

**DARTMOUTH ALUMNI COUNCIL**

**REPORT OF ALUMNI COUNCIL COMMITTEE TO SUPPORT  
GREEK LETTER ORGANIZATIONS**

May 12, 2010

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## **I. Overview**

As the name implies, the Dartmouth College Alumni Council *ad hoc* “Committee to Support Greek Letter Organizations” (“CSG”) was created to help fraternities, sororities and co-ed Greek letter organizations (“Greek Letter Organizations” or “GLOs”) endure and thrive. The Committee includes Alumni Council representatives from a range of fraternities and sororities, college deans, GLO alumni advisors, faculty members, and students. During the past two years, we studied GLOs, attempted to identify best practices, and strove to determine ways in which alumni can assist these student organizations in improving themselves. We recognize that alumni may not be well suited to address certain facets of Greek life, and we attempted to focus on those areas where we could do the most good.

GLOs are under significant pressure, and many of us doubt they will be able to survive long-term without significant assistance from alumni. For example, many of the houses are more than a century old and have accumulated deferred maintenance and capital improvement needs. Far too few students in far too few houses fund and bear the burden of the social life for the great majority of Dartmouth students. GLOs have a public relations problem that could be improved by increasing alumni and faculty interaction with the organizations. Finally, we believe that by improving physical conditions, increasing alumni and faculty involvement, and generally raising expectations for the system, we may help change the culture in ways that decrease certain harmful activities, particularly unhealthy drinking.

We divided the CSG into four subcommittees: 1) alumni engagement, 2) faculty engagement, 3) physical plants, and 4) long-range planning. These subcommittees addressed a number of issues and identified recommendations reflected in this report.

The CSG also solicited the views of others involved with or impacted by GLOs. Among others, we spoke with GLO alumni advisors, presidents of fraternities, sororities and co-ed houses, the Dean of the faculty, and Presidents Wright and Kim.

This report first reviews the history and current status of GLOs at Dartmouth, and then provides observations and recommendations (broken down by subject area) for supporting the system.

## **II. Executive Summary**

Dartmouth’s fraternities, sororities, and co-ed organizations are vibrant, varied and important forces in student life today, benefitting members and non-members alike. While GLOs are extremely popular and strong, they face significant challenges. Many “houses” are in terrible physical condition, both from a structural standpoint, and in terms of cleanliness and upkeep. The reputation of GLOs suffers due to behavioral issues. At the same time, too few students pay for and otherwise support the social lives of too many others.

Our committee focused on four areas effecting GLOs: 1) alumni engagement; 2) faculty engagement; 3) physical plants; and 4) long-range planning.

GLOs with strong alumni support tend to succeed, while those without tend to suffer. Each GLO should have an active alumni corporation or advisory board, and one or more alumni advisors living in the Hanover area who regularly works with the student membership. The Alumni Council, working with the Alumni Relations Office, may be able to help identify alumni willing to work with GLOs. GLOs without a strong alumni base, such as newer sororities, could be adopted by alumni who were not actually undergraduate members of such organizations.

GLOs need to work to improve their relationship with the faculty by engaging faculty to interact in positive ways with the organizations, and by improving student behavior. GLOs should solicit faculty members to serve in some capacity with the organizations, perhaps as many of Dartmouth's athletic teams now do, or to interact in a less time-consuming manner, *e.g.* leading discussion groups or simply attending social events. GLO members need to act responsibly to enhance the academic mission of the College, for example by attending class regardless of GLO activities.

The physical plants of many houses are in a terrible state of decay and maintenance. The abysmal physical condition of many houses greatly harms the reputation of the GLO system, and has caused many to suggest GLO houses should be taken over by the College, or closed entirely. All students, GLO members and non-members alike, need to show greater responsibility in the way they treat the buildings during parties, and many GLO members need to do a much better job cleaning and maintaining their houses. With perhaps minor exceptions, every house needs to employ professional janitors/housekeepers to clean common areas several times a week. Every house should also hire a handyman to make ongoing repairs. Many houses need significant capital improvements and should consider capital campaigns.

Regarding long-range planning, Dartmouth needs more sororities with houses. The College should be commended for the steps it has taken to provide sorority housing, but the number of buildings currently is not adequate to meet the need. Many GLOs should consider running capital campaigns to fund capital improvements. Each house should plan for and create a sinking fund to finance recurring capital improvement needs (*e.g.* roof repairs, boiler replacement). The Greek system would benefit from a mechanism by which costs are more equitably shared across the student body, and alumni should be given the ability to donate to the Greek system as a whole, in addition to donating to individual houses.

In sum, Dartmouth's Greek system is an integral aspect of student life. We believe the suggestions described herein could significantly improve the system and help to ensure its continued vitality.

### **III. A Brief History of the Greek System**

Fraternities have existed at Dartmouth for over 150 years, since 1842 with the establishment of Psi Upsilon and Kappa Kappa Kappa. Many Dartmouth fraternities began as extensions of "national" fraternities originating at other colleges and universities. During the 1960s and thereafter, many of Dartmouth's "national" fraternities broke with their national organizations and became "local" fraternities as a result of the nationals' restrictive racial

policies or a sense that belonging to a national was not advantageous from an economic or other standpoint.<sup>1</sup>

Unlike at many schools, Dartmouth's GLOs historically have not been dining halls, nor have they served as dormitories for the entire membership. At most, GLO members tend to live in their houses for one year, and/or their sophomore summers. These factors have helped prevent Dartmouth's GLOs from becoming overly "cliquish" and have allowed GLOs to be one of a number of social and other activities that an individual student engages in while at Dartmouth – *i.e.*, member of a residence hall, sports team, or other extracurricular club or activity, in addition to a GLO. On the other hand, with the 1970s advent of year-round operation under the "D Plan" in which students are coming and going from campus throughout the year and frequently switching residence halls, the importance of GLOs as a home base and source of consistency has increased for many students. Moreover, most GLO housing is consistently filled to capacity.

