member experience creates a more cohesive group (DeSantis, 2007; Hollmann, 2002: Morinis, 1985). Called the maltreatment effect or the severity-attraction effect (Aronson & Mills, 1959; Keating et al., 2005), individuals who are mistreated sometimes demonstrate greater loyalty than those who are treated well. In a laboratory setting, those participants who were mistreated and perceived themselves to have more fun felt stronger attachment to the abuser and a greater perception of the abuser's power compared to individuals who engaged in activities without maltreatment. Mistreated participants also agreed more often with the viewpoints of those they perceived as in power (Keating et al., 2005).

Cohesion is also developed through engaging in "tolerable deviance" or behavior that, while outside accepted norms, has become tolerated as long as it does not harm others (Stebbins, 1988). Underage

drinking and marijuana usage often fall within this realm, as does hazing in the eyes of many college students (Bryshun & Young, 1999) and perhaps some of their parents who also experienced hazing. Often in an effort to show disregard for authority and to gain status through risk-taking, commanding new members to steal something, break into another fraternity or sorority facility, or be dropped off and find their way home with no money or phones, as some examples, can further bond groups (Hughes & Coakley, 1991). In effect, to break rules or expectations together makes fraternity and sorority members more cohesive in opposition to the control of the institution or national/international organization. In support of both the maltreatment effect and the concept of tolerable deviance, Campo et al. (2005) found fraternity and sorority members were more likely to participate in activities that caused embarrassment and deviance than non-Greek students.

Hazing as a consequence of moral disengagement. Moral disengagement is the psycho-social process by which individuals convince themselves that ethical standards of behavior do not apply to them in a given context. The unequivocal acceptance of group norms that deviate from social mores and the accompanying complicitness that accompanies this acceptance of group norms can lead to group moral disengagement that takes the shape as dehumanization, attribution of blame to organization aspirants, and diffusion of responsibility for ensuring good treatment (Bandura, 1986, 1999). Men and boys tended to show higher levels of moral disengagement (Hamilton, 2011; McCreary, 2012; Paciello et al., 2008). Additionally, a strong correlation has been shown between the likelihood of hazing and moral disengagement (Hamilton, 2011; McCreary, 2012; McCreary et al., 2016).

While there are many explanations for why hazing happens, none of them are singularly explanatory. Hazing is a complex psycho-social phenomenon that is influenced by individual characteristics, group culture and dynamics, and the larger environmental norms in which the hazing is situated. Individuals may agree to participate in hazing and groups may see hazing as a necessary form of new member socialization for all or some of these reasons.

What are the outcomes of hazing?

In many studies, both the hazers and the hazed

reported positive outcomes, which is perhaps one of the greatest challenges in eradicating hazing. Some students indicated that hazing was fun, aided in their development, helped them gain valued skills like time management and self-confidence, supported group cohesiveness, improved organizational pride, and status, and ensured the commitment of new members (Allan & Madden, 2008; Campo et al., 2005; Hinkle, 2006; Jones, 1999, 2000; Mechling, 2008; Montague et al., 2008; Muir & Seitz, 2004). In fact, as the number of hazing acts increased (as both the hazed and the hazer), students also reported greater positivity toward hazing (Campo et al., 2005). This is particularly true of fraternity and sorority members, who were more likely to report that hazing was fun, made them feel more included, generated a sense of accomplishment, and made those who experienced hazing feel a greater sense of accomplishment compared to non-members (Campo et al., 2005). In contrast, other studies did not show that hazing increased involvement or greater commitment to the organization (Owen et al., 2008; Rogers et al., 2012). Hazing is normalized as long as it is not harmful (Montague et al., 2008). Some students believed hazing was a serious issue, yet reported that hazing was commonplace and that many new members expected to experience some form of hazing, leading journalist Flanagan (2014) to label hazing as one of the "four horsemen of the student-life apocalypse" (p. 11).

How do identity characteristics such as gender and race impact hazing participation, attitudes, and outcomes?

Studies have explored the role gender and gender norms, especially masculinity, play in hazing participation and perceptions of hazing as well as the relationship between race and/or cultural background and hazing. According to Allan and Kerschner (2020a), published studies related to gender and hazing can generally be grouped according to: a) research that uses the lens of gender theory to explain the nature of and/or perceptions about hazing and b) empirical studies that report gender differences in behavior and/or perceptions of hazing. Research related to each of these categories is reviewed next.

