

FEMALE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR ENGAGEMENT IN
AN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ACTIVITY

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ABSTRACT

This study explores Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment grounded in a learning-outcomes-based curriculum as a vehicle for student engagement and learning. This study explores the demographics of participants and the perception of learning that occurred within the context of engagement in experiential learning activities during the first week of the Fall 2009, 2010, and 2011 academic semesters at The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC). This study was conducted by utilizing quantitative and qualitative measures through the administering of pre-tests, post-tests, and withdrawal surveys. This study has determined that significant learning occurs through engagement in the Panhellenic Sorority recruitment process, including the perception of learning that was not anticipated through the development of outcomes and curriculum. The research in this area is incredibly limited as the institution studied is the only documented institution of higher learning investing in an outcomes-based curriculum experience for engagement in Panhellenic sorority recruitment.

DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS OF GRATITUDE

My journey as a doctoral learner has impacted my growth and development as a female leader in profound ways. I am often challenged by my role in creating an inclusive world where any willing learner is provided opportunities to flourish. The beginning of my doctoral journey coincided with the birth of my Goddaughter, Emerson Kate Porter, on August 14, 2009. The responsibility of serving as a mentor and role model to this impressionable-young woman has served as one of the greatest treasures of my life. This gift has enabled me to radically redefine health, wellness, relationships, and learning in all aspects. I am grateful for the trust and friendship that Becky and Michael Porter have shared with me through this responsibility of influencing Emerson's learning and leadership journey. My dissertation is dedicated to Emerson. I am so moved by the influence you have already made in our world, I cannot wait to help you learn and grow along the way.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

Experiential learning within higher education is consistently explored in the context of intended learning outcomes (Astin, 1993). Researchers and practitioners often fail to consider the unintended learning that occurs through a series of experiences within the collegiate setting, specifically those experiences that take place outside the traditional lecture hall and/or classroom (Dewey, 1938). It should be noted that unintended learning within any cultural experience can be both positive and/or negative depending on the findings of the outcome (Kuh, Hu, & Vesper, 2000).

Many efforts are made to ensure that college students obtain life-skill education outside the classroom. These exertions are typically conducted through student engagement in student organizations and student educational/entertainment programming. Engagement in campus activities is often connected to student retention and degree attainment, as students are more likely to develop a sense of community in the collegiate environment in which they are participating through experiences outside of the classroom (Pascarella & Terrenzini, 1991).

Statement of the Problem

Capturing data that supports the learning that occurs in comparison to the developed learning outcomes associated with female student participation in leadership-development programming has not been examined to a degree from which an accurate judgment can be made

regarding its effects on learning and engagement (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). University financial and human resources are dedicated to creating leadership development programs for female students; however, the effects of the effort are not being assessed and/or evaluated in order to support continuation and/or justification in the context of gender-specific learning efforts.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the learning that occurs through engagement in The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC) Panhellenic Recruitment Process as conducted in a gender-specific effort engaging female undergraduate students. The study considered the level at which the participant entered the process in the context of the desired learning outcomes. It concluded by evaluating the perception of the learning that occurred through participation in experiential-learning activities for the duration of a six-day leadership development curriculum facilitated by peers. The researcher also developed an understanding and awareness of the demographic background of the female student population self-selecting to engage in the process.

The curriculum (Appendix B) facilitated throughout the process was designed by the researcher as a means for applying King and Kitchener's (1994) Reflective Judgment Model to a process that engages critical thinking by participants. The decision-making that occurs throughout engagement in the experiential-learning process creates a multitude of opportunities for students to make decisions regarding vexing issues that may not be interpreted as such for a more mature population of females. However, the decision-making surrounding gaining entrance into a sorority organization through mechanisms of interpersonal relationships and the

development of social capital, challenges learners to make decisions regarding issues of a vexing nature that could be interpreted differently by females with additional life experiences.

The application of Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning (1984) allows the participant to engage in a concrete experience grounded in Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment supplemented by reflective observations through engagement in a peer-facilitated curriculum. The reflective observation serves as a product of the process of abstract conceptualizations, while creating and re-creating a concrete experience through active experimentation as the curriculum coincides with the application of engagement in the experiential learning process.

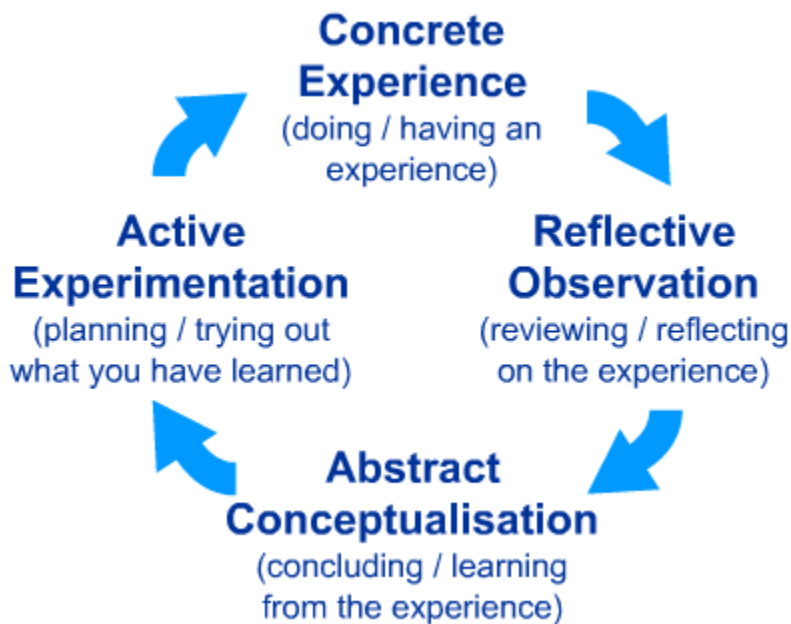


Figure 1.0 Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning (1984)

Research Questions/Related Hypothesis

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What demographic factors were self-disclosed by participants engaged in UTC Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment and how did this compare to the undergraduate student body at UTC?

2. What did female student participants perceive as having learned through participating in UTC Panhellenic Recruitment in the context of learning outcomes and self-identification of learning?
3. What unintended learning and/or competency development was perceived as occurring through participation in UTC Panhellenic Recruitment?
4. Did female student participants perceive that they had gained competencies through partial participation in Panhellenic Recruitment?

Developing a hypothesis surrounding learning in the context of Panhellenic Recruitment created a challenge for the researcher. No known similar studies have examined learning in the context of Panhellenic Recruitment with developed learning outcomes that have been implemented for the experience. The only presentations of research conducted by the Association of Fraternity and Sorority Advisors (AFA), an International Professional Development Association for higher education professionals engaged in Fraternity and Sorority Life, have been conducted by the researcher from UTC. The lack of research conducted in this area are discussed in limitations of the study. At the outset of this study, the researcher assumed that some sort of learning had occurred and would be perceived as such by participants engaged in the experience, but the certainty of meeting or exceeding learning outcomes was unknown.

Rationale for the Study

Very rarely is experiential learning considered in the context of gender-specific studies (Josselson, 1987). While leadership-development curricula are widely used within the context of higher education, limited research exists that considers the role of engagement in female-only higher-education environments. This study will explore the role of Panhellenic Recruitment

conducted in the context of a peer-facilitated learning-outcomes-based recruitment model, which has not been implemented within any other higher-education context as indicated by programmatic efforts of AFA. The process is comprised of six-days of experiential-learning activities in conjunction with dialogue and written reflection. This study will consider the educational outcomes associated with the UTC Panhellenic-Recruitment process as a means for determining relevance in the context of student learning.

Currently, three years of secondary data have been collected through pre- and post-tests as well as withdrawal surveys designed to understand what participants perceived as having learned throughout engagement in the process. Withdrawal surveys were designed to understand the learning that was perceived as having occurred by participants who self-selected to withdraw from the process. Through the employment of the researcher in the Dean of Students Office, the mechanism for researching this topic is considered a primary function and scope of employment as a strategy for retention and degree attainment for undergraduate students.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

The concept of Experiential Learning (Dewey, 1938) states that participants learn through direct engagement and involvement; this can be easily applied to engagement in the Panhellenic Sorority Process. Dewey explored the idea that learners often take away concepts that were unintended or undesirable. While educators are committed to creating meaningful and intentional learning outcomes, the actual engagement in experiences often results in unintended learning that cannot be controlled by the educator and/or learner.

Dewey's work has been further explored in recent practice through the analysis of Kolb's Experiential Learning Model (Holman et al., 1997). The concepts of management theory and the

role in which experiential learning is applied through social constructs further supports learning through engagement in experience. It must be noted that making meaning of the experience(s) that participants engage, is the influence and context in which learning occurs.

Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) defined a hierarchy in learning based on the level at which a learner has developed competency within the desired learning outcome or objective. Bloom's levels of knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation serve as ranges within which the learner is able to demonstrate competency. Depending on the area in which the participant is evaluated, learning can look very different, depending on the experience in which the participant has engaged. It must also be considered that the perception of student learning may in fact be different from the level in which learning actually occurred (Kolb, 1984).

Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Model notes that reflective observations serve as an exceptional tool for making meaning of an experience, while influencing future behaviors and decisions. Making meaning of shared experiences enables a participant to change behavior and/or decision-making for future experiences. The influence of learning through experience can transcend multiple contexts (Kolb, 1984).

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because the experience being evaluated does not currently exist at any other institution of higher learning as evidenced by the lack of programmatic efforts of AFA and other higher-education associations. However, similar experiences are created at more than 600 college campuses with undergraduate female students without grounding the experience in a learning-outcomes-based leadership-development model. Also, significant research does not exist in the context of engagement in Panhellenic Recruitment activities because the majority of

time dedicated to creating this experience is not based in the context of student learning or through the use of intentional and meaningful assessment practices. This can be noted through the comprehensive review of ways in which Panhellenic Recruitment is implemented throughout North America in a context of assessment of satisfaction and membership numbers without reflective practice measures, rather than engagement in perceived student learning.

A large amount of data were collected over a period of three years at UTC, but these data have not been analyzed or published. The findings from such a study could be explored as a mechanism for change in the areas of female-identity-development theory as well as leadership-development theory and curriculum design.

Definition of Terms

Active Member:

Undergraduate student who is initiated in a fraternal organization and has successfully completed the new member education process.

Experiential Learning:

Learning that occurs through engagement in activities and or experiences.

Fraternal Organization/Chapter:

Undergraduate student organization which is constructed through lifetime membership with a commitment to shared values and ideals.

Learning Outcome:

An intended competency gained through participation and/or engagement in an experience.

Panhellenic:

Umbrella organization for twenty-six member sororities of the National Panhellenic Conference. While many college campuses host Panhellenic Councils, very few host all 26 member sororities.