Shortly after the start of coeducation in the 1970s, Dartmouth women began to form sororities. Again, these sororities began as national organizations. Unlike fraternities, most sororities on campus today remain members of national organizations. The first graduating class of women was the Class of 1976. By the early 1980s, a time when men still outnumbered women on campus, five sororities existed – three with houses. As the percentage of women on campus continued to grow, now equaling that of men, the number of sororities also increased. However, as detailed below, there continues to be a demand for additional sororities, and for additional buildings to house sororities.

By the early 1980s, four formerly-all-male fraternities had become co-ed – thus providing yet another option for students interested in participating in Greek life. Today there are three co-ed fraternities with a total aggregate membership of 133, the other co-ed fraternity has been replaced by a sorority.

In the 1970s and '80s, fraternities and sororities were formed on campus focusing on racial and ethnic groups. These organizations tend to be national organizations. The aggregate number of students belonging to all multi-cultural organizations has ranged between 20 to 35 individuals in any given year.

At various times over the last century, individuals or groups have questioned whether Dartmouth should continue to have GLOs. The very existence of a Greek system at Dartmouth has, at times, been tenuous at best. Some have criticized the system as being "anti-intellectual," as giving Dartmouth an "Animal House" reputation, as contributing to excessive drinking, as being bastions of tradition, and on other grounds.

As recently as 1999, the Board of Trustees and administration introduced the "Student Life Initiative" which was promoted by the administration as "the end of the Greek system as we know it." See Appendix A, February 10, 1999 article from The Dartmouth: "Trustees To End Greek System 'As We Know It.'" The Student Life Initiative generated a tremendous degree of

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<sup>1</sup> To be sure, some national fraternities remain, and most sororities and racially or ethnically focused institutions are affiliated with a national organizations.

student and alumni concern. Alumni leaders of GLOs met with trustees and administrators and eventually helped to reverse some of the most challenging aspects of the Student Life Initiative. For example, the Student Life Initiative would have required GLOs to move rush from Sophomore Fall to Sophomore Winter -- in 1988, the College had moved rush from Freshman Spring to Sophomore Fall. Moving rush to Sophomore Winter, when many sophomores are off campus, would have greatly reduced the membership and funds available to GLOs, perhaps fatally so for many of the weaker organizations. Alumni leadership was successful in helping to convince the College to move rush to sophomore fall, where it stands today.

Even before the Student Life Initiative, in the 1980s and '90s, the College imposed a series of restrictions on alcohol use at GLOs and other student groups. The College banned tap systems, fixed bars, and, for a short period, all kegged beer. Such restrictions generated a great deal of student concern. Several houses broke with the College and became "independent" because of the alcohol restrictions and the postponement of rush. After several years, the College lifted the keg ban, but required keg registration and imposed limitations on the number of kegs that may be available at parties based on a mathematical formula. The "independent" fraternities agreed to return to regulation by the College.

Some students and fraternity advisors noted to us that certain unhealthy drinking activities began or increased in the last twenty years. For example, some students, (particularly freshmen who are not members of GLOs and thus have greater difficulty "getting a beer" at a house party) "pre-game" -- that is, they drink hard liquor in their dorm rooms before going out "to the frats." There has also been an explosion of "beer pong" on campus -- including games played with multiple cups of beer per student, in which a student may drink 8 cups of beer in a single game. The last twenty years have witnessed a proliferation of canned beer and an increase in the amount of litter on campus. Some argue that canned beer has made it more difficult to control distribution of alcohol at house parties. *I.e.*, with fixed tap systems located in fraternity basements behind fixed bars, beer was only available in the basements, beer distribution could be controlled by students manning the taps, and beer pong and other drinking games were largely confined to the basement.

Increased prosecution of the minimum 21 year-old drinking age has put additional pressure on GLOs. Students can no longer throw keg parties in residence halls. Dartmouth no longer has a student pub. Student organizations have a more difficult time throwing parties in College facilities at which alcohol is available. As a result, the Greek system has become even more of a focus of campus social life than it was in bygone days.

The relationship of the Greek system with the Hanover Police Department has changed over the years, as has the attitude of the Hanover Police towards enforcing drinking laws. Though it was lowered to 18 for several years during the 1970s and incrementally raised back to 21 in the 1980s, throughout most of the last century the New Hampshire drinking age has been 21, where it remains today. While the drinking age has not changed very much, enforcement policies of the Hanover Police have changed dramatically. New Hampshire now has a "possession by consumption" law in which any underage person who has any trace of alcohol in his bloodstream can be criminally convicted of being a "minor in possession of alcohol" by the mere fact that he has alcohol in his system. Up until this spring, the Hanover Police Department regularly followed ambulances to Dartmouth-Hitchcock Hospital and arrested underage students

who were transported there and had been drinking.<sup>2</sup> This spring the Hanover Police Department modified its policy, and now allows eligible (*i.e.* first time offenders) to enter a diversion program rather than face criminal charges.