Considering the latter category, most larger-scale survey-based studies have reported gender differences in rates of hazing across an entire sample. For example,

a recent analysis of data from a multi-institutional study of college students involved in a range of clubs, organizations, and teams revealed that 32.4% of male students and 22.0% of female students experienced behaviors that met the definition of hazing. In that same study, male students showed a greater likelihood to haze others, to have experienced hazing in high school, and to indicate alumni were present during hazing. Female students were more likely to have prosocial attitudes toward hazing. That is, they were more likely to agree with such statements as, "Hazing is not an effective way to create bonding," "It can be hazing even if someone agrees to participate," and "I do not need to be hazed to feel like I belong to a group," among others (Allan et al., 2019). In the national study of college student hazing (Allan & Madden, 2008), 61% of male respondents and 52% of female respondents experienced behaviors meeting the definition of hazing. In unpublished data from that same investigation, researchers found that male students experienced an average of 5.1 instances of hazing compared with 2.2 for female students. In an earlier study based on survey responses from students at a university in the northeast (N=736), Campo et al. (2005) found that on average, more male students (39.7%) than female students (32.3%) experienced behaviors meeting the definition of hazing and that 8.8% of males, compared with 5.4% of female respondents, self-identified as a hazer. Additionally, that analysis revealed that female students reported feeling more susceptible to the dangers of hazing compared to male students and in general, believed that hazing is more harmful.

In another single-campus survey of undergraduate students (n=258) on a Midwest college campus, Cokley et al. (2001) examined attitudes about pledging and hazing in fraternities and sororities and found that women were more likely than men to believe that pledging should be a positive experience and men were more likely to believe in "conformity to pledge rules." This gender difference occurred across all student respondents, not just those affiliated with a fraternity or sorority. Likewise, in another single-campus survey study (n=231) that explored attitude differences in response to a campus hazing incident, researchers examined responses of fraternity and sorority members as well as unaffiliated students (Drout & Corsoro, 2003) and found sorority members were more likely

than fraternity members and their unaffiliated peers to hold the president of an organization responsible for hazing when they were not directly involved in the hazing behavior. They also found that sorority members saw commitment to initiation and sense of obligation as having greater causal significance for hazing than did fraternity members. The researchers concluded that differential response to victimization by gender suggested a tendency for sorority members to view the organization as playing a more significant causal role in a hazing incident.

Aside from gender differences in reported behavior and attitudes about hazing, some researchers have examined ways in which gender identity and gender norms intersect with hazing (Allan & Kinney, 2018; McCready, 2019; Perlow, 2018; Tran & Chang, 2013; Veliz-Calderón & Allan, 2017). From this perspective, hazing can be considered a tool to reinforce the desired gender identity of the organization by marginalizing and othering new members who exhibit undesirable forms of gender expression or sexual orientation (Anderson, 2005; Holman, 2004; Kimmel, 2008; Perlow, 2018; McCready, 2019). Simultaneously, gender norms can be used as a tool for humiliating and harassing behavior in hazing (Allan & Kinney, 2018). Sexualized hazing features prominently as a tool to reinforce what is and is not desirable gendered behavior for athletic team and fraternity members, as demonstrated by sorority women who compel their new members to perform a sexualized dance for a men's group or fraternity men or athletic team members who make new members dress in drag or engage in mock sex with one another (Anderson, 2005; Dundes & Dundes, 2002; James, 1998; Johnson, 2002, 2011; Johnson & Holman, 2009; Muir & Seitz, 2004; Waldron et al., 2011). Particularly for men, but also seen among women's groups, heteronormative behavior, achieved by marginalizing women and gay men, influences organizational status, helps reinforce that new members have not yet achieved membership through acceptably demonstrating the desired gender identity and asserts the dominance of the members over new members (DeSantis, 2007; Dundes & Dundes, 2002; Hall & LaFrance, 2007). Illustratively, one participant in Kiesling's (2005) study stated:

> Why did I put up with hazing? For one thing, I was used to it. . . . My masculine identity was very much tied to not failing such challenges. . . . But my primary motivation was a wish for benign (I thought) masculine solidarity, which, when I was 18 I did not see could be easily found in other ways. (p. 705)

While scholars have investigated ways in which hazing both reflects gender differences and is shaped by gender norms circulating in the broader society, other identity differences and their relationship to hazing have also been explored.