Panhellenic Recruitment:

The process by which potential new members join Panhellenic sororities on a college campus. The process at UTC consists of six-days of activities conducted by active members and peer facilitators.

Peer Facilitator:

Active members that serve as unbiased resources throughout Panhellenic Recruitment. Trained members of the Panhellenic community that facilitate the learning-outcomes based recruitment curriculum

Potential New Member (PNM):

Undergraduate student who desires membership in a Panhellenic sorority. Participant in the Panhellenic Recruitment process.

Undergraduate:

Currently enrolled student in higher education who is pursuing a Bachelor's degree.

Methodological Assumptions

This study assumes that the participants within the study are being truthful on the assessment that they are provided through their answers in a pre- and post-test and/or withdrawal survey. The assumption is made that the participants understand the terms and questions being asked within the surveys conducted. The researcher made the assumption that participants desire to join a Panhellenic organization for the purpose of sharing in a values-based experience and that they desire to gain competencies in leadership development. An alternate expectation can be related to the socially-constructed experience associated with fraternal organizations. While access to underage consumption of alcohol and/or drugs, social acceptance by peers through engagement in what could be considered elite organizational membership, and/or hazing activities is not intended; these outcomes can be a reality.

Delimitations of the Study

Because no other institution of higher education is known to be conducting a similar process for Panhellenic Recruitment activities, this study was limited by the boundary of only assessing students engaged in undergraduate studies at UTC. It must also be considered that the study was bound by only assessing learning that has occurred for potential new members engaged in Panhellenic Recruitment, which only included female undergraduate students that approximate 400 of the 4,000 that are eligible annually to participate in the process. Thus, perception of the participant can be influenced by the desired outcome to gain membership in a Panhellenic sorority, rather than gaining competencies through involvement and engagement in leadership-development curriculum and experiences.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited by only assessing the perceived learning that has occurred at the end of day six of the process (Appendix G), rather than considering the influence of the learning over an extended period of time. Also, a longitudinal study is not being conducted to consider the influence on engagement in Panhellenic organizations as it applies to retention, attrition, and attainment within higher education.

This study displays significant limitations in regard to the collection of additional demographic information beyond year in college, self-identification of ethnic/racial background, as well as level of education completed by parents. A limitation exists that is relative to socioeconomic class, religion, and other life experiences that are not explored. Exploring the correlations of pre- and post-tests allow for better understanding of the place at which students begin their developmental journey, and in the ways in which participation in the experiential learning created through engagement in the Panhellenic Recruitment process plays a role in meeting or exceeding the competency associated with the learning outcomes.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

For undergraduate students the concept of learning is grounded in the collegiate experience. Often times the learning that happens outside of the classroom is as significant if not more significant than the learning that happens within the classroom (Dewey, 1938). The major issue with understanding the learning that happens outside of the classroom is the fact that few assessment measures are utilized to gain an understanding of the learning happening within academic settings since grades and/or academic performance are not assessed for student engagement outside of the academic realm (Astin et al., 1996).

College student development happens in a number of contexts. One way in which college students are provided a significant opportunity for engagement is through affiliation in student organizations (Dugan & Komives, 2007). A long-standing tradition on many college campuses is fraternity and sorority membership. Fraternal organizations offer students an opportunity to affiliate with groups that demonstrate similar values and social culture (Anderson et al., 2002). Obtaining membership in fraternal organizations varies from campus-to-campus, but tends to involve some sort of organized recruitment effort in which organizations and potential new members explore membership, ending with the organization offering invitations for membership to a select group of students that meet particular academic requirements, community involvement/service, and personal commitment to shared ideals and values.

When considering the role of a fraternity- and sorority-life professional, it becomes rather difficult to fathom the complexity of the work that is required. In simplistic terms, the individual is responsible for providing direction and oversight for a system of fraternal organizations (Andersen et. al., 2002). In actuality, the responsibility includes conceptualizing and identifying complex subcultures within the higher education experience, applying theories on change management, leadership development, moral and cognitive development, and organizational psychology, as well as supporting student learning through the development of meaningful experiences for college students and other stakeholders (Andersen, et. al , 2002). Considering these responsibilities, in addition to the need for collaborating with multiple entities both on- and off-campus and other duties as assigned, it is no wonder that such positions are plagued with high turnover and burn-out.

One of the most convoluted practices that the fraternity- and sorority-life professional may face is defining the role of serving as an educator in conjunction with programming (Andersen et al., 2002). It is very easy to define one's professional practice by considering where time and energy are spent (Manning et al., 2006). Most importantly, consideration for which is the best use of time and energy: Creating educational opportunities or Programming for the sake of filling space? Some may say that it takes programming to educate or it takes educating to program. Regardless of current philosophy, it is agreed that support of holistic student development should be the framework of operation (Andersen et. al., 2002). Rather than reviewing antiquated practices, exploration for making the case for intentionally supporting student learning must be a norm.

Learning and Leadership Applied

Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) provides an exceptional framework for understanding the levels at which students learn in conjunction with the application of learning objectives expected by educators for student learning. Bloom noted that the majority of learning that is tested is done at the lowest levels, which serve as a mechanism for memorizing or regurgitating information. Such levels of learning very rarely affect or change behaviors and actions. When reflecting on many traditional new member-education programs, it becomes quite clear that the majority of the focus regarding student learning is placed within the knowledge and understanding levels, rather than at the more complex levels of analyzing and evaluating (Andersen, et. al., 2002). From a programming perspective, many campus-based programs do not even meet the lower levels of knowledge, as there is no educational or learning component intended through participation and engagement.

We must also consider the learning that may occur through experience, while keeping in mind that all learning experiences do not have the same impact. Experiential learning suggests that knowledge can be gained through direct engagement and involvement (Dewey, 1938). When students actively engage in activities that are directly supported through the fraternity and sorority experience, but are not congruent with the intended outcomes of engagement; learning is occurring, but it is just not what was intended or what would be proudly proclaimed. Rather than focusing time on pondering what students aren't learning from their experience, maybe evaluating what they are learning that was never intended should be a priority (Manning, et. al., 2006). A great deal of significance can probably be found through a more intentional evaluation of student learning.

When asked what the fraternity and sorority experience can provide an individual, the most frequent response includes “leadership” (Andersen, et. al., 2002). However, it can be quite a struggle to determine what exactly that means or even what it looks like. The experiential-learning model (Itin, 1999) provides students with direct opportunities regarding leadership practice; however, it may lack a theoretical background for providing more insight into the framework in which they are engaging. A struggle exists in regard to empowering students to explore their leadership development without providing them an officer position, causing great confusion regarding the true role of student leadership. Once again, creation of an opportunity for unintentionally teaching students that positions or titles define leadership, rather than applying the intended outcome of creating leadership-development opportunities for all.

The Higher Education Research Institute (1996) suggested that social change is at the pinnacle of developing a culture of leadership development for young adults. Perhaps, this emphasis on social change may also apply to the practice of fraternity and sorority advising. Socially reconstructing the role of advising fraternities and sororities to focus on student learning may seem radical. However, as educators supporting leadership development, it seems as if it may be the only option for relevance (Andersen et. al., 2002). This does not suggest that student learning only occurs under the advisement of fraternity- and sorority-life professionals, but that learning and leadership-development practices are being learned through direct and indirect behaviors and actions. The value that is placed on social constructs within the context of fraternity and sorority life by professionals is, in essence, teaching students through observation and experiential learning (Kolb, 1984).

Exploring Models for Practice

Many models for student-affairs practice exist within higher education. While no one model is appropriate for every institution of higher learning, exploring models that support student learning and engagement remain important in creating learning opportunities for students. A number of proposed models for practice have emerged from the Documenting Effective Educational Practice (DEEP) Study (Manning, Kinzie, & Schuh, 2006). Three innovative models for practice have been introduced as a means for reconsidering current practices.

The Student-Centered Ethic of Care model proposes a focus on relationships and care for addressing the needs of each individual student. This requires faculty and staff that empathize with student experiences and backgrounds, while providing more attention to students who are most in need of additional support (Manning et al., 2006). The Student-Centered Ethic of Care model requires a great deal of faculty and staff time, and many institutions of higher learning lack the staffing structure necessary to support this model.

The Student-Driven Model is much more realistic to implement for the fraternity- and sorority-life professional, as it is framed in the assumption that students are capable of managing the context in which they operate. The Student-Driven Model supports the ideology that college students are capable of being responsible for functions, engaging peers in leadership development practices, as well as a general grounding in student empowerment (Manning et al., 2006). The Student-Driven Model suggests that students not only engage in the collegiate experience through involvement, but through investment in growth and learning through a series of experiences in which they find meaning. This model enables student-affairs professionals to consistently provide opportunities of increasing complexity for the support of cognitive

discourse for students. This model can be easily supported by campuses that serve a traditional population, but it has been noted that student populations that require additional support may find it difficult to engage at the level expected by this model.

The Student Agency Model serves as an incredibly advanced version of the Student-Driven Model. The Student Agency Model serves as a catalyst for complete student responsibility for student life as students serve as full partners with faculty and staff (Manning et al., 2006). This model allows for full student empowerment, which in essence creates a culture in which students want to be responsible for their growth and development through learning. This model can create an environment that is very difficult for student affairs professionals to implement since their role can become marginalized in conjunction with the need for a high tolerance for ambiguity and reiteration (Manning et al., 2006).

Regardless of the enacted or proposed model for practice within student affairs administration, the fraternity- and sorority-life professional must be empowered to create opportunities that directly and indirectly support student learning (Andersen et al., 2002). One must consider the context in which fraternity- and sorority-life exists, including campus culture and climate regarding student learning, faculty and staff engagement surrounding student success and retention, as well as fraternity-and sorority-stakeholder perception of what is currently being learned through engagement in the fraternal experience. One of the best tasks to perform prior to committing to a model for practice is completing a program assessment of current learning as a means for establishing community core values as well as learning outcomes and objectives for collegiate membership (Jahansouz & Bergeron, 2007). In the end, student learning should serve as the construct upon which we place our time and energy as we continue to make the case for creating a relevant fraternity and sorority experience within higher education.

It must be recognized that the organized process for joining a Panhellenic Sorority consists of a number of days filled with activities that enable potential new members to interact with active members, allowing both parties to partake in a mutual selection process to determine the offering of invitations for membership. The typical process is approximately five to seven days in length, depending on the size and type of institution.