In February, 2010, the Hanover Police Department announced it would begin “sting” operations in which it would use undercover agents to infiltrate fraternities and prosecute them for serving alcohol to underage persons. Due to efforts by the College, GLO advisors, GLO students, and members of the Hanover community, the police chief has agreed not to implement this operation, at least for now.

According to the most recent data available from the U.S. Department of Education, the Hanover Police Department arrests more students for underage drinking than the police departments in towns and cities of all other Ivy League institutions combined. For the period 2006-2008 (the most recent years for which data are available), Hanover Police arrested 212 Dartmouth students for alcohol-related offenses. In the same period, there were no arrests of Harvard, Brown or Columbia students for alcohol-related offenses, 12 arrests at Princeton, 38 at Cornell, 54 at Penn, and 65 at Yale. See U.S. Department of Education, “Campus Security Data,” <http://ope.ed.gov/security/Index.aspx>. Each of these schools has a larger student population than Dartmouth (*e.g.* Cornell is three times the size of Dartmouth).

Many Greek organizations have taken on a somewhat cave-like appearance as students feel forced to draw curtains and shades in order to prevent the Hanover Police from peering through their windows in an effort to arrest them. Gone are the days many alumni may recall of walking across campus with a beer in hand while traveling from Webster Avenue to AD, Heoret, Theta Delt, Deke, or Psi U, and saying hello to a friendly police officer. Not surprisingly, the relationship between GLOs and the Hanover Police Department is not good. Moreover, many believe the policies of the Hanover Police Department, and more broadly policies regarding drinking age, contribute to unhealthy binge drinking and are harmful to students.

On the other hand, the relationship between the Greek system and Dartmouth’s campus police, Dartmouth’s “Safety and Security” or “S&S,” is excellent. GLO leaders tell us that students look at Safety and Security as a group that is there to help them, not to persecute them. Safety and Security has been a great help in implementing the “Good Samaritan” policy discussed above.

During the past decade, Dartmouth College has shown great support for GLOs. Both President Wright and President Kim enthusiastically supported formation of the Committee to Support Greek Letter Organizations. The College has provided over \$8,000,000 in low-interest

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<sup>2</sup> The Hanover Police Department’s policy of tailing ambulances so as to arrest students contravenes Dartmouth’s “Good Samaritan” policy. Under the “Good Sam” policy, if a student or GLO believes a student has had too much to drink and is in need of medical assistance, the student or GLO can call campus police who will transport the student to Dartmouth’s student infirmary, Dick’s House, for treatment. Under “Good Sam,” there are no criminal or disciplinary repercussions to anyone involved. If the student’s blood alcohol level is sufficiently high, however, Dick’s House transports him to Dartmouth-Hitchcock Hospital. At this point the Hanover Police follow the ambulance and, if the patient is underage, arrest the patient for being a minor in possession of alcohol (“possession by consumption”), and charge the student with a misdemeanor criminal offense.

loans to GLOs to fund much-needed capital repairs and compliance with ever-stricter safety regulations such as covered fire stairways, fire doors, and emergency lighting. Moreover, the College provided additional housing for sororities – including the recent acquisition of two buildings on Wheelock Street, one of which has already been renovated (at college expense) and is in use as a sorority house. The second building was purchased by the Office of Residential Life to serve as a sorority house, but renovation is on hold due to budget constraints. The College permits GLOs to use college billing to collect rent and house dues, provides insurance coverage to organizations, owns a number of GLO houses, and has been very supportive in many other respects. Among these, the College has provided excellent guidance to Greek organizations through several extremely capable individuals in the Dean’s Office, including Dean of Residential Life Martin Redman, Assistant Dean of Residential Life Deborah Carney, and Associate Director of Greek Letter Organizations and Societies Fouad Saleet. Unfortunately, the Dean of Residential Life and the Associate Director positions were recently cut due to budget limitations.

Any remaining doubt concerning the College’s supportive attitude toward GLOs should be dispelled by the fact that the College recently allowed three all-male fraternities to return to campus: Phi Delta Alpha, Beta Alpha Omega (f/k/a “Beta Theta Pi”), and Zeta Psi. The College previously revoked recognition of each of these fraternities for disciplinary reasons and the houses essentially went dormant for several years (10 years in the case of Beta). In the last five years Beta, Phi Delt and Zeta Psi were revived by interested students and alumni, with the College’s blessing and assistance.

While President Kim has expressed strong support for Greek Letter Organizations, he has also called upon them to address the problems of unhealthy drinking and the system’s negative public image.<sup>3</sup> In an interview with The Dartmouth last fall, President Kim stated: “I think it’s very important to let the rest of the world know what an important experience the Greek system provides to more than half of our students....The reason that 60 percent of sophomores pledge is that this is the kind of system that provides the ideal grouping of people together so that they become very close and lifelong friends.’... Kim said he believes the public does not understand the distinct aspects of Greek life at Dartmouth. ‘The very definition of a Greek system elsewhere is that you can control who comes to your parties, that you can control who you socialize with,’ Kim said. ‘Whereas here, the parties are open to everyone. I think there is an openness in the [Dartmouth] Greek system that’s very striking.’” The Dartmouth (September 23, 2009).

#### **IV. Greek Letter Organizations Today**

GLOs appear to be thriving at Dartmouth College. Sixty-seven percent of those students eligible to join GLOs (sophomores, juniors, and seniors) are members of one of Dartmouth’s 31 GLOs. In total, 1037 women, and 1080 men belong to a GLO. Even students who are not members of GLOs are regular guests of many houses.