As described by Allan and Kerschner (2020a), a growing body of work (e.g., Jones, 2000, 2004; Kimbrough, 2003, 2007; Parks & Mutisya, 2019; Parks, 2012; Parks et al., 2014; Parks et al., 2015; Rogers et al., 2012; Stone, 2018) has examined hazing practices within predominantly Black fraternities and sororities. Some researchers maintain that hazing in male NPHC organizations included more instances of violence and more physical hardships than predominantly White fraternal organizations (Jones, 2000; Parks et al., 2015). By comparison, published studies focused on hazing in the context of MGC groups (e.g., predominantly Latinx, Asian American, or multicultural fraternities and sororities) are few. In their chapter, "To Be Mice or Men: Gender Identity and the Development of Masculinity Through Participation in Asian American Interest Fraternities" (Tran & Chang, 2013), hazing and masculinity were intertwined. Echoing that assertion, in another analysis of hazing among Asian American fraternities, Parks and Laybourn (2017) suggested that Asian men may be prone to engaging in hazing violence as a demonstration of hypermasculinity and as a reflection of "strict rearing," where students may exhibit "displaced aggression" towards individuals who are perceived to have less seniority in the organization (p. 32).

Early studies by Williams (1992), Kimbrough (2003), and Jones (2004) laid a foundation for examining hazing within the context of NPHC fraternities and shared in reporting that NPHC fraternity members and new members engaged in hazing activities that included paddling and other forms of physical abuse. More recently, Parks et al. (2014) argued that hazing in NIC organizations is more likely to involve abuse of alcohol whereas physical violence tends to be associated with NPHC fraternities. Like Jones, Smith's (2009) unpublished dissertation supported the assertion that members of NPHC groups viewed their membership traditions and rituals as a connection to their cultural heritage in contrast with NIC participants who were more likely to attribute the meaning of the new member experience to the value of hard work instilled by parents or others.

NPHC sorority hazing was described in Lee-Olukoya's (2010) unpublished dissertation as having a greater focus on performing tasks for members, verbal abuse, manipulation of physical appearance to encourage uniformity, and some physical violence among members. These activities were justified by students as a mechanism to curb undesirable behaviors among new members or "neophytes". Like Smith, Lee-Olukoya found women viewed hazing as a mechanism to perpetuate the values and mission of the organization. In their analysis of hazing, organizational dynamics, and NPHC sororities, Parks and Mutisya (2019) argue that while the hazers or perpetrators are typically the focus after a hazing incident, the sorority leadership plays a vital role in "supporting and propelling behavior, even if unwittingly" (p. 97), painting a more complex and nuanced portrait when considering accountability for hazing in this and other contexts.

The Role of Alcohol in Hazing

Fraternity and sorority members in predominantly White fraternities and sororities, engage with alcohol and binge drink more often than their non-affiliated peers; thus, not surprisingly, fraternity and sorority members experience the negative repercussions of drinking more often than non-members (Wechsler et al., 2009). Men often conform or overconform to the normative drinking patterns of their peers to affirm their masculinity and to establish their place within the group (Syrett, 2009; Kimmel, 2008; McCready, 2018). Alcohol is often utilized to foster intimacy and unity, particularly among college men (Nezlek et al., 1994). The drinking culture in fraternities and sororities is also symbiotic with dangerous or deviant behaviors, such as hazing and pranks, that are often retold as funny, legendary, and a source of bonding (Hughes & Coakley, 1991; Kiesling, 2005; Snyder, 1994; Workman, 2001).

Given a heavy reliance on alcohol in the overall fraternal experience, alcohol consumption features frequently in hazing activities particularly among historically White organizations (Anderson, McCormack, and Lee, 2012; Hoover, 1999; Malszecki, 2004). While the consumption of alcohol as a condition of membership into an organization is a violation of all campus and national/international fraternity and sorority hazing policies, the normative culture of binge drinking within new member socialization processes seen primarily in historically White organizations is deeply ingrained in the social experience for the vast majority. The new member processes in these organizations often mirror the larger fraternity and sorority experience in terms of its socialization of high-risk alcohol consumption (Wechsler et al., 2009). Given the strong desire to fit into the group, potential new members are likely more susceptible to the influence of their peers' high-risk alcohol norms (Kuh & Arnold, 1993) as drinking patterns are established for many students during the initial phases of membership (Biddix et al., 2014). Particularly for newcomers to an organization who deeply desire to belong, this may lead to the consumption of alcohol well beyond their limit in order to demonstrate the ability to align with group norms (Hughes & Coakley, 1991).