The concept of Experiential Learning (Dewey, 1938) states that participants learn through direct engagement and involvement; this can be easily applied to engagement in the Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment Process. What one must be cautious of is that learning which occurs through engagement in any activity can result in both intended and non-intended learning. Educators must remain cautious regarding experiential learning outside of the classroom, as experiences within the collegiate setting are not always congruent with the intended college experiences promised to undergraduate students. Social culture is a significant influence on college students as they develop both morally and cognitively and begin to make decisions regarding vexing issues (King and Kitchener, 1994). Decisions regarding vexing issues are often completed in environments over which educators have little to no control. It must be considered that college students arrive at an institution with a multitude of life experiences that influence the diverse ways in which learning occurs, just as engagement is reflective of a multitude of college student needs (Learning Reconsidered, 2004).

Standards provided by The Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) (2008) were updated to reflect the direction that learning should take within the collegiate setting for undergraduate students. CAS Standards recommend that intrapersonal development and interpersonal competence remain cornerstones for preparing students for post-degree attainment. Specifically, intrapersonal development is comprised of diverse dimensions of realistic self-

appraisal, self-understanding, and self-respect; identity development; commitment to ethics and integrity; and spiritual awareness. Engagement in fraternity and sorority life serves as an excellent vehicle for the development in intrapersonal and interpersonal competence through engagement in multiple experiential-learning environments.

The Call for Values Congruence (Andersen et al., 2002) was mandated by the Franklin Square Group in 2003 as a salient document for values congruence within the field of Fraternity and Sorority Life. The Franklin Square Group is comprised of a number of College and University Presidents, as well as Executive Staff and International and National Presidents of Fraternal Organizations, providing recommendations for ensuring that engagement in fraternity and sorority life is congruent with the espoused and founding values of fraternal organizations. The Call for Values Congruence is grounded in creating developmental experiences for college students, and it enables intellectual development, leadership abilities, positive relationships, and civic engagement (Andersen et al., 2002).

The application of the salient documents such as CAS Standards (2008) and The Call for Values Congruence (2002) demands that the development of experiences within fraternity and sorority life must be done in ways in which these suggested competencies are met or exceeded. An assumption can be made that by creating learning opportunities grounded in these salient documents prior to membership within fraternal organizations, learning will be intentional and increased as well as supporting experiential learning that will frame a positive expectation for active membership. In order to make this a reality, current practices for gaining membership within fraternal organizations must be assessed and developed in a way in which learning outcomes are not only developed and integrated, but also continually assessed to gain an

understanding of how the outcomes are being met or exceeded, as well as how to develop the process further to ensure that student learning is being supported (Astin et al., 2007).

College Student Development Theories

When considering the development of college students, we must take into consideration moral and cognitive development. Many would agree that moral and cognitive development represent a large component of developing ethical-leadership skills and practices. Two prominent theories within cognitive- and moral-development theory for college students are King and Kitchener's reflective-judgment model (1994) and Kohlberg's (1985) moral-development theory. Both theories are highlighted below.

The process of decision-making for traditional-aged college students has been addressed through the reflective-judgment model presented by King and Kitchener (1994). The reflective-judgment model responds to the question, "How do people decide what they believe about vexing problems?" (King & Kitchener, 1994, p. 2). Vexing problems within the college student population vary across many factors outlined by Larimer et al. (1997), such as binge drinking and hazing. Many decisions being made by college students are within the stage of prereflective thinking, thus no justification is required in regards to the decisions being made (King & Kitchener, 1994). This can be seen in many aspects of the student-conduct process involving violations of the traditional student code of conduct on any college campus; while intended to be developmental in nature, the conduct process tends to highlight decisions made in the stage of prereflective thinking.

Lawrence Kohlberg addresses the stages of morality in his studies of moral development (1985). This theory addresses the various stages of morality based on decisions made by

individuals (Kohlberg, 1985). Many decisions being made by college students reflect level one of Kohlberg's moral-development theory (1985). Many students are just attempting to avoid punishment by authority figures, rather than basing decision-making on factors congruent with their personal values and/or moral character.

The combination of the reflective-judgment model and theory of moral-development address the process of decision-making by many traditional-aged college students. These theories fail to consider commitments that students have made to upholding values of student organizations and/or the academic mission of the institution.

Leadership Development Theories

The role of leadership development has truly evolved on college campuses across the world. There are many aspects involved in developing an effective leader. There are many theories as well as schools of thought about what factors contribute to the development of leadership skills and abilities. It can be concluded that the sources of power that contribute to the effectiveness of a college student's ability to lead consist of showing support to those around them, strong conviction for ethical and moral decision-making, willingness to bring diverse voices to the table (Komives et al., 1998), and leading and serving by example at all times.

Strategies for teaching leadership development have evolved over the years as the ideology of positional leadership changes from title to action (Komives et al., 1998). Leadership was defined much more by power and domination than by cooperation and teamwork (Komives et al., 1998). The industrial paradigm of leadership was the focus of the twentieth century. The leader was a single person who ordered subordinates to complete tasks and work. This style was

much more characteristic of managing rather than leading. Earlier generations were probably more adapted to this style within a university-setting (Manning et al., 2006).

It is assumed that the current millennial generation of college students would not adapt well to the industrial paradigm in an institutional setting. This is due to the post-industrial paradigm focusing on collaboration and working towards common goals as a group (Komives, 1998). Current millennial-generation college students are only accustomed to the current paradigm and have little-to-no experience and/or working knowledge of the former paradigms regarding leadership. There are multiple leadership-development theories that demonstrate and/or value the building of relationships; creating change through reflection, evaluation, and assessment; and serving constituents through the concept of followership as well as commitment to civic engagement (Komives et al., 2006).

Two emerging leadership-development theories that have specific application to the collegiate experience are authentic-leadership development (Avolio & Gardner, 2005) and leadership-identity theory (Komives et al., 2006). These theories are often utilized as a framework for establishing a leadership-development curriculum for experiential learning on the collegiate level.

It has been suggested that authentic-leadership development is utilized as a framework for all leadership-development theories (Shamir & Eilam, 2005). Authentic-leadership development consists of a continual developmental process, “whereby leaders and followers gain self-awareness and establish open, transparent, trusting, and genuine relationships” (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p.322). Authentic leaders are known for a strong commitment to optimism, hope, confidence, and resilience. They are also known for their transparency about their

intentions through seamlessly linking espoused values, behaviors, and actions (Avilio & Gardener, 2005).

The Leadership Identity Development Model (Komives et al., 2006) is a theory based on multiple stages of development. The theory is grounded in relational leadership, which is known as, “a relational process of people together attempting to accomplish change or make a difference to benefit the common good” (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 1998, p.21). Influences by adults and peers, reflective learning, and meaningful involvement are the influences that move college students through the six stages of development. This in turn works to establish a personal and social leadership identity. This developmental model allows students to focus on leadership development as a process rather than focusing primarily on accomplishing tasks and managing others.

Female Identity Theory

The exploration of female-identity development stems from the research of Erik Erikson (1968), as he explored clinical psychology from adolescence through adulthood. Erikson’s work influenced the research of Ruthellen Josselson’s Theory of Identity Development in Women (1987). Josselson’s Theory (1987) identifies four statuses of development categorized in an ascending order: Identity Diffusion, Foreclosure, Moratorium, and Identity Achievement. While it is acknowledged that the developmental phases are in ascending order, they are neither permanent nor necessarily progressive and/or static.

Women who identify as Foreclosures have experienced no identity crisis through the collegiate experience. However, these women tend to engage in an undergraduate experience with a commitment to self-identity that is rarely challenged by self and/or peers. Upon further

review of female-identity post-collegiate experience, Foreclosures rarely change in regard to identity.

Identity Achievement supports strong indications that a woman is creating a separation from childhood to adulthood through the development of a sense of self (Evan, Forney, Guido-DiBrito, 1998). The process of separation and change can be considered difficult or troubling, at times leading to unpredictability. Many women explore this phase through self-reflection and internal processing. Success occurs through the development of a sense of self through maturation. Women identifying as Achievers indicate that the role of positive childhood and adolescent development contributes to a sufficient level of self-efficacy and confidence. Decision-making is not a complex process as choices are made without hesitation and doubt.

Typically, the Moratorium group identifies closely with a maternal figure in adulthood rather than childhood. Through adolescence, a male or paternal figure has typically served in an idealized or romanticized mentor role. Philosophies and ideologies are rather idealistic and many aspire for “some sort of idealized perfection” (Josselson, 1987, p. 135).

Identity Diffusion is marked by insufficient crisis and commitment. Members of this group are quite unique and complex as they typically measure lowest on all levels of healthy psychological functioning (Josselson, 1987). This group has a high tendency to withdraw from situations and experiences that could be considered complex. Many times women in this group have experienced some sort of emotional trauma that has not been resolved from childhood or adolescence.

It must also be acknowledged that the current climate for female students on college campuses is influenced by gender dynamics. Women arrive at the collegiate experience with a different self-concept when compared to their male peers (Baenninger, 2011). Female college

students question their abilities to hold positional leadership roles within organizations and require support and/or encouragement in order to feel adequate. In comparison, their male counterparts arrive at the collegiate-setting with high self-confidence, but a lower level of self-awareness regarding leadership abilities. Women underestimate their abilities and express far lower levels of self-confidence both at the beginning of their collegiate experience as well as when the experience comes to a close through degree attainment (Baenninger, 2011).

Summary of Literature

The literature that informs this study surrounds the concepts of learning theory, exploration of models for practice within higher education, college-student development theory, leadership development theory, and female-identity theory. Each foundational concept influences the development of traditional college-aged females throughout their journey in the collegiate experience. The perception of learning by female undergraduates is reflective of experiential learning practices and the application of reflection (Josselson, 1987).

Capturing a specific female-undergraduate learning experience is a challenge in a co-educational environment (Kuh et al., 2000). Utilizing a specific context for exploring gender-specific experiential learning creates a unique opportunity for future literature. The researcher creates an opportunity for further literature in this topical area.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Population

The participants in the study were female undergraduate students who participated as potential new members in the Fall 2009, 2010, and 2011 Panhellenic Recruitment Processes. Participants completed the process and were extended an invitation for membership in a collegiate sorority on campus and/or self-selected to withdraw from the process prior to the extension of invitations for membership. The population did not include women who did not receive an invitation for continuation in the Panhellenic Recruitment Process by the collegiate member organizations. National Panhellenic Conference Release Figure Methods (2011) indicate that fewer than ten women per formal Panhellenic Recruitment Process are released by all member organizations with no invitation for membership in a collegiate sorority chapter at UTC.

The initial enrollment of potential new members has varied annually from 355 to 416 participants with 97% of participants completing a pre-test. Throughout the six-day process women self-select to remove themselves or are not extended an invitation by the active chapters to continue participation in the process. At the conclusion of all activities, 100% of the remaining participants receiving an invitation for membership complete a post-evaluation.