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<sup>3</sup> The College has created a committee, the “Student and Presidential Alcohol Harm Reduction Committee” (“SPAHR”) to suggest policies promoting student safety. SPAHR intends to present its findings later this month.



Dartmouth has 15 all-male fraternities; 8 all-female sororities; 3 co-ed fraternities; one Native American sorority, one Latino fraternity, one Latina sorority, one historically Black fraternity, and one historically Black sorority. See Appendix B, GLO Membership Table (May 6, 2010).

Fifteen all-male fraternities have houses (two college-owned and thirteen privately-owned by alumni corporations). Six sororities have houses (all college-owned). Three co-ed fraternities have houses (all privately-owned by alumni corporations). 1023 men are members of all-male fraternities. 961 women are members of all-female sororities. 133 students are members of co-ed fraternities. 35 students are members of multicultural institutions.

The Greek system engages in a tremendous amount of community service within the Upper Valley. Today, GLOs help run Special Olympics, Big Sister/Big Brother programs, community Halloween parties for children, Habitat for Humanity, and many other organizations, and raise funds for a large number of local, national and international charities. For example, since 2007 every GLO has participated in the Prouty Bike/Walk fundraiser for Dartmouth's Norris Cotton Cancer Center. In 2007 alone, the event raised over \$2,000,000 for cancer research. See Dartmouth's Office of Residential Life Report, "Greek Letter Organizations Year In Review," <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~orl/documents/glo-review-0809.pdf>.

The average GPA of GLO students is higher than the College average.

Five of Dartmouth's eight sororities are "national" sororities and are subject to strict rules regarding distribution and consumption of alcohol – generally speaking they are "dry." Some sorority members with whom we spoke favor being part of a national because it means that they do not have to host parties for the rest of campus as other GLOs do – with the resulting financial burden and wear and tear on their physical plants. For the most part, the overwhelming number of social events (*i.e.* house parties) held by all-male fraternities, co-ed fraternities, and local sororities are open to the entire campus. The CSG believes open parties allow the Greek system to benefit the entire campus – even students who are not members of Greek organizations – and prevents the institutions from becoming insular and "exclusionary." Open parties help to foster the Dartmouth sense of community and spirit.

On the other hand, the result of this openness, and the fact that, generally speaking, it is only a limited number of GLOs hosting campus-wide parties (and only those GLOs large enough to fund such parties), means that a subset of the student body is supporting a major aspect of the social lives of the remaining students. This causes an enormous amount of wear and tear on certain houses, and means that a small percentage of students is paying for the social activities of others (bands, beer, disc jockeys), and cleaning up after their fellow students.<sup>4</sup> On any given weekend night, it is not unusual for a GLO hosting an open party to have up to 300 or 400 students attend. In short, there is a significant amount of "free-riding" on campus and an unfair burden placed on a few students and a few physical plants.

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<sup>4</sup> We were informed by people within the Office of Residential Life that 25% of students do not drink alcohol.

## V. Challenges Facing Greek Letter Organizations

GLOs face a number of challenges. First, many of the houses have literally a century of deferred maintenance and capital improvement needs that must be addressed. In addition, many if not most of the houses are poorly maintained and poorly cleaned. The CSG reviewed numerous complaints by visiting alumni as to the shabby condition of (particularly) the all-male fraternities. See Appendix C (excerpts of alumni comments), and Appendix D (photographs of houses). As to many organizations, the students either will not or can not keep their premises looking presentable without professional assistance.

Year-round operation stresses GLO physical plants in a manner to which older alumni are unaccustomed. The houses are used throughout the year, without a significant down period during the summer. A good deal of damage and wear and tear on houses is caused by non-fraternity members, and even young alumni. In addition, there is a culture in which students believe it is appropriate to mistreat houses and not to keep them in presentable condition. Students at Dartmouth are not treating GLO houses with adequate respect, and many members of the Greek system are not getting the job done of taking care of Greek houses. The students need to take greater responsibility for themselves.

Alcohol laws and policies may unintentionally have added to binge drinking, damage to houses, and an overall state of uncleanness at those houses that host open parties.

The CSG heard a variety of opinions as to how to improve GLOs. Some believe all Greek houses should be turned over to the College because the students have proven they are not themselves up to the task of taking care of the buildings. Those holding this view think the College administration should be heavily involved in maintaining and regulating the organizations. Others believe the students benefit by having the responsibility of running the organizations themselves, and that with additional guidance from alumni, the students could rise to the occasion and act in a more responsible manner in terms of taking care of themselves. Some note that alumni corporations who own GLO houses have extensive powers to punish bad behavior, including requiring a house to be alcohol-free for weeks or terms, and, perhaps as a last resort, closing down houses for significant periods of time, or allowing other GLOs to occupy the houses. Members of the College administration noted that college-owned houses face many of the same issues.

Many believe there is a “broken window” syndrome at work at Dartmouth due to the poor condition of GLO houses. If houses are perceived to be in bad shape, they will be treated poorly by students: students may behave badly in a bad environment. Improving the physical condition of the houses may help alter Dartmouth’s student culture for the better.

The CSG believes GLOs need significant help from alumni, and that alumni can greatly benefit the system. Experimenting with additional alumni involvement is a reasonable next step to support the Greek system, rather than a college takeover of Greek houses.