The Role of the Chapter Facility

The recognized chapter house, the campus suite, or unofficial off campus apartment or house where most members live year to year can be the site of hazing. The house or suite serves as a locus of power, where newcomers seek the privilege of inclusion by being invited into the space and may make them more willing to endure hazing (Syrett, 2009). The fraternity and sorority house plays a role similar to the bar and the locker room among athletes. It is a place where territory is policed, free from the watchful eye of coaches, and where teammates protect each other from negative consequences (Allan & DeAngelis, 2004; Curry, 2000).

The chapter house often serves the same functions as the locker room: "…a haven where veterans are the rulers and rookies must pledge their allegiance in addition to proving their worth….a social pecking order emerges…where the strongest are placed at the top and weakest are placed at the bottom" (Allan & DeAngelis, 2004, p. 70). The fraternity or sorority house is a space free from watchful purview of authority figures such as university administrators, where there

is perceived autonomy to do what one wants, and where secrecy is one of the deeply entrenched cultural mores. As an example of the problematic nature of fraternity housing: while most fraternity and sorority members were drinkers, more than 86% of fraternity house residents were binge drinkers (Wechsler et al., 2009).

Worth noting, the fraternity or sorority house is not the sole site for hazing. In Allan and Madden's study (2008), 25 percent of the students who reported experiencing hazing behaviors said the hazing occurred in a public setting. Almost half of the students reported their hazing occurred during the day (Allan & Madden, 2008). In 2008, one in four students experiencing hazing said alumni were present and perceived that coaches and/or advisors were aware of the activity (Allan & Madden, 2008) and in a more recent study, Allan et al., (2019) report that more than 40% of students surveyed indicated that a coach or advisor had knowledge of the hazing activities and more than 25% say these individuals were physically present when the hazing occurred. Nearly a third (29%) of respondents reported that alumni were present for some of the hazing activities they experienced.

Why Does Hazing Persist?

As seen from a quick scan of newspaper headlines, hazing clearly causes harm, leaving many administrators and researchers perplexed about why hazing persists. One reason individuals and organizations continue to haze may be the perception that there are more positive outcomes of hazing than negative ones. In Allan and Madden's (2008) study, 31 percent of students experiencing hazing said they felt more like a part of the group and 22 percent said they felt a sense of accomplishment as a result of the hazing they experienced. As we have established, there are other motivating factors for student participation, including the belief that hazing creates group cohesion and cultivates committed group members (Campo et al., 2005; Cimino, 2011; Keating et al., 2005). Whether it helps increase individual or organizational status (DeSantis, 2007; Waldron et al., 2011), demonstrates solidarity by rejecting the expectations of authority figures (Syrett, 2009), or just does not seem dangerous or harmful, many students and organizations fail to problematize hazing.

Hazing Prevention

While literature on prevention of high risk drinking, sexual assault, and bullying is well established, the body of work focused on hazing prevention is nascent. To date, published empirical studies documenting efficacy of primary hazing prevention in any context are few. However, research points to the value of public health frameworks and principles of prevention science for informing hazing prevention (Allan et al., 2018). As noted in Allan and Kerschner (2020a), a public health approach emphasizes activities that prevent problematic behavior *before* it begins (primary prevention). Other forms of prevention are also important, including intervention (secondary prevention) and response to hazing (tertiary prevention). However, studies from community health affirm that a focus on primary prevention is needed to make significant gains in behavior change and to shift cultural norms (Nation et al., 2003). Consideration of the environment in which human behavior occurs, the comprehensive nature of a prevention approach, and community readiness are themes from the literature that inform campus hazing prevention (Allan et al., 2018; Langford, 2008).