The population of participants is taken from a self-selected pool of undergraduate female students at UTC. Enrollment for undergraduate females for the academic terms in which the study took place are noted in table 3.1 from UTC Office of Institutional Research (2012),

Table 3.0 UTC Undergraduate Female Enrollment by Class-Standing

Freshman	1585	1473	1816
Sophomore	1232	1113	1020
Junior	901	955	1050
Senior	1235	1341	1539
Undergraduate Special	88	53	63
Undergraduate Total	5041	4935	5488

Participants were asked to complete the pre-test during the first phase of curriculum facilitation of the Panhellenic Recruitment Process. The pre-tests were facilitated by university staff and/or recruitment counselors. The location of the distribution of pre-tests took place on-campus in student programming spaces such as conference rooms of the University Student Activities Building (UTC University Center).

When participants indicated to a Recruitment Counselor that they would like to withdraw from the Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment Process, it was requested that the withdrawing potential new member complete a withdrawal survey. The withdrawal survey was completed in the University Student Activities Building and the potential new member was provided with resources for alternate campus involvement outside of Fraternity and Sorority Life Programming.

The post-test was distributed on the final day of Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment inside Patten Chapel located on the UTC campus. Prior to receiving an invitation for membership, each potential new member who had completed the Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment Process was asked to complete a post-test to provide a final reflection on the experiential learning activities they had engaged in over the course of the week.

Sample

The sample for this study included all participants that self-selected to complete a pre-test, post-test, and/or withdrawal survey. The population of participants completing pre-tests

was 1,117 with a collected sample of 1,018 eligible participants. The population of participants in post-tests was 686, with a collected sample of 677 eligible participants. The population of withdrawal participants was 396, with a collected sample of 77 eligible participants. The most difficult population to sample was students that self-selected to withdraw from the process. Once the withdrawal had occurred, it was difficult to contact the former participants to gain information regarding the reason for withdrawal.

Design/Methodology/Validity Issues

This project explored a participant's self-identification of gaining the competency associated with learning outcomes grounded in a curriculum-based learning experience (Appendix F) based on self-perception through agreement, neutrality, and/or disagreement with statements. The study used a mixed-methods approach by analyzing quantitative and qualitative data that had been collected as secondary data for the purpose of informing practice within the Division of Student Development at UTC. Participants engaged in simulations, dialogues, and reflections associated with each learning outcome throughout the durations of the experiences. Upon completion of the experience in full, participants were surveyed regarding agreement, neutrality, and disagreement with statements associated with competence related to the learning outcomes. Demographic information regarding the sampled population of student participants was collected to explore the student population that engages in the Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment Process. It was helpful to compare the sample of students surveyed throughout the Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment Process with the current undergraduate female enrollment at UTC during corresponding academic terms. It was assumed that students who had completed college credit prior to engagement in Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment also may have developed

competencies through other life experiences prior to participating in the Panhellenic Recruitment experience.

The pre- and post-tests included the collection of qualitative data from participants who shared in their own words what they learned and gained through engagement in the experience. It must be noted that the statements in which participants indicated agreement, neutrality, and/or disagreement are qualitative in nature, but quantified through nominal data coding to analyze responses statistically. Through open-ended questions, participants were provided opportunities to express ways in which the process could be improved for future participants. The study considers the learning that was perceived to have occurred, as the dependent variable, while demographic information collected served as the independent variable.

Measures

The measurement tools constructed for this project allowed participants to identify their level of agreement, neutrality, and/or disagreement with statements that reflected the gaining of competencies related to the learning outcomes from the experience. The surveys were comprised of six quantifiable qualitative statements and three qualitative questions in conjunction with demographic designations. The majority of data collected surrounded the concepts of demographic information and level of agreement, neutrality, and/or disagreement with intended learning. The qualitative measures provided space for describing learning that had occurred, ways in which the process could have been better, and any additional feedback that the participant was willing to provide.

Procedures

Participants self-selected to complete the pre- and post-tests during the Panhellenic Recruitment Process (Appendix C). During the first round of Panhellenic Recruitment Curriculum implementation, participants were asked to complete a survey regarding their experiences prior to participation in this process. All surveys were collected at the time of distribution and were kept confidential and no information that could connect an individual with her survey was collected. Surveys were distributed on paper and completed by pen.

Participants who completed the entire Panhellenic Recruitment experience and were offered an invitation for membership to a sorority were given the option to complete a post-test to reflect on their experience (Appendix D). Participants who self-selected to withdraw from the process were given the option to complete a withdrawal survey in order to provide a closing reflection to their experience (Appendix E). The withdrawal survey was a reproduction of the post-evaluation with the addition of one open-ended question regarding the decision to withdraw.

It was difficult to create a mechanism for benchmarking, as no other institution of higher learning has conducted a comparable recruitment process for students to engage in, as indicated by AFA. No best practice exists in the context of Panhellenic Recruitment at this time. It was also important to explore the ways in which students who participate in a partial process learn. We must gain a better understanding regarding the learning that occurs for the women who don't continue throughout the entire duration of the process, and most importantly, why they had self-selected to discontinue engagement throughout the duration of the experience.

Furthermore, we must explore the learning that was occurring from the active-member perspective, as well as from the perspective of the peer facilitator, referred to as the Recruitment Counselor. Learning outcomes have been established for competency development from the

active member and Recruitment Counselor perspectives; however, a clear analysis regarding the experience that was created from that context has not been explored.

Research Questions

1. What demographic factors were self-disclosed by participants engaged in UTC Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment and how did this compare to the undergraduate student body at UTC?
2. What did female student participants perceive as having learned through participating in UTC Panhellenic Recruitment in the context of learning outcomes and self-identification of learning?
3. What unintended learning and/or competency development was perceived as occurring through participation in UTC Panhellenic Recruitment?
4. Did female student participants perceive that they had gained competencies through partial participation in Panhellenic Recruitment?

Analysis of Data

Data were analyzed through the compilation of demographic information of participants in the recruitment process as compared to UTC overall undergraduate female enrollment as indicated by the UTC Office of Institutional Research. Frequencies and percentages are organized in tables to gain a better understanding of the demographic information of the studied sample. One-Way ANOVA was utilized to divide the variance between dependent variables. Establishing an “F” value from comparing means, it was determined whether the perception indicated through likert-scale, nominal data were statistically significant. The use of Chi-Square

enabled statistical analysis of assumptions that are made surrounded the learning that has already been perceived as having occurred among upper-classmen in comparison to first-year student experiences.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the learning that occurs throughout engagement in the UTC Panhellenic Recruitment Process. Both quantitative and qualitative measures have been utilized to explore the role of learning throughout the process.

The research questions at hand are:

1. What demographic factors were self-disclosed by participants engaged in UTC Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment and how did this compare to the undergraduate student body at UTC?
2. What did female student participants perceive as having learned through participating in UTC Panhellenic Recruitment in the context of learning outcomes and self-identification of learning?
3. What unintended learning and/or competency development was perceived as occurring through participation in UTC Panhellenic Recruitment?
4. Did female student participants perceive that they had gained competencies through partial participation in Panhellenic Recruitment?

The data collected were analyzed by compilation of Fall 2009, Fall 2010, and Fall 2011 data sets through the assessment of pre-tests, post-tests, and withdrawal surveys. The analysis of data indicated that little variance occurred regarding demographic information and participant response; therefore, data have been compiled as an aggregate of three years of experiences.

While the year of the experience was variable, the data collected were combined to reflect a greater population and sample over the course of three Panhellenic Recruitment Processes.

While the years were different, the process, curriculum, and assessment tools remained the same.

The compilation of three years of data sheds a greater light on answering the research questions at hand.

Quantitative Analysis

Demographic information regarding class-standing was collected in all assessment tools: pre-tests, post-tests, and withdrawal surveys. It was noted in Table 4.0 that the vast majority of participation in the Panhellenic Recruitment Process involved first-year students. The number of second year students was the next greatest numerical sample with a small population of third-year students. It must be noted that no students self-identified as fourth-year or other class-standing. Therefore, it can be assumed that the target population for participation in Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment was primarily first-year students with some participation from second- and third-year students. These data were further analyzed within the qualitative analysis to determine how this factor plays a role in expectations of learning. It was also noted in Table 3.1 that the comparison of female undergraduate enrollees from First-Year through Fourth-Year undergraduate enrollment reflected higher enrollment for first-year students with some issues of retention from first-year to second-year in addition to second-year to third-year, with an increase in enrollment in the fourth-year of studies.

The researcher was concerned that upperclassmen would not gain as much learning through engagement in this experience because of an increase in life experience and previous involvement as an undergraduate student at UTC. Qualitative findings indicated that

classification had little impact on learning. Regardless of class standing, learning and/or increase in competencies occurs. However, class standing did affect learning surrounding knowledge about UTC. ANOVA-alpha .05 utilized as independent groups by class standing and continuous variables of learning outcomes indicated that only first-year students gain competencies regarding knowledge about UTC. This was also supported through t-tests as the distribution was non-normal, supporting student learning. Upperclassmen did not note an increase in learning surrounding campus culture. Utilizing Chi Square resulted in findings which indicated a strong confidence that there was a strong association between variables, meaning that participation in the experience led to learning associated with the learning outcomes connected to the implemented curriculum.

Table 4.0 Frequency and Percentage by Class-Standing

	N(pre-)	%(Pre)	N(Post-)	%(Post)	N(W/D)	%(Withdrawal)
First-Year	834	81.9	561	82.8	70	90.9
Second-Year	148	14.5	96	14.2	7	9.1
Third-Year	37	3.6	18	2.6		0
Fourth-Year	0	0	0	0		0
Other	0	0	0	0		0
Missing Data	0	0	3	0.4		0

The analysis of ethnic/racial group identification enabled pre-test participants to self-identify ethnic/racial identification through open-ended questioning. The qualitative data was coded to reflect the following demographic population, as noted in Table 4.1. Participation in the pre-test indicated that the majority of participants in Panhellenic Recruitment was comprised of females identifying as White/Caucasian, which accounted for 91.7% of the initial

participation. Less than 10% of the sampled pre-test population identified as other than white/Caucasian.

The total cumulative enrollment of the UTC undergraduate student population from 2009-2011 fall enrollment included a total of 28,159 students with 20,260 students identifying as White/Caucasian. This was a population of 71.5% of undergraduate students self-identifying as White/Caucasian, while 91.7% of the students self-identifying with ethnic/racial identities of White/Caucasian participating in Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment. No other predominant ethnic/racial identity emerged as predominant in comparison of UTC Undergraduate Students to participants of potential new members engaged in Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment.