## **VI. Enhanced Alumni Involvement**

### **A. Observations**

The experience at Dartmouth clearly shows that GLOs benefit greatly from active alumni involvement. The CSG surveyed GLOs to determine how many had active alumni boards and advisors, and to review the ways in which alumni interact with GLO students. In addition, we considered the experience of deans directly involved with GLOs with respect to the advantages of a strong alumni presence.

Some GLOs have active, functioning boards of directors, while others do not. Some GLOs have active house advisors who live in the Hanover area; others have advisors who are less active either due to inclination or geography; and still others do not have house advisors.

GLOs whose houses are owned by the College seem better able to get by without an active alumni board of directors or house advisor; however, they too would benefit from alumni involvement. In addition, many newer organizations, particularly sororities, do not have a base of alumni to draw upon to help the organization. One suggestion we considered was recruiting alumnae who were not involved in the Greek system to adopt sororities and form advisory boards or serve as house advisors.

We discovered that alumni help GLOs in many ways and to varying degrees. It may well be that one size does not fit all, but that houses will be able to look at a variety of “best practices” to determine what works best for them. For example, some alumni advisors handle a number of treasury responsibilities such as paying for a variety of expenses including property taxes, heating bills, cleaning services, and repairs. Other advisors leave more of these responsibilities to the students. Alumni house advisors are often very helpful in working with vendors such as cleaning services, handymen, and contractors. There is some sense that in houses without strong alumni assistance certain contractors have been able to take advantage of students when it comes to performing repairs or capital improvements. In addition, some vendors do not like dealing with students as they are concerned about consistency of payment.

Alumni house advisors have also assisted fraternities by presenting speakers, such as representatives from Alcoholics Anonymous to discuss issues concerning alcohol, and alumni from various professions to discuss career opportunities. Alumni house advisors have helped organizations who have encountered disciplinary issues with the College, or legal issues with law enforcement agencies. And, of course, alumni assist some GLOs financially by donating funds for capital improvements, and ongoing maintenance. Perhaps most strikingly, in the last five years, three alumni boards reconstituted defunct fraternities (Phi Delt, Beta and Zeta Psi) – overseeing renovations/construction and actually running rush for several years until the undergraduates were on their feet.

A number of GLOs regularly send newsletters to their alumni members. Newsletters perform the dual function of keeping alumni engaged/informed as to the goings on of the house, and serving as a request for donations. Some of these entities use outside newsletter services, while others produce and send newsletters themselves. Several houses earn \$20,000-\$30,000 annually from alumni appeals.

## B. Recommendations

1) Each GLO should be encouraged to develop an active alumni advisory board. Members of the Alumni Council, working with the Alumni Relations Office, may be able to identify and solicit alumni members of organizations that do not have strong boards to form or reinvigorate a board for each house.

2) GLOs that lack a substantial alumni base, *e.g.* new sororities, should be encouraged to form active alumni advisory boards consisting of “adopted” alumnae. Members of the Alumni Council, working with the Alumni Relations Office, may be able to identify and solicit alumnae to serve in this capacity.

3) Each GLO should be encouraged to have an active advisor or advisors to assist in week-to-week running of the organizations. Surprisingly, we are told by several of Dartmouth’s most successful house advisors that the time involved to work with a fraternity or sorority is not as great or all consuming as most people believe. One to two hours a week may be sufficient during most of the year. The CSG believes that the most effective house advisors are those who are in the Hanover area and have the ability and inclination frequently to stop by the house and become known to the students. There seems to be no substitute for having “boots on the ground” in Hanover. An optimal situation may be one in which each GLO has two advisors: one who is a long-term resident of the Upper Valley and is likely to provide continuity to the organization over a significant number of years; and one who is a younger alumnus who may be more in tune with the students and better able to communicate with them – as well as having the energy to do so.

4) GLOs should make a concerted effort regularly to communicate with their alumni. Each GLO should send a newsletter one or more times a year which can be used to inform alumni as to the status of the organization, and solicit donations. Effective newsletters include those that are created by alumni board members and students working together. (The CSG has sample newsletters that it can share with interested GLOs.) The College is willing to provide alumni address lists upon requests to GLOs. Each GLO should consider using Facebook and other social media to connect alumni within its group.

5) Each GLO should consider taking advantage of alumni speakers to address issues important to the organizations and to students (*e.g.* alcohol consumption, career opportunities, current events). GLOs may discover a wealth of experience concerning a variety of issues among their alumni, and such speakers would be a way for the organizations to benefit their members and the larger community.

6) Each GLO should consider whether its legal structure is up to date. For example, those houses that are owned by alumni corporations should determine whether their corporate by-laws and articles of incorporation are up to date and being followed. (The CSG has gathered some models which we can make available to GLOs.) In addition, each alumni corporation may wish to consider whether it should more formally lease premises to its student GLO and the students residing in its house.

## VII. Enhanced Faculty Involvement

### A. Observations

The CSG believes enhancing faculty involvement with the Greek system could greatly benefit the College.

Anecdotally, it appears that historically and currently a significant portion of the faculty has a negative view of the Greek system. Some faculty believe GLOs are “anti-intellectual” and are embarrassed by the “Animal House” reputation they foster. Faculty have complained that drinking during the week, particularly after house meetings on Wednesday nights, results in students not appearing for class the next morning. This certainly is a very legitimate complaint. Students within the Greek system need to act more responsibly. It is appalling to think that faculty may avoid scheduling classes for Thursday mornings because they fear students will not bother showing up due to “partying” the night before.