Systematic and comprehensive approaches are widely known to be most effective for developing violence prevention programs (Langford, 2004). Additionally, evidence indicates that theory-based programs, varied teaching methods, sustained dosage, and appropriate timing and customization to institutional characteristics and target populations are associated with effective prevention programs (Nation et al., 2003). Drawing from these and the Strategic Prevention Framework (SAMSHA, 2019), Allan et al., (2018) described a data-driven Hazing Prevention Framework (HPF) that incorporates these principles and applies them to hazing prevention specifically (Figure 1). The HPF delineates eight key components for comprehensive hazing prevention including: commitment, capacity building, assessment, planning, cultural competence, implementation, evaluation, and sustainability. Specific indicators for assessing progress in hazing prevention are elaborated for each component of the HPF. When the components are applied in an integrated manner, the HPF can provide a roadmap for comprehensive hazing prevention.

Drawing from the premise that human behavior is

shaped by factors at multiple levels (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) of a particular context, Dahlburg and Krug's (2002) social ecological model (SEM) portrays the interplay of dynamic systems at multiple levels of an organization within the context of the broader community (Figure 2). The SEM is frequently employed in community health initiatives and can assist practitioners in planning for prevention strategies that are targeted to address multiple layers of the social ecology including: individuals, groups, the institution, and the broader community (Allan et al., 2018; Langford, 2008). Used in conjunction with other frameworks, the SEM can be a powerful tool to assist campus professionals with planning for a more strategic and targeted approach to hazing prevention.

A problem analysis process, in alignment with the SEM, can support practitioners in strengthening a strategic and targeted approach to hazing prevention by identifying risk and protective factors for hazing at multiple layers of the social ecology (Langford, 2008; Allan et al., 2018). Informed by research and local assessment data, coalitions of campus professionals identify and differentiate factors believed to increase the likelihood of hazing relative to each layer of the SEM. For instance, a risk factor at the individual or intrapersonal level might be the lack of established social networks outside the group or team in which the student is seeking membership or belonging. At the group level, a risk factor might be the organization or team's history of hazing behavior and active alumni
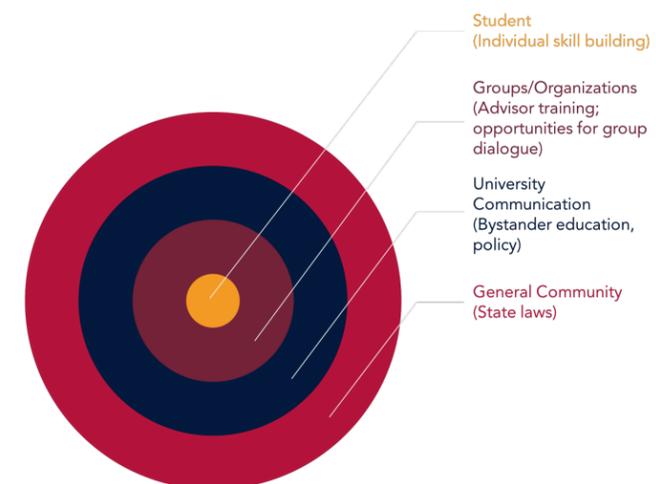
members who reinforce the importance of maintaining the tradition, and at the institutional level, the lack of clearly communicated expectations and accountability for hazing could contribute to a perception that hazing is not taken seriously and thus increase the likelihood that hazing might occur. Also, as part of the problem analysis process, it is equally important to identify factors that may protect against hazing at each level of the SEM (protective factors). For instance, at the institutional level, expectations clearly communicated via anti-hazing policies, clear reporting mechanisms, strong accountability, and transparency relative to violations may help deter some hazing behavior. While this analysis process can be based on an environmental scan, it will be substantially fortified if grounded in formal assessment data.

After key risk and protective factors are identified, the process moves to the identification of specifically targeted strategies relative to risk and protective factors at each level of the SEM. In some cases (e.g., trainings), a particular strategy might reduce risk while also strengthening factors that are believed to protect against hazing. In other cases, a strategy might be solely focused on diminishing a risk factor, while another strategy is developed to amplify protective factors (e.g., ethical leadership development and bystander intervention). This problem analysis process aligns with a public health approach that emphasizes the importance of mechanisms that are informed by research and data, developed in a strategic and targeted way, and carry clearly defined goals and objectives (Langford, 2008). Theory-based programs, varied teaching methods, sustained dosage, and appropriate timing and customization to institutional characteristics and target populations are established principles associated with effective prevention programs (Nation et al., 2003).