Table 4.1 Frequency and Percentage by Ethnic/Racial Group Identification

	N	%
White/Caucasian	934	91.70
Asian	12	12.00
African American	6	0.60
Multiracial	6	0.60
Native American	6	0.60
Multicultural	6	0.60
Hispanic/Latina	12	1.20
Pacific Islander	6	0.60
Colombian	3	0.30
White/Hispanic	9	0.90
White/Chinese	3	0.30
White/Asian	3	0.30
Middle Eastern	3	0.30
Arabian/White	3	0.30
Asian/Indian	3	0.30
Missing Data	3	0.30

Table 4.2 Total UTC Undergraduate Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Undergraduates	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011
Non-Resident Alien			86
White, Non-Hispanic	7,053	6,231	6,976
American Indian, Non-Hispanic	57	0	23
Black, Non-Hispanic	1,447	1,090	1,225
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Inlander, Non-Hispanic	-	0	10
Asian, Non-Hispanic	232	166	173
Hispanic	159	217	278
Multi-Racial, Non-Hispanic	-	194	923
Unknown	91	1,331	197
TOTAL	9,039	9,229	9,891

One of the most surprising aspects of data collection was gaining an understanding of the level of education that had been completed by the parent(s) of the pre-test sampled participants reflected in Table 4.3. Many indicators would point to a great deal of assumptions being made that the institution (UTC) where the study was completed indicates that a high population of students served as first-generation college students. This did not hold true when applied to students participating in Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment. Less than 10% of the sampled pre-test participants indicated that her parent(s) had completed only a high school education. More than 90% of the sampled pre-test participants indicated that her parent(s) had completed a range of some college up to a Doctoral Degree. Approximately 65% of the sampled pre-test participants indicated that her parent(s) had earned a Bachelor's and/or Master's Degree. It must also be noted that no sampled pre-test participant noted that her parent(s) had earned less than a high school diploma. This question was left open-ended and allowed for sampled pre-test participants to share their parent(s) highest education level, in their own words.

Unfortunately, UTC Institutional Research does not currently publish the level of highest education obtained by the parents of undergraduate students. It is often referenced in public

meetings and forums that UTC serves a population of first-generation students; however, this is not reflected by the enrollment of potential new members in Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment.

Table 4.3 Frequency and Percentage by Parent/Guardian Highest Level of Education

	N	%
High School	97	9.5
Some College	133	13.1
Associate's Degree	48	4.7
Bachelor's Degree	411	40.4
Master's Degree	247	24.3
Doctorate Degree	8	0.8

One of the primary learning outcomes for participation in the UTC Panhellenic Recruitment Process for Potential New Members is gaining knowledge and an appreciation for UTC as an institution for higher learning. Due to the timing of Panhellenic Recruitment taking place during the first week of the fall academic term and a great majority of participation including first-year students, it must be acknowledged that this process was intended to better connect females with the institution as a whole. It was noted from pre-test and post-test sampled participants that there was an increase in gaining competencies surrounding connection to the university as a whole in Table 4.4. The greatest increase was seen from neutrality to agreement regarding knowledge about UTC. Unfortunately, sampled participants that self-selected to withdraw from the Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment process indicate a decrease in knowledge regarding UTC. This was certainly not the intention of the implemented curriculum, but could be connected to the sampled pre-test participants indicating neutrality, which was further reflected through withdrawal from the process.

Through the analysis of a one-way ANOVA results, it was determined between pre-tests, post-tests, and withdraw surveys that $F(2,674) = 15.887$, $p = .000$ value indicated that statistical significance can be found in the perception of knowledge gained regarding UTC as an Institution. Table 4.5 explores the ANOVA results for this learning outcome and is further supported by Table 4.6 through the results of Post-Hoc Analysis.

Table 4.4 Frequency and Percentage Regarding Knowledge of UTC as an Institution

	N(Pre-)	%(Pre-T)	N(Post-)	%(Post-)	N(Withdrawal)	%(Withdrawal)
Agree	800	78.6	616	91	49	63.6
Neutral	209	20.5	58	8.6	21	27.3
Disagree	6	0.6	4	0.4	7	9.1
Missing Data	3	0.3	0	0	0	0

Table 4.5 ANOVA Results: Knowledge of UTC as an Institution

	Sum of Sqs	df	Mean Sq	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6.505	2	3.252	15.887	0.000
Within Groups	137.974	674	0.205		
Total	144.479	676			

Table 4.6 Post-Hoc Analysis: Knowledge of UTC as an Institution

	N	Mean	SD	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Withdraw
Pre-Test	1015	1.22	0.427	-	*	*
Post-Test	678	1.1	0.316	*	-	*
Withdraw	77	1.45	0.660	*	*	-

*Denotes Significance Difference, NS Denotes No Significance

In conjunction with establishing a better-developed understanding of UTC, it was also an outcome of the potential new member process to develop a better knowledge of Panhellenic Organizations. It is indicative of Table 4.7 that there was an incredible advancement in the

gaining of competencies in the realm of Panhellenic organizations from the pre-test sample to post-test and withdrawal samples. The pre-test sample indicates that more than 55% of the participants are neutral or disagree with the statement that they are knowledgeable about Panhellenic Sororities. A great deal of growth occurs from pre-tests to post-tests and withdrawal surveys, as 99.6% of the sampled post-test participants agree that they are knowledgeable about Panhellenic organizations. Sampled withdrawal participants agreed 90.9% of the time that they are knowledgeable about Panhellenic organizations. Perhaps the greatest observation to be noted was that no sampled post-test participants or withdrawal participants stated disagreement with having gained knowledge about Panhellenic organizations.

The results of one-way ANOVA indicate statistical significance in the perception of gaining an understanding of Panhellenic Organizations at UTC. The value of $F(2,676)=8.342$ and $p=.004$ indicate an increase of perception in understanding. Significance is further supported through Table 4.9 Post-Hoc Analysis.

Table 4.7 Frequency and Percentage Regarding Knowledge of Panhellenic Organizations

	N(Pre-Tests)	%(Pre-T)	N(Post-Tests)	%(Post-Tests)	N(Withdrawal)	%(Withdrawal)
Agree	456	44.8	674	99.6	70	90.9
Neutral	496	48.7	4	0.4	7	9.1
Disagree	66	6.5	0	0	0	0

Table 4.8 ANOVA Results: Knowledge of Panhellenic Organizations

	Sum of Sqs	df	Mean Sq	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.820	2	1.820	8.342	0.004
Within Groups	147.490	676	0.218		
Total	149.310	677			

Table 4.9 Post-Hoc Analysis: Knowledge of Panhellenic Organizations

	N	Mean	SD	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Withdraw
Pre-Test	1018	1.62	0.605	-	*	*
Post-Test	678	1.01	0.077	*	-	*
Withdraw	77	1.09	0.289	*	*	-

*Denotes Significance Difference, NS Denotes No Significance

The primary component of the learning-outcomes based Panhellenic Recruitment Model was the implementation of curriculum surrounding the identification of personal values. The most important aspect of the curriculum that was revisited throughout the duration of the process was the identification of personal values and the application of those values to decision-making and organization membership. Upon review of the sampled pre-test participants in Table 4.10, only 55.8% agreed that they had a developed understanding of their personal-value system, 36.8% of the sampled pre-test participants were neutral and 7.1% disagreed with the statement that they had a developed understanding of their personal values. Post-test data indicate that upon full completion of the learning-outcomes-based recruitment process, 95.5% of sampled participants agreed that they had identified their personal values with only 4.1% remaining neutral. This indicates an increase in agreement by over 40% of the sampled population. Table 4.9 also indicates that a significant increase in agreement was connected with the sampled withdrawal participants. Of sampled withdrawal participants, 72.7% indicated that they agree with having identified their personal values. It must be acknowledged that both sampled populations of post-test participants and withdrawal survey participants indicated no disagreement with having an understanding of personal values. This indicates a significant finding in comparison to the pre-test sample.

Table 4.11 indicates the greatest increase in quantifiable-qualitative data through ANOVA results an $F(2, 673)=200.720$ and $p= .000$. This is indicative of an incredible gain in

perception of learning surrounding the concepts of personal value identification and understanding for undergraduate female students. Significance is further supported through Table 4.12 Post-Hoc Analysis.

Table 4.10 Frequency and Percentage Understanding of My Own Personal Values

	N(Pre-Test)	%(Pre-Tests)	N(Post-Test)	%(Post-Test)	N(Withdrawal)	%(Withdrawal)
Agree	568	55.8	647	95.5	56	72.7
Neutral	375	36.8	28	4.1	21	27.3
Disagree	72	7.1	0	0	0	0
Missing Data	3	0.3	3	0.4	0	0

Table 4.11 ANOVA Results: Understanding of My Own Personal Values

	Sum of Sqs	df	Mean Sq	F	Sig.
Between Groups	20.865	2	20.685	200.720	0.000
Within Groups	69.354	673	0.103		
Total	90.039	674			

Table 4.12 Post-Hoc Analysis: Understanding of My Own Personal Values

	N	Mean	SD	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Withdraw
Pre-Test	1015	1.51	0.626	-	*	*
Post-Test	675	1.04	0.200	*	-	*
Withdraw	77	1.27	0.448	*	*	-

*Denotes Significance Difference, NS Denotes No Significance

Sampled post-test participants and withdrawal survey participants were asked if they would recommend participation in the Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment process to another student. The post-test sample in Table 4.13 indicated agreement at 98.9% with no disagreement noted. The sampled withdrawal-participants self-selected to discontinue their engagement in the process. However, 54.5% of the sampled withdrawal-survey participants indicated that they

would recommend the experience to another student, 27.3% indicated neutrality with the statement, and 18.2% would not recommend the experience. Significance can be found in the 54.5% of sampled withdrawal-survey participants, indicating comfort with recommending the experience to someone else. This finding was not anticipated by the researcher, and the 27.3% noting neutrality with the recommendation statement was also not anticipated. The researcher assumed that a participant who self-selected to withdrawal from the process would not recommend engagement in the experience to another student. Qualitative findings informed this notation, as quantitative measures alone did not express why the experience would be recommended.

Table 4.13 Frequency and Percentage “I would recommend this experience to another student”

	N(Post-Test)	%(Post-Test)	N(Withdrawal)	%(Withdrawal)
Agree	670	98.9	42	54.5
Neutral	7	1.1	21	27.3
Disagree	0	0	14	18.2

Some assumptions were made by the researcher regarding reasons participants would withdraw from the Panhellenic Recruitment process. This was made by informed assumptions gained through practice of advising Panhellenic Recruitment at varying university campuses. The most-commonly noted reasons for withdrawal are: finances, time commitment, no interest in joining, and other various reasons as noted through qualitative findings. Table 4.14 indicates that multiple reasons for withdrawal were noted by sampled survey-participants. The most significance was found in the qualitative analysis.