On the other hand, the CSG believes the extent of animosity felt by the faculty toward the Greek system is significantly overstated. Several faculty members serve as house advisors to GLOs, and many faculty members regularly participate in academic talks or social events sponsored by GLOs. A number of faculty members have strong personal relationships with individuals or small groups of students that have led to strong engagement with individual houses. Many of the strongest relationships are those found in the context of an ever-changing group of students who actively and regularly engage with the faculty member, and rarely as a relationship with a house or impersonal organization.

The CSG spoke with then Dean of the Faculty Carol Folt<sup>5</sup>, and other faculty members to learn more. Among other things, the myth that the College discourages faculty members from becoming involved in the Greek system was dispelled. Faculty members involved with GLOs told us that they have not experienced such pressure, and Dean Folt noted that the College encourages faculty involvement with all student organizations, including GLOs. Indeed, faculty members are annually evaluated on, among other things, their involvement with student organizations.

Faculty at Dartmouth College are extremely busy and are pulled in many directions. It certainly is commendable that some members of the faculty are able to make time to serve as advisors for GLOs, but it probably is unrealistic to expect many of them to commit to being advisors. Therefore, GLOs may consider inviting faculty members to serve in a more limited role within their organizations.

GLO students often do a poor job of reaching out to and following up with faculty. One faculty advisor to a GLO told us that the members did not really seem to know what they wanted the advisor to do. Similarly, we heard of instances where GLOs had invited faculty members to their house for an event, only to have many members of the GLO not attend. In other instances, students were lacking in social skills such as greeting faculty members at the door, and engaging faculty members in conversation. Dean Folt noted that such experiences can quickly sour a

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<sup>5</sup> Professor Folt was recently named Provost of the College, with overall responsibility for academic affairs.

faculty member's view of the GLO. In short, if students are going to host faculty members the students need to show up and make their guests feel welcome.

The CSG believes that greater interaction between GLOs and the faculty could significantly break down barriers and improve the Greek system's reputation with the faculty. Alumni advisors may be able to help students in planning and ensuring the success of faculty events. Current advisors have recognized the unexpected value of consistently engaging students intellectually outside their own classroom, lab, and/or field of study.

A model GLOs may consider is that used by many of Dartmouth's athletic teams whereby faculty members serve as mentors to the teams.

#### B. Recommendations

1) Members of GLOs need to act as responsible adults to ensure the academic life of the College is enhanced, and not harmed by the organizations.

2) GLOs should actively reach out to faculty to encourage them to participate in the organizations in some meaningful fashion, perhaps modeled on Dartmouth's athletic teams. In whatever capacity the faculty are engaged, GLOs must have a clear vision for the level and manner of faculty involvement. This vision should include a clear "ask" of the faculty, and the organizational commitment to show up to events, engage the faculty, and follow up appropriately. That being said, faculty are not eager to engage in superficial ways, with only periodic "check-ins" to fulfill a mandate from a national organization.

3) GLOs should, perhaps in conjunction with other GLOs (*e.g.* a fraternity and sorority co-hosting an event), sponsor faculty talks and faculty social events. GLOs need to ensure these events are well attended, that the houses are clean and presentable, and that faculty members come away with a good impression of the organizations.

4) Students should seek to build their personal connections with faculty in the context of their participation in a GLO. Invitations for engagement from the GLO are far less appealing to faculty than a personal invitation and follow-up from an individual student or group of students.

### VIII. Improving Physical Plants

#### A. Observations

The physical plants of many of GLOs, particularly the all-male fraternities, are in terrible condition with decades of decay and deferred maintenance. In addition, the students have done an extremely poor job of maintaining the houses in presentable condition. Far too often the houses, particularly though not exclusively the basements, are filthy -- littered with beer cups, beer cans, and other unsavory byproducts of excessive drinking that result in permanent, foul odors. Far too few students seem to understand that it is their responsibility to keep their houses in clean and presentable shape.

The condition of the houses does tremendous harm to the reputation of GLOs. We received many comments from alumni concerning the deplorable condition of fraternity houses. Many alumni, including those who are GLO supporters, are of the opinion that students are irresponsible and do not look after themselves. With some outstanding exceptions, many houses are left in terrible shape at times when alumni are most likely to see them – *e.g.* on Homecoming Weekend. See Appendix D (photographs). Appendix C contains emails discussing the conditions of some houses and the terrible effect this has on the willingness of alumni and others to support the system.

Though acknowledging issues with their own memberships, many students and house advisors note that a significant amount of damage to houses is caused by outsiders – that is, not by the members of each house themselves, but by other students, non-Dartmouth people, and, shockingly to the CSG, by young alumni. Indeed, young alumni are a particular problem for many houses. We heard of instances in which young alumni returned to Dartmouth for big party weekends or fifth year reunions and “trashed” the houses. Some young alumni view the houses as their hotels. Further, it seems that there is some stealing of furniture and damage that occurs across houses. We did not discover any instance where individuals who caused damage to a GLO house were held personally responsible and forced to repair or pay for damage they had done.