Promising Practices

Building on the foundation of prevention science, several studies have sought to explore the promise of particular hazing prevention strategies. In an evaluation of a hazing prevention training for high school athletes, Hakkola et al., (2019) reported statistically significant shifts in scales measuring general knowledge about hazing, attitudes and perceptions of hazing, and knowledge about hazing

prevention strategies. In another study of a hazing prevention training with college students, (Allan & Kerschner, 2020b), researchers employed a rigorous evaluation design including two treatment groups and a control group. Data were collected from nearly 400 (n=395) students enrolled at one of three U.S. universities and included members of a leadership development program, resident advisors, club sport athletes, and fraternity and sorority members at their respective campuses. Students randomly assigned to view the film, *We Don't Haze*, were Treatment Group A, while students assigned to Treatment Group B, viewed the same film supplemented by a facilitated discussion. Overall, in comparison to the control group who viewed a generic leadership video, students who participated in either treatment group were more likely than their peers to increase their knowledge and understanding about what constitutes hazing, the full range of harm that hazing can cause, and where hazing occurs. Additionally, students in both treatment groups were more likely than their peers to shift their attitudes and perceptions away from those that serve to support and normalize hazing and toward attitudes that assist in the development of inclusive group and team environments. Finally, students in the treatment groups were significantly more likely to gain knowledge about how to prevent hazing.

The film, *Intervene* includes brief scenarios demonstrating ways in which student bystanders can successfully intervene in a range of high risk or problematic situations including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, sexual harassment, emotional distress, alcohol emergency, bias, and hazing. A randomized controlled evaluation examined the effectiveness of the video as a stand-alone intervention for undergraduate and graduate students and found that after four weeks, students who watched the video reported a higher likelihood to intervene for most situations compared to the control group who did not view the video (Santacrose et al., 2020).

In addition to trainings, studies are in development to examine the potential effectiveness of other implementation strategies for hazing prevention including: visible campus messaging communicating that hazing does not align with the college, university, or group's values; a social norms campaign that works to correct misperceived norms about peer acceptance of hazing attitudes and behaviors; increased institutional

transparency about hazing reports and accountability measures for hazing violations; amnesty policies for reporting hazing; ethical leadership development activities; and incentivizing non-hazing alternatives for building group cohesion.

Informed by the body of literature about fraternity and sorority hazing and the developing body of work focused on campus hazing prevention, we recommend the following strategies and action steps.

Table 1
Applying the SEM at four levels: the individual, groups, the institution, and the broader community

Level	Description	Example considerations
Individuals	What individual characteristics contribute to hazing behavior? These can include demographic factors, life experiences, knowledge, values, and beliefs.	• Considering your campus demographics, what aspects of identity (race, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation) may make students at higher or lower risk of engaging in hazing? • What percent of fraternity and sorority members were members of high school student groups where hazing was prevalent? • Does your campus have a high percentage of first-generation students who may not have mentors to consult with if they are experiencing hazing? • Do students have access to resources for learning about ethical leadership and building skills to engage as ethical leaders?
Groups	What connections does the individual have that provide support, a sense of identity, and a role in the greater culture?	• Does your campus have a high percentage of students who feel pressure to join from their parents? • How engaged are alumni in maintaining organizational status quo? • What percent of students are affiliated? Does this create any pressure to join? • How is a student's sense of affiliation with the institution and identity cultivated with other organizations before membership is available in fraternities and sororities? • What characteristics of groups make them more or less likely to engage in hazing? • Is higher status on campus afforded to groups who engage in hazing? • Do student groups have access to non-hazing alternatives for building cohesion? • What social pressures exist on your campus that reduce the likelihood of reporting? • Who are the campus stakeholders who may be complicit in supporting or allowing fraternity/sorority hazing (ex. parents, roommates, athletic coaches, professors, or club advisors)?
The institution	What institutional characteristics might influence a hazing culture? Consider physical and symbolic messages, rules, policies, norms, and cultural practices on the campus.	• What policies and procedures are in place to dissuade members and organizations from hazing? • What policies and procedures are in place to incentivize non-hazing alternatives to group bonding? • How are students who report hazing protected from being identified? • What messages are communicated (both formally and informally) to students that encourage or discourage hazing? • What resources are in place to support hazing prevention efforts? • How widespread is knowledge about hazing prevention efforts across the institution? • How are campus stakeholders, including students, engaged in prevention efforts? • What is the culture of help-seeking at your institution?
The broader community	What societal norms support or inhibit hazing?	• Is low-level hazing viewed as tolerably deviant and thus permissible? • What are the legal implications of hazing in your city or state? • How do national/international organizational policies conflict with or support organizational efforts? • What are the messages being shared in popular media about hazing?