Table 4.14 Frequency and Percentage Reasons for Withdrawal

	N(Withdrawal)	%(Withdrawal)
Finances	21	27.3
Time Commitment	21	27.3
No Interest in Joining	21	27.3
Other	48	63.6

Qualitative Analysis

The analysis of qualitative findings with this study was quite significant for the researcher. As the literature indicates, unintended learning is a significant component of experiential learning practices. Inasmuch as the components of the learning-outcomes-based recruitment model are heavily driven through conversation and reflection, very little of the outcomes of learning can be controlled due to the variance of learning styles, demographic background and life experience, as well as desired learning by participants.

The pre-test sample indicated a number of themes surrounding the perception of gaining competencies and learning prior to engagement in the learning-outcomes-based recruitment model. The greatest theme that emerged through the qualitative analysis was a desire to learn more about one's self. One participant noted in the pre-test, *"I want to learn more about myself and grow as a person in all aspects. I want to build relationships with people who share my same values."* Self-exploration was a major theme throughout the pre-test analysis with approximately 44% of the sampled pre-test participants indicating some sort of self-exploration/understanding as a key component of desired learning throughout their engagement in the process.

The secondary aspect of desired learning that emerged through the pre-test analysis was a desire to engage in community development through relationships with others. Pre-test participants noted that they desired to learn more about the community in which they were

engaging (UTC and/or Panhellenic Organizations) and the way in which they hoped to do this was through relationships with others. A pre-test participant noted, *“I want to learn anyway to better myself, meet new people, be more involved within the school and city.”* Another pre-test participant stated, *“I hope to learn more about my environment and how I can get involved during my college experience. While making new friends.”* Approximately 29% of sampled pre-test participants noted a desire to learn about community development through relationships with other people and/or peers.

The sample collected through post-test analysis created a number of emerging themes surrounding student learning that were both intended and not intended. Intended learning themes emerged surrounding the identification of personal values. When asked the open-ended question, “What did you learn from participating in this experience?”, the theme of personal value identification was a common thread. Approximately 57% of the sampled post-test participants noted that identifying personal values and utilizing values as a compass for decision-making was an outcome of learning through engagement in the experience. One participant stated, *“I learned what was important to me and what values I was not willing to give up.”* Another participant wrote, *“I learned how to make a decision based on my values.”* The quantitative findings validate the outcome of identifying personal values as a competency developed through engagement in the UTC Panhellenic Recruitment process as perceived learning. Both quantitative and qualitative measures support that this learning outcome was being met through full participation in the Panhellenic Recruitment process.

Interpersonal skill development was noted as a theme surrounding learning throughout the full Panhellenic Recruitment process in approximately 21% of the post-test sample. It was intended that participants would gain competencies in the development of relationships with

peers as well as comfort in engaging in conversations surrounding personal and organizational values. Sampled post-test participants stated that they grew more comfortable with conversations and interactions with sorority members, other potential new members, and recruitment counselors/UTC Staff. One participant stated, *“I learned a lot about myself and about social communication. I learned how to branch out a little bit and strike-up conversations with strangers that are now friends.”*

The final intended outcome for learning noted throughout the qualitative findings as a theme was a stronger knowledge of UTC and Panhellenic organizations. The quantitative findings indicated a significant increase in knowledge about Panhellenic organizations and an increase in knowledge about UTC. Qualitative findings supported these claims, as themes emerged surrounding a stronger understanding of the UTC community as a whole as well as the inner-workings of Panhellenic organizations as a function of student engagement at UTC. Approximately 20% of the sampled post-test participants noted that they gained information about life as a UTC student and/or a better understanding of UTC Panhellenic organizations. One post-test participant stated, *“I learned a tremendous amount about the Greek community and was delighted to see how passionate the whole community is about their chapters and especially their values.”*

The unintended learning that emerged in the qualitative findings of sampled post-test participants noted themes of an increase in self-esteem and self-efficacy. While this can be incredibly difficult to measure without psychological evaluation, it must be noted that the term self-esteem and/or confidence was noted 119 times throughout the qualitative analysis of, “What did you learn from participating in this experience?” Sampled post-test participants stated that they felt more confident and/or had an increase in self-esteem through participation in the full

process. The theme of self-efficacy emerged in the findings surrounding an ability to feel as if participants were more capable of doing things that they would not have been confident engaging-in in the past. One post-test participant stated, “*I feel so confident in my abilities. My self-esteem is so high right now. Thank you!*” The researcher did not intend to study aspects of confidence, self-esteem, and/or self-efficacy, because these were not intended outcomes of the curriculum-based process and were not considered during the conception of the curriculum development and evaluation/assessment tools. However, it was incredibly encouraging to know that engagement in a learning-outcomes based Panhellenic Recruitment process has a positive impact on a young woman’s development. Without exploration of unintended learning through qualitative measures, this finding would remain unknown.

Qualitative measures indicated a number of suggestions regarding ways in which to improve the Panhellenic Recruitment Process. Many of the suggestions are incredibly difficult to control and/or manage seeing as they were weather-related. A significant theme that emerged was that it was simply too hot outside to focus on the process as a whole. The logistical process of transporting 300 or more women to engage in conversations with 500 or more women at varying facilities requires the use of buses for transportation as well as walking outdoors in Mid-August. The most-commonly expressed feedback regarding how to make the experience better was to spend less time outdoors and/or on buses.

A major concern of the researcher that was noted through qualitative measures was the disruption of evening classes and engagement with Panhellenic Recruitment. As UTC enrollment continues to grow, it is becoming more common for undergraduate students to be enrolled in courses that meet during the evening. The traditional Panhellenic Recruitment model utilizes the first week of courses as a time frame for engagement in the process. A tipping point

has occurred in which more women are troubled by balancing course work and engagement in the Panhellenic Recruitment process during the first week of fall courses due to enrollment in courses meeting after 5p.m. In order to best support the academic mission of UTC, a change must be made to better accommodate the current undergraduate learning climate. One student stated, *“I think recruitment should be held the week before school, because dealing with recruitment and the first week of classes is very stressful.”* The researcher makes the assumption that the timing of the process was having an impact on the number of women withdrawing from the process. This was further explored through the withdrawal survey data.

The findings from the withdrawal-survey sample provide a great deal of information surrounding learning. While this sample was limited, as many participants withdraw from the process without providing any feedback, the analysis of the qualitative findings support that learning does occur even when the process is not fully completed with all aspects of the curriculum. While quantitative findings indicate that time commitment, finances, and a loss of interest in joining a Panhellenic organization are factors in withdrawing, qualitative measures provide a clearer picture regarding this decision. A significant theme that emerged was that the intention of the participants’ engagement was to meet new people, but not join a Panhellenic organization. It was not indicative of a negative experience, but an intention of not joining prior to engagement in the process that influenced withdrawal.

In regard to learning from the experience, the withdrawal-survey sample was not all that different from the post-test sample data. The most significant theme that emerged was positive learning from the experience and positive reflection on the future as a UTC student. One participant that withdrew stated, *“I met some amazing people and honestly learned more about myself and this system – it has made me think hard about my future.”* Another participant that

self-selected to withdraw stated, *“I learned that by joining a sorority you get to be involved in so much and get a lot of opportunities to help out with organizations. You get to meet a lot of new people and learn so much from each sorority and what they do and how they contribute their time to community service.”* One participant who withdrew simply stated, *“This is not meant for me.”* The candor in the qualitative analysis of the withdrawal survey sample made coding very simplistic, as this sample was quite small in comparison to the pre-test and post-test samples.

CHAPTER V

REVIEW OF METHODOLOGY

Introduction of the Problem/Study

Capturing data that supports the learning that occurs in comparison to the developed learning outcomes associated with female student participation in leadership-development programming has not been examined to a degree from which an accurate judgment can be made regarding its effects on learning and engagement (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). University financial and human resources are dedicated to creating leadership development programs for female students; however, the effects of the effort are not being assessed and/or evaluated in order to support continuation and/or justification in the context of gender-specific learning efforts.

The purpose of this study was to examine the learning that occurs through engagement in UTC Panhellenic Recruitment Process as conducted in a gender-specific effort engaging female undergraduate students. The study considers the level at which the participant enters the process in the context of the desired learning outcomes. It concludes with evaluating the perception of the learning that occurred through participation in experiential-learning activities for the duration of a six-day leadership development curriculum facilitated by peers. The researcher also developed an understanding and awareness of the demographic background of the female student population self-selecting to engage in the process.

Review of Methodology

The longitudinal study of three years of collective data in conjunction with a mixed-methods statistical analysis created a complex environment for accurately coding and evaluating data. Quantitative measures remained relatively fluid in analysis as the aggregate of three years of data provided a supple sample of an accurate population for pre-tests and post-tests. Coding data annually as a function of the researcher's professional role at UTC assisted with creating a culture of consistency that may have been difficult to re-create without an annual review of data as a function of employment at UTC.

It should be noted that demographic information should have been collected through post-tests and withdrawal surveys. The researcher missed an incredible opportunity to better understand the influence of demographics and aspects of privilege as an influence on student learning and engagement. The pre-test demographic information collected assisted in creating a scope for understanding the target audience for engagement in the curriculum-based recruitment experience. However, without the continuation of this data collection, other than class-standing, it does not indicate a clear depiction of how engagement in Panhellenic Recruitment, as a context for engagement in experiential learning, influenced student learning and engagement throughout the process. There is additional importance in analyzing the withdrawal surveys to best understand how predisposed demographics may play a role in continuation of the Panhellenic Recruitment Process as well as student learning.

The tools for analysis did allow for all research questions to be addressed. Quantitative and qualitative measures were used to address the competencies and learning gained through participation in the UTC learning-outcomes based recruitment model. This learning also encompasses a thorough analysis of the unintended learning and competency development that is

acknowledged through qualitative measures in both post-tests and withdrawal survey samples. The analysis of these data also provides a better understanding regarding the learning that occurs through partial participation in the learning-outcomes recruitment model. It is regrettable that the withdrawal survey did not include the day on which the participant self-selected to withdrawal. This variable would help to create a better understanding of the most impactful components of the curriculum and potentially indicate the point at which a participant may have chosen to disengage. Finally, demographic information related to class-standing did in fact play a role in learning. All learning outcomes were met, regardless of class-standing, other than the gaining of knowledge surrounding UTC as an institution. Quantitative and qualitative measures indicate that second- and third-year students do not indicate learning more about UTC as an institution or campus culture through participation in a learning-outcomes-based recruitment process.

Analysis of Research Question One

What demographic factors were self-disclosed by participants engaged in UTC Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment and how did this compare to the undergraduate student body at UTC?