Currently, a range of approaches exists within the Greek system for hiring and paying janitors/housekeepers and handymen. Some houses do not have professional cleaning services, but rely on students to maintain the premises. In other instances, the undergraduate GLO writes a check to the alumni house advisor at the beginning of each term and the alumni house advisor hires janitors/housekeepers and handymen from these funds throughout the term. Some third-party service providers prefer to deal with alumni house advisors as there may be uncertainty of regular, timely payment from students. Moreover, a house advisor may be in a better position to insure that the GLO is treated fairly by vendors in the Upper Valley. At other houses, students directly pay janitors/housekeepers, handymen and others. Houses which permit students to themselves pay for services believe it provides important lessons in responsibility to the students, and lessens the burdens on the alumni house advisor.

## B. Recommendations

1) Students need to be encouraged to clean up after themselves. While it is surprising to have to say so about Dartmouth students, many of them apparently expect others to pick up after them. The student culture needs to change to one whereby each member of a GLO believes he is personally responsible for keeping houses clean and presentable, and each Dartmouth student needs to understand that he is responsible for not damaging or soiling every GLO house on campus. The culture needs to change from one in which people at parties throw cups or cans on the floor once they are done with them, spit on floors and carpets, break windows or put holes in walls, and use floors as restrooms.

2) Each GLO owning a private house should employ a professional cleaning service to, at a minimum, regularly clean bathrooms and common areas (*e.g.*, living rooms, hallways). In several instances since the CSG began its work, fraternities that did not previously employ cleaning services have done so and have reported to us extremely positive results – sometimes to



the students' surprise. The frequency with which janitors/housekeepers should clean may vary from house to house. For those houses seeing the most traffic, employing a janitor/housekeeper at least two to three times a week (ten hours or more a week) appears advisable. Anecdotally, we understand that \$20 to \$25 per hour is the going rate for cleaning services at GLOs, and there appear to be plenty of professional janitors/housekeepers available for hire.

While some suggest that students could themselves perform cleaning services, history has proven that they simply do not adequately clean their houses over time and that outside professionals are necessary.

The CSG believes that changing the environment may change undesirable behaviors.

3) Each GLO should hire a handyman to regularly inspect the house and make necessary repairs and minor improvements. The handyman should coordinate both with the students and with the house advisor. There are several reliable handymen in the Hanover area who currently are working with GLOs, and who are available to take on additional work.

4) Each organization should determine for itself whether its alumni advisor or student officers should be responsible for paying its janitor/housekeeper and handyman. At a minimum, the CSG believes the house advisor should have some direct interaction with the janitor/housekeeper and handyman.

5) Some houses may wish to band together to hire a handyman, janitor/housekeeper, or other professionals to assist in house upkeep.

6) Many privately-owned houses need significant capital improvements and attention to deferred maintenance. Each organization should analyze and prioritize its needs. Moreover, each organization should attempt to map out and plan for long-range capital needs (*e.g.*, replacement of roofs every "X" number of years). Ten years ago a physical plant audit, the "Fuller Report," was performed of each GLO. The alumni boards and house advisors should familiarize themselves with their house's Fuller Report and may wish to consider updating it.

7) Many GLOs need to raise significant funds in order to make necessary capital improvements. Each organization should consider funding sources such as: capital campaigns among alumni members, loans from the college, and loans from third parties. It is possible that third party loans could be secured by mortgages on the house and repaid from room rent, student membership dues, and annual alumni fund drives. Several houses have engaged in successful capital campaigns in recent years, and may serve as models to other GLOs.

8) While most GLOs are nonprofits and do not pay income taxes, donations made to them are not tax deductible unless the organization has qualified as a 501(c)(3) entity under the Internal Revenue Code. GLOs that are not 501(c)(3) entities should explore whether such a designation is available to them, and may wish to coordinate with other GLOs to obtain tax advice.

9) The basements of many GLOs are often filthy. The foul smells that permeate a number of fraternity houses originate in their basements. Even those organizations that employ professional cleaning services have made the decision to have students rather than professionals



clean the basement. In the view of the CSG, this is not working. The CSG recommends that a professional janitor or housekeeper be employed at least once a month to thoroughly clean the basement of each organization.

10) Fraternity houses may consider installing drains in their basements to allow students and professional cleaners to hose down floors for easier cleaning.

11) GLOs that host large parties should consider replacing existing plumbing fixtures in basements and on first floors with sturdy fixtures that are designed to handle large volumes of use.

12) Each house should sit down with its janitor/housekeeper at the beginning of each term to identify key times throughout the term when the house needs to be especially clean. For example, houses should be in pristine condition for Homecoming Weekend and reunions when they are most likely to be seen by alumni. Reunion can present particular problems as graduating seniors exiting the house often leave it in disarray, and as other members may be off-campus and unable to clean the house themselves. At this time, it may be worthwhile to pay an outside professional to clean the house.

13) In order to protect their houses during commencement and reunion week, several GLOs hire student members to remain in the house and to cleanup after alumni. This is a worthwhile precaution.

14) Many GLOs that employ outside cleaning services direct them to thoroughly clean the house between terms, when students are not present and it is easier to clean. Between terms is also a good time to clean student rooms, in addition to common areas. The CSG recommends each house be thoroughly cleaned at least once a year, if not at the end of each term.

15) Limitations on the number of kegs at parties and the resulting purchase of scores of cases of canned beer has exacerbated the problem of litter from cans. In addition, unlike kegs, canned beer often is not distributed from a common source, limited to the basement tap system, but may be given out throughout any room in the house. We understand that the College is reevaluating its alcohol policies, and any changes may have a significant effect on many aspects of Greek life.