Clearly Define Hazing

The development of a common, shared, and inclusive definition of hazing is a vital aspect of hazing prevention. According to Allan and Kerschner (2020a), understanding the following three components can help students and campus professionals discern when seemingly innocuous behavior becomes hazing:

- Group context - hazing is associated with the process of joining or maintaining membership in a group.
- Abusive behavior - hazing involves activities that are potentially humiliating and degrading, with the potential to cause physical, psychological, and/or emotional harm.
- Regardless of an individual's willingness to participate - hazing occurs in a context where the "choice" to participate in hazing is diluted by the strong desire to belong compounded by the power dynamics of peer pressure in the context of gaining membership in a group.

Further, a narrow framing of hazing may be problematic when predominant understandings of "harm" tend to focus on physical harm and overlook the "hidden," yet damaging emotional harm that can result from hazing (Apgar, 2013). Presenting hazing along a continuum may help to broaden the conceptualization (Figure 3). According to Allan and Kerschner (2020a), on the left side of the spectrum, hazing behaviors are humiliating and degrading. These behaviors are thought to occur with greater frequency and are more likely to be normalized or "explained away" with euphemisms that erase the label of hazing and replace it with more palatable descriptions like "initiation," or "tradition." At the right side of the spectrum, hazing includes physical and sexual assault, alcohol poisoning, and other potentially life-threatening activities. These behaviors, largely condemned as unacceptable and at times abhorrent, are more likely to be identified as hazing yet are believed to occur less frequently than other behaviors along the continuum. The documented disconnect between student experiences of hazing and their willingness to label it as hazing may be linked to predominant images of hazing that are depicted on the violence end of the continuum (Veliz-Calderon & Allan, 2017). However, regardless of the outcome, hazing is predicated on an abuse of power where consent is often compromised.

Assess the Climate on Your Campus

It is critically important to assess campus climate to illuminate common perceptions about hazing, motivations for hazing, predominant understandings about campus policies, reporting mechanisms, and ways in which the campus culture can support and strengthen hazing prevention. If it is not feasible to work with an external entity to conduct a campus climate assessment, an internal group can use data from an environmental scan (e.g., informal and formal reports of hazing; policy language, response protocols) to begin a systematic review. After gathering some initial data, applying the SEM at four levels: the individual, groups, the institution, and the broader community is helpful for identifying and prioritizing risk and protective factors for hazing (Allan et al., 2018; Langford, 2008). Commonly employed in the public health field, this type of analysis can help campus leaders dissect a complex issue and better understand the interplay among all levels (Richard et al., 1996).

Seek Out Partners

To be effective, hazing prevention needs to involve partners from across the institution. Consider partnering with institutional research to better incorporate extant relevant data to inform a planning process; colleagues from health services might help to strengthen amnesty policies and incorporate a public health approach; residential life staff can help to ensure consistency in all living environments; wellness offices can bring expertise to strengthen bystander intervention programs and to nest and align broader campus prevention frameworks with hazing prevention; athletics and other offices that oversee high-risk student populations or student organizations (e.g., club sports, performing arts groups) can ensure consistency in prevention and response efforts; judicial or community standards offices can strengthen and clarify the expectations of students and student organizations and reporting structures; alumni can serve as advisors or mentors in stewarding and maintaining change; and counseling and mental health professionals can align hazing prevention efforts with broader initiatives to promote student well-being. These partners can help you form a coalition of campus professionals who are committed and focused on preventing hazing across your campus. Plan regular meetings of the full group; create sub-committees for implementation of specific initiatives; and work across functional areas to jointly plan and implement hazing prevention efforts.