Demographic information regarding class-standing was collected in all assessment tools: pre-tests, post-tests, and withdrawal surveys. It was noted in Table 4.0 that the vast majority of participation in the Panhellenic Recruitment Process involved first-year students. The number of second year students was the next greatest numerical sample followed by a small population of third-year students. It must be noted that no students self-identified as fourth-year or other class-standing. Therefore, it can be assumed that the target population for participation in Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment was primarily first-year students with some participation from second- and

third-year students. It was further analyzed within the qualitative process used in this study how participant class-standing plays a role in expectations of learning. It was also noted in Table 3.1 that the comparison of female undergraduate enrollees from First-Year through Fourth-Year undergraduate enrollment reflected higher enrollment for first-year students with some issues of retention from first-year to second-year in addition to second-year to third-year, with an increase in enrollment in the fourth-year of studies.

The researcher was concerned that upperclassmen would not gain as much learning through engagement in this experience because of an increase in life experience and previous involvement as an undergraduate student at UTC. However, qualitative findings indicated that classification had little impact on learning. Regardless of class standing, learning and/or increase in competencies occurs. However, class standing did affect learning surrounding knowledge about UTC. ANOVA-alpha .05 utilized as independent groups by class standing and continuous variables of learning outcomes indicated that only first-year students gain competencies regarding knowledge about UTC. This was also supported through t-tests as the distribution was non-normal, supporting student learning. Upperclassmen did not note an increase in learning surrounding campus culture. Utilizing Chi Square, a strong confidence was noted that there was a strong association between variables, meaning that participation in the experience led to learning associated with the learning outcomes connected to the implemented curriculum.

The analysis of ethnic/racial group identification enabled pre-test participants to self-identify ethnic/racial identification through open-ended questioning. The qualitative data was coded to reflect the following demographic population, as noted in Table 4.1. Participation in the pre-test indicated that the mass majority of participants in Panhellenic Recruitment was comprised of females identifying as White/Caucasian, which accounted for 91.7% of the initial

participation. Less than 10% of the sampled pre-test population identified as other than white/Caucasian.

The total enrollment of the UTC undergraduate student population from 2009-2011 fall enrollment included a total of 28,159 students with 20,260 students identifying as White/Caucasian. This was a population of 71.5% of undergraduate students self-identifying as White/Caucasian, while 91.7% of the students self-identifying with ethnic/racial identity of White/Caucasian participating in Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment. No other predominant ethnic/racial identity emerged as predominant in comparison of UTC Undergraduate Students to participants of potential new members engaged in Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment.

One of the most surprising aspects of data collection was gaining an understanding of the level of education that had been completed by the parent(s) of the pre-test sampled participants reflected in Table 4.3. Many indicators would point to a great deal of assumptions being made because the institution (UTC) where the study was completed indicates that a high population of students served as first-generation college students. This did not hold true when applied to students participating in Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment. Less than 10% of the sampled pre-test participants indicated that their parent(s) had completed only a high school education. More than 90% of the sampled pre-test participants indicated that their parent(s) had completed a range of some college up to a Doctoral Degree. Approximately 65% of the sampled pre-test participants indicated that their parent(s) had earned a Bachelor's and/or Master's Degree. It must also be noted that no sampled pre-test participant noted that her parent(s) had earned less than a high school diploma. This question was left open-ended and allowed for sampled pre-test participants to share her parent(s) highest education level, in her own words.

Unfortunately, UTC Institutional Research does not currently publish the level of highest education obtained by the parents of undergraduate students. It is often referenced in public meetings and forums that UTC serves a population of first-generation students; however, this is not reflected by the enrollment of potential new members in Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment.

Analysis of Research Question Two

What did female student participants perceive as having learned through participating in UTC Panhellenic Recruitment in the context of learning outcomes and self-identification of learning?

One of the primary learning outcomes for participation in the UTC Panhellenic Recruitment Process for Potential New Members is gaining knowledge and an appreciation for UTC as an institution for higher learning. Due to the fact that Panhellenic Recruitment takes place during the first week of the fall academic term and a great majority of participation involves first-year students, it must be acknowledged that this process was intended to better connect females with the institution as a whole. It was noted from pre-test and post-test sampled participants that there was an increase in gaining competencies surrounding connection to the university as a whole in Table 4.4. The greatest increase was seen from neutrality to agreement regarding knowledge about UTC. Unfortunately, sampled participants that self-selected to withdraw from the Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment process indicated a decrease in knowledge regarding UTC. This was certainly not the intention of the implemented curriculum, but could be connected to the sampled pre-test participants indicating neutrality, which was further reflected through withdrawal from the process.

Through the analysis of a one-way ANOVA results, it was determined between pre-tests, post-tests, and withdraw surveys that $F(2,674) = 15.887$, $p = .000$ value indicated that statistical

significance can be found in the perception of knowledge gained regarding UTC as an Institution. Table 4.5 explores the ANOVA results for this learning outcome and is further supported by Table 4.6 through the results of Post-Hoc Analysis.

In conjunction with establishing a better-developed understanding of UTC, it was also an objective of the potential new member process to develop a better knowledge of Panhellenic Organizations. It is indicated in Table 4.7 that there was advancement in the gaining of competencies in the realm of Panhellenic organizations from the pre-test sample to post-test and withdrawal samples. The pre-test sample indicated that more than 55% of the participants were neutral or disagreed with the statement that they were knowledgeable about Panhellenic Sororities. A great deal of growth occurred from pre-tests to post-tests and withdrawal surveys, as 99.6% of the sampled post-test participants agreed that they are knowledgeable about Panhellenic organizations. Sampled withdrawal participants agreed 90.9% of the time that they are knowledgeable about Panhellenic organizations. Perhaps the greatest observation to be noted was that no sampled post-test participants or withdrawal participants stated disagreement with having gained knowledge about Panhellenic organizations.

The results of one-way ANOVA indicated statistical significance in the perception of gaining an understanding of Panhellenic Organizations at UTC. The value of $F(2,676)=8.342$ and $p=.004$ indicate an increase of perception in understanding. Significance was further supported through Table 4.9 Post-Hoc Analysis.

The primary component of the learning-outcomes based Panhellenic Recruitment Model was the implementation of curriculum surrounding the identification of personal values. The primary aspect of the curriculum that was revisited throughout the duration of the process was the identification of personal values and the application of those values to decision-making and

organization membership. Upon review of the sampled pre-test participants in Table 4.10, only 55.8% agreed that they had a developed understanding of their personal-value system, 36.8% of the sampled pre-test participants were neutral and 7.1% disagreed with the statement that they had a developed understanding of their personal values. Post-test data indicated that upon full completion of the learning-outcomes-based recruitment process, 95.5% of sampled participants agreed that they had identified their personal values with only 4.1% remaining neutral. This indicates an increase in agreement by over 40% of the sampled population. Table 4.9 also indicates that a significant increase in agreement was connected with the sampled withdrawal participants. Of sampled withdrawal participants, 72.7% indicated that they agreed with having identified their personal values. It must be acknowledged that both sampled populations of post-test participants and withdrawal survey participants indicated no disagreement with having an understanding of personal values. This indicates a significant finding in comparison to the pre-test sample.

Table 4.11 indicates the greatest increase in quantifiable-qualitative data through ANOVA results indicate an $F(2, 673)=200.720$ and $p=.000$. This is indicative of a significant gain in perception of learning surrounding the concepts of personal value identification and understanding for undergraduate female students. Significance is further supported through Table 4.12 Post-Hoc Analysis.

Analysis of Research Question Three

What unintended learning and/or competency development was perceived as occurring through participation in UTC Panhellenic Recruitment?

The analysis of qualitative findings with this study was quite significant for the researcher. As the literature indicates, unintended learning is a significant component of experiential learning practices. Inasmuch as the components of the learning-outcomes-based recruitment model are heavily driven through conversation and reflection, very little of the outcomes of learning can be controlled due to the variance of learning styles, demographic background and life experience, as well as desired learning by participants.

The pre-test sample indicated a number of themes surrounding the perception of gaining competencies and learning prior to engagement in the learning-outcomes-based recruitment model. The greatest theme that emerged through the qualitative analysis was a desire to learn more about one's self. One participant noted in the pre-test, "*I want to learn more about myself and grow as a person in all aspects. I want to build relationships with people who share my same values.*" Self-exploration was a major theme throughout the pre-test analysis with approximately 44% of the sampled pre-test participants indicating some sort of self-exploration/understanding as a key component of desired learning throughout their engagement in the process.

The secondary aspect of desired learning that emerged through the pre-test analysis was a desire to engage in community development through relationships with others. Pre-test participants noted that they desired to learn more about the community in which they were engaging (UTC and/or Panhellenic Organizations) and the way in which they hoped to do this was through relationships with others. A pre-test participant noted, "*I want to learn anyway to better myself, meet new people, be more involved within the school and city.*" Another pre-test participant stated, "*I hope to learn more about my environment and how I can get involved during my college experience. While making new friends.*" Approximately 29% of sampled pre-

test participants noted a desire to learn about community development through relationships with other people and/or peers.

The sample collected through post-test analysis created a number of emerging themes surrounding student learning that were both intended and not intended. Intended learning themes emerged surrounding the identification of personal values. When asked the open-ended question, “What did you learn from participating in this experience?”, the theme of personal value identification was a common thread. Approximately 57% of the sampled post-test participants noted that identifying personal values and utilizing values as a compass for decision-making was an outcome of learning through engagement in the experience. A participant stated, “*I learned what was important to me and what values I was not willing to give up.*” Another participant wrote, “*I learned how to make a decision based on my values.*” The quantitative findings validate the outcome of identifying personal values as a competency developed through engagement in the UTC Panhellenic Recruitment process as perceived learning. Both quantitative and qualitative measures support that this learning outcome was being met through full participation in the Panhellenic Recruitment process.

Interpersonal skill development was noted as a theme surrounding learning throughout the full Panhellenic Recruitment process in approximately 21% of the post-test sample. It was intended that participants would gain competencies in the development of relationships with peers as well as comfort in engaging in conversations surrounding personal and organizational values. Sampled post-test participants stated that they grew more comfortable with conversations and interactions with sorority members, other potential new members, and recruitment counselors/UTC Staff. One participant stated, “*I learned a lot about myself and*

about social communication. I learned how to branch out a little bit and strike-up conversations with strangers that are now friends.”