16) Perhaps another example of unintended consequences, tightening of drinking laws and access to alcohol appear to have transmogrified beer pong from what once was a game played at one or perhaps two tables in a fraternity basement involving one cup of beer per player, to a cult fetish in which it is not uncommon to find six or more beer pong tables in use in a single house at a time. Moreover, games are now played involving multiple cups of beer per player. Games commonly played include those in which a student will drink 4-8 cups of beer in a single game (*i.e.* “doubles” played with 8-15 cups of beer per side arranged in the outline of a tree, shrub, or the children’s game “Battleship”).

The results of this modern-day form of beer pong are that students customarily throw cups and a significant amounts of beer onto the floor. Moreover, beer pong has migrated out of basements and onto the first floors and better living spaces of houses, creating additional

cleanliness issues. (It goes without saying that the new form of beer pong presents a major health/unsafe-drinking problem, in addition to damaging the houses.)

At a minimum, beer pong and other games should be relegated to basements. Students should not simply throw cups and beer onto the floor. Far better yet, for many reasons, most importantly student health, the CSG would like to see a cultural shift in which the prevalence of beer pong diminishes and the amount of drinking (particularly per game) is greatly reduced.

17) The Committee discussed whether it was advisable for alumni corporations to receive security deposits from individuals living in the houses and from the undergraduate brothers on campus each term. At the end of each term, the corporation could use money from the security deposits to repair any unrepaired damage. Security deposits would have the benefit of placing the burden of protecting the house on those who are in control of the premises, and entail treating the students as though they were adults. Security deposits are the norm in landlord-tenant relationships in the real world. On the other hand, some members of the CSG expressed concern that security deposits held through the College billing system could put a burden on the College administration, and that there might be issues of landlord-tenant law regarding the prompt return of security deposits. It may be that security deposits should be collected from the undergraduate GLO and students residing in the house by the house corporation at the beginning of each term, and handled solely by the corporation. This, however, places an additional burden on house advisors.

## **IX. Long-Range Planning**

### **A. Observations**

Sorority Housing. There is a significant demand for additional sororities with houses at Dartmouth. The College has done an admirable job in creating sorority housing over the past several decades. It is noteworthy that, in juxtaposition to the history of fraternity houses which were privately funded, the College has borne the burden of purchasing, remodeling and providing sororities with homes. In addition, the College creatively has made floors of residence halls available to serve as sorority housing, and also has made facilities available for several historically Black and Latina/o GLOs. In a perfect world, alumni might be able to fund acquisition of houses in the Hanover area that could serve as new sorority housing; however, in light of real estate prices in Hanover, this appears unlikely.

Dartmouth's undergraduate student body is roughly 50% male and 50% female. There are 15 all-male Interfraternity Council fraternities with houses, but only 6 Panhellenic sororities with houses. The average sorority has 118 members, while the average fraternity has 68 members. The CSG believes that additional sororities with houses would greatly benefit Dartmouth's campus.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> At times some will suggest that there are too many fraternities in relation to the number of sororities. The CSG thinks this is an unhealthy way to look at the situation. GLO housing need not be a zero-sum game whereby the sororities can only benefit by hurting the fraternities. Far better would be expansion of the overall number of GLOs with houses, to the point where they satisfy the campus-wide demand. In short, the solution is to eliminate the pain, not to spread it around.

Free Riding. GLOs should try to figure out a way to address free-riding. Students who benefit directly from GLOs but are not members of them should pay their fare share for those benefits. Sororities that choose to remain in national organizations so as to avoid having to host open parties should consider whether there are ways they can support those GLOs that do host large, open parties.

Long-term funding. As noted in the previous section, many GLOs are in dire need of significant capital improvements and renovations. GLOs should consider launching capital campaigns and regular, annual fundraising. In addition, they should set aside a sinking fund to be financed in part by contributions from student dues and room rents such that money is available for periodic renovations or capital improvements (*e.g.*, replacing boilers, roofs).

## B. Recommendations

- 1) The College should continue to expand the number of sororities with housing on campus.
- 2) The Greek system should consider fundraising across individual houses such that alumni can donate to the system as a whole -- and not simply to the institution to which they belonged as an undergraduate. A detailed proposal is attached hereto at Appendix E.
- 3) Ways should be found more fairly to spread the cost of hosting open social events so that a small number of houses do not continue to pay for and suffer the wear and tear of a significant portion of the campus's social life.
- 4) Alumni should be encouraged to "adopt" sororities and serve as advisory board members.
- 5) Each house should consider whether it is in need of significant capital improvements, and whether to engage in a capital campaign.
- 6) Houses should plan/schedule long-term capital improvement projects and create sinking funds to provide for future expenses.

## X. CONCLUSION

Dartmouth's Greek system is popular, varied and strong. GLOs provide important benefits to members and non-members alike. The system, however, needs significant improvement and would benefit greatly from additional alumni support. With active alumni support, the Greek system at Dartmouth has a bright future, and will not merely endure, but will thrive.

Respectfully Submitted:

Alumni Council *ad hoc* Committee to Support Greek Letter Organizations

2008-2010

Chair: John ("J.B.") Daukas '84	Past-President Alumni Council, Chi Gamma Epsilon/Kappa Sigma Zeta Psi
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Geoffrey V. Bronner '91	Phi Delta Alpha
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Linda Cooper Marshall '85	Alpha Chi Alpha
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John S. Engelman '68	Delta Delta Delta House Advisor
Prof. M. Cecelia Gaposchkin	Sigma Delta/Sigma Kappa
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