Make Data-Informed Decisions

If you are not already doing so, develop a plan to collect data that can help inform your coalition's decisions. These data might include:

- Characteristics for who is joining your chapters: race/ethnicity, socio-economic status (SES), academic performance, or conduct records before joining
- New member retention rates
- Campus alcohol data
- Student organization conduct records
- Hazing attitudes and behaviors of students and student organizations on your campus

Ask Questions

Given these data, consider asking the following questions:

- Where is hazing happening most frequently? Are there specific populations more impacted than others?
- Who are the stakeholders who can support this effort? Make sure to consider non-traditional stakeholders like alumni, community neighbors, and parents.
- What policies are needed?
- What resources are needed?
- What are the current social norms relative to hazing on your campus?
- What opportunities or threats exist in your environment?

| Low | Recognition | High |

Intimidation	Harassment	Violence
Deception	Verbal abuse	Forced consumption of alcohol or drugs
Assigning demerits	Threats or implied threats	Beating, paddling, or other forms of assault
Silence periods with implied threats for violation	Asking new members to wear embarrassing attire	Forced branding
Socially isolating new members	Skit nights with degrading or humiliating acts	Forced ingestion of vile substances
Demeaning names	Sleep deprivation	Water intoxication
Expecting certain items to always be in one's possession	Sexual simulations	Abduction/kidnaps
		Sexual assault

| High | Frequency | Low |

Figure 3

Spectrum of Hazing

- How will you promote the behaviors you want to see?
- How do you incentivize the behaviors you want to see?
- What are some short term successes?
- What are long term successes?

Create A Hazing Prevention Plan using a Primary Prevention Model

With more clarity about the current climate and challenges you may be facing as an institution, it is crucial to create a campus specific plan that capitalizes on the Hazing Prevention Framework (HPF) to guide a comprehensive and campus-wide approach (Allan et al., 2019). Ideally, your plan should include the following eight components of the HPF (Figure 1):

- **Commitment:** A visible commitment of resources for hazing prevention throughout all levels of the organization.
- **Capacity building:** The institution must ensure human and fiscal resources are aligned to support hazing prevention efforts.
- **Assessment:** The institution must implement efforts to collect qualitative and quantitative data to better understand hazing in the campus context.
- **Planning:** It is imperative that the institution use assessment data to develop measurable efforts at prevention.
- **Cultural competence:** The institution must acknowledge that hazing prevention cannot be a one-size-fits-all plan, but must be population specific. It must account for the societal forces that influence students' decision making and success.
- **Implementation:** Efforts must be implemented in a coordinated fashion so as to widely communicate to students that hazing is not tolerated. These efforts must have multiple passive and active touchpoints with students.
- **Evaluation:** All hazing prevention efforts must be documented and evaluated as a means to determine effectiveness.
- **Sustainability:** The efforts must be able to be supportable, executable, and achievable over time. Systems and structures must be implemented so that prevention efforts can be sustained over multiple years.

See Appendix for a "Hazing Prevention Framework Mapping Sheet" you can use to map your institution's plans in each area.

Concluding Thoughts

Hazing is a complex psycho-social phenomenon that has many explanations. The challenges as a busy practitioner are many: (a) to find the time to read relevant research; (b) to develop a comprehensive hazing prevention approach grounded in the literature; and (c) to thoughtfully and intentionally implement this approach at an institutional level. Our hope is that this resource can assist you in accessing and understanding relevant research findings and in building a research-grounded plan to prevent hazing on your campus.

Appendix
Hazing Prevention Framework Mapping Sheet

Component	What Does Your Campus Currently Do?	What More Can Your Campus Do?	Who Are the Stakeholders You Need to Enlist?
Commitment Commit resources in visible ways (from the senior level to the student levels) toward hazing prevention.			
Capacity Ensure human and fiscal resources are aligned to support hazing prevention efforts.			
Assessment Implement efforts to collect qualitative and quantitative data to better understand hazing in the campus context.			
Planning Use assessment data to develop measurable hazing prevention initiatives.			
Cultural Competence Acknowledge that hazing prevention cannot be a one-size-fits-all plan, but must be population-specific and account for societal forces that influence students' decision making and success.			
Implementation Implement efforts in a coordinated fashion to widely communicate that hazing is not tolerated and to incentivize non-hazing alternatives to initiations and bonding within groups and teams. These efforts must have multiple passive and active touchpoints with students.			
Evaluation Include evaluation data gathering in hazing prevention as a means to determine effectiveness and to inform refinements as part of an iterative process.			

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