The final intended outcome for learning noted throughout the qualitative findings as a theme was a stronger knowledge of UTC and Panhellenic organizations. The quantitative findings indicated a significant increase in knowledge about Panhellenic organizations and an increase in knowledge about UTC. Qualitative findings supported these claims, as themes emerged surrounding a stronger understanding of the UTC community as a whole as well as the inner-workings of Panhellenic organizations as a function of student engagement at UTC. Approximately 20% of the sampled post-test participants noted that they gained information about life as a UTC student and/or a better understanding of UTC Panhellenic organizations. A post-test participant stated, *“I learned a tremendous amount about the Greek community and was delighted to see how passionate the whole community is about their chapters and especially their values.”*

The unintended learning that emerged in the qualitative findings of sampled post-test participants noted themes of an increase in self-esteem and self-efficacy. While this can be difficult to measure without psychological evaluation, it must be mentioned that the term self-esteem and/or confidence was noted 119 times throughout the qualitative analysis of, “What did you learn from participating in this experience?” Sampled post-test participants stated that they felt more confident and/or had an increase in self-esteem through participation in the full process. The theme of self-efficacy emerged in the findings surrounding an ability to feel as if participants were more capable of doing things that they would not have been confident engaging-in in the past. One post-test participant stated, *“I feel so confident in my abilities. My self-esteem is so high right now. Thank you!”* The researcher did not intend to study aspects of

confidence, self-esteem, and/or self-efficacy, because these were not intended outcomes of the curriculum-based process and were not considered during the conception of the curriculum development and evaluation/assessment tools. It was incredibly encouraging to know that engagement in a learning-outcomes based Panhellenic Recruitment process has a positive impact on a young woman's development. Without exploration of unintended learning through qualitative measures, this finding would remain unknown.

Analysis of Research Question Four

Did female student participants perceive that they had gained competencies through partial participation in Panhellenic Recruitment?

The analysis of withdrawal surveys as compared to pre-tests and post-tests indicate that learning occurred through partial participation in a learning-outcomes-based recruitment model. The findings from the withdrawal-survey sample provide a great deal of information surrounding learning. While this sample was limited, as many participants withdraw from the process without providing any feedback, the analysis of the qualitative findings supported the idea that learning does occur even when the process is not fully completed with all aspects of the curriculum. While quantitative findings indicate that time commitment, finances, and a loss of interest in joining a Panhellenic organization were factors in withdrawing, qualitative measures provide a clearer picture regarding this decision. A significant theme that emerged was that the intention of the participants' engagement was to meet new people, but not join a Panhellenic organization. It was not indicative of a negative experience, but an intention of not joining prior to engagement in the process that influenced withdrawal.

In regard to learning from the experience, the withdrawal-survey sample was not all that different from the post-test sample data. The most significant theme that emerged was positive learning from the experience and positive reflection on the future as a UTC student. One participant that withdrew stated, *“I met some amazing people and honestly learned more about myself and this system – it has made me think hard about my future.”* Another participant who self-selected to withdraw stated, *“I learned that by joining a sorority you get to be involved in so much and get a lot of opportunities to help out with organizations. You get to meet a lot of new people and learn so much from each sorority and what they do and how they contribute their time to community service.”* One participant that withdrew simply stated, *“This is not meant for me.”* The candor in the qualitative analysis of the withdrawal survey sample made coding very simplistic, as this sample was quite small in comparison to the pre-test and post-test samples.

Recommendations for Future Research

The recommendations for future research on this topic are many. It must be acknowledged that the model utilized for this study was peer-facilitated by Undergraduate females in the role of Recruitment Counselors and Active Members of Collegiate Sororities. This includes approximately 500 female students annually that are creating the experience for the potential new members to engage. The learning that is occurring through participation as a Recruitment Counselor and Active Member should be analyzed to best understand the development of female undergraduates throughout collegiate sorority membership.

Learning outcomes and curriculum have been developed and implemented for Recruitment Counselors and Active Members at UTC. Additional staff is required to properly analyze and code the data connected to these populations. A wealth of data exists, but without

proper analysis, very little practice can be informed through research. As UTC continues to grow and develop in regard to enrollment, the number of women engaged in Panhellenic organizational activities will continue to increase. Capturing data regarding student learning through this educational process will better inform student learning and engagement as an institution.

As noted by the researcher, demographic information beyond class-standing (represented by year in undergraduate studies) should be collected on post-tests and withdrawal surveys. Withdrawal surveys should also include the recruitment round at which the student withdrew. This information is critical to understanding the ways in which demographic background influences female student learning.

The learning-outcomes-based model should also be applied to other highly attended student-engagement practices. This could be applied to other organizational contexts that drive predominantly male organizations and/or other predominantly demographic-based fraternal organizations. Cross-comparison by gender and/or predominant ethnic/racial background could greatly influence the ways in which students learn through engagement in experiential-learning opportunities, such as gaining fraternal membership.

Discussion

The timeliness of this study comes at a very interesting time for Fraternity and Sorority Life at UTC. The student experience regarding engagement in fraternal organizations has seen a rapid growth over the course of three years. This coincides with not only enrollment growth, but also with the connection of gaining membership in conjunction with the application of learning outcomes. The researcher notes that undergraduate students may be looking for engagement in

organizations that provide a more meaningful culture of self-growth and discovery. As indicated in the qualitative findings, female students are seeking opportunities to learn and grow in the areas of confidence, self-esteem, values identification, and self-efficacy. Creating experiential-learning opportunities enables college-aged peers the ability to learn and grow through relationships and meaningful conversation. In an age of social media and technology, it is important to observe that this study indicates that college-aged females are seeking learning environments where they can connect on an interpersonal level with their female peers.

Female students engaged in a learning-outcomes-based recruitment model indicated that a great level of discourse is created that supports their development as young females. While the timing of the process may not be ideal for academic achievement, the process in itself positively impacts the personal development of young women. Continued engagement with a learning-outcomes-based recruitment model will serve the female student population at UTC that self-selects to participate annually. Research must be committed to the holistic development of females that continue throughout the alternate levels of membership in recruitment reflected through the roles of Recruitment Counselors and Active Members. Further analysis of this level of involvement of female learners will best inform current practices of engagement of experiential learning at UTC. It would be beneficial to track students throughout their undergraduate studies to better understand the ways in which affiliation with Panhellenic organizations influences academic learning as well as personal growth and development.

Conclusions

The researcher is confident that a learning-outcomes-based recruitment model is a successful indicator of student learning through engagement in experiential activities. As the

curriculum indicates, much of the learning that occurs is through conversation and reflection. Through facilitated leadership-development curriculum, conversation and reflection cannot be controlled by the educator or the learner, as the experience is personalized through Kolb's Experiential Learning Model (1984). This study is complex in regard to no basis for comparison as the primary aspect of assessing Panhellenic Recruitment on other university campuses is based on satisfaction and placement and/or membership statistics. At this time, there is no other documented institution of higher learning that is utilizing a learning-outcomes based recruitment model and/or assessing student learning and engagement through experiential learning activities as connected to Panhellenic Recruitment.

It was the intention of the researcher to formulate learning outcomes connected to a process that was already considered meaningful as indicated by the high numbers of engagement and attendance by UTC-female-undergraduate students. By applying a learning-outcomes based curriculum to a process that already existed, the researcher was provided an opportunity to better understand the learning that occurs among female undergraduates as well as the demographic information of the population of students engaging in the Panhellenic Recruitment process. Essentially, the researcher utilized an opportunity to better assess student learning through engagement that could be connected to curriculum by peer educators to make meaning of an experience that would take place regardless of an educational or assessment intervention.

Through practical application, it should be noted, many universities have been in communication with the UTC Dean of Students Office to learn more about the practice that has been put into place regarding a learning-outcomes-based Panhellenic recruitment model. As retention and engagement of students continue to grow as a hot topic among student affairs professionals, engagement in a learning-outcomes-based recruitment model may influence the

engagement and learning of female students on campuses beyond UTC. It is important to the mission and purpose of women's Panhellenic organizations to better understand the learning that occurs through engagement in recruitment activities. It is also important to institutions of higher learning to ensure that the processes created and supported by higher education professionals reflect those that include student engagement in meaningful ways that support the academic mission of the institution. Assessment of student learning through experiential programs is essential to developing an understanding of the current climate and culture of student learning in higher education.

The greatest area for comparison would be one of two studies. First, a comparison with a peer institution to UTC regarding student learning through engagement in a Panhellenic Recruitment process that is not connected to learning outcomes and leadership development curriculum. Second, a comparative study of a peer institution with a fully implemented learning-outcomes-based panhellenic recruitment model would allow for additional exploration of the research questions guiding this study. Both comparisons would provide equally important analyses of the role of student learning through engagement in experiential learning.

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APPENDIX A
IRB APPROVAL

MEMORANDUM

TO: Sara Jahansouz **IRB: 12-057**
Dr. Jim Tucker

FROM: Lindsay Pardue, Director of Research Integrity
Dr. Bart Weathington, IRB Committee Chair

DATE: March 5, 2012

SUBJECT: Undergraduate Student Learning through Engagement in Experiential Learning Activities

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed and approved your application and assigned you the IRB number listed above. The IRB number listed above must be included on the research materials seen by participants and used in research reports:

The Institutional Review Board of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (FWA00004149) has approved this research project # 12-057

Please remember that you must complete a Certification for Changes, Annual Review, or Project Termination/Completion Form when the project is completed or provide an annual report if the project takes **over one year** to complete. The IRB Committee will make every effort to remind you prior to your anniversary date; however, it is your responsibility to ensure that this additional step is satisfied.

Please remember to contact the IRB Committee immediately and submit a new project proposal for review if significant changes occur in your research design or in any instruments used in conducting the study. You should also contact the IRB Committee immediately if you encounter any adverse effects during your project that pose a risk to your subjects.

For any additional information, please consult our web page <http://www.utc.edu/irb> or email instrb@utc.edu

Best wishes for a successful research project.

APPENDIX B

LEARNING-OUTCOMES-BASED PANHELLENIC RECRUITMENT CURRICULUM

Defining Personal Values

(Influenced by North American Interfraternity Conference – Undergraduate Interfraternity Institute Curriculum, 2004)

Supplies: Work Sheets, pens, post-it notes, and bag for trash

45 min.

Small Group Energizer – Name Aerobics, Baby Shark, Magic Hula Hoop, etc.

What do you want to learn about yourself through your recruitment experience?

Why do you want to be a Sorority Woman at UTC?

What do you hope to gain by being a member of UTC Fraternity and Sorority community?

We're going to be spending a lot of time talking about values throughout the recruitment experience. How do you define values? (Where you spend time and energy should be answer, push back on ideals and values being two different things...Values are defined as where we choose to spend our time and energy, ideals are what we wish we were spending time and energy on.)

How do values impact your day to day life?

What do you value?

Activity – My Values Worksheet (10 minutes)

Pair & Share (10 minutes)

Let's shift directions for a minute...write each value on a post-it note. If you were forced to throw a value away, which one would it be? Why?

What if you had to throw away another value, what would you have left? Why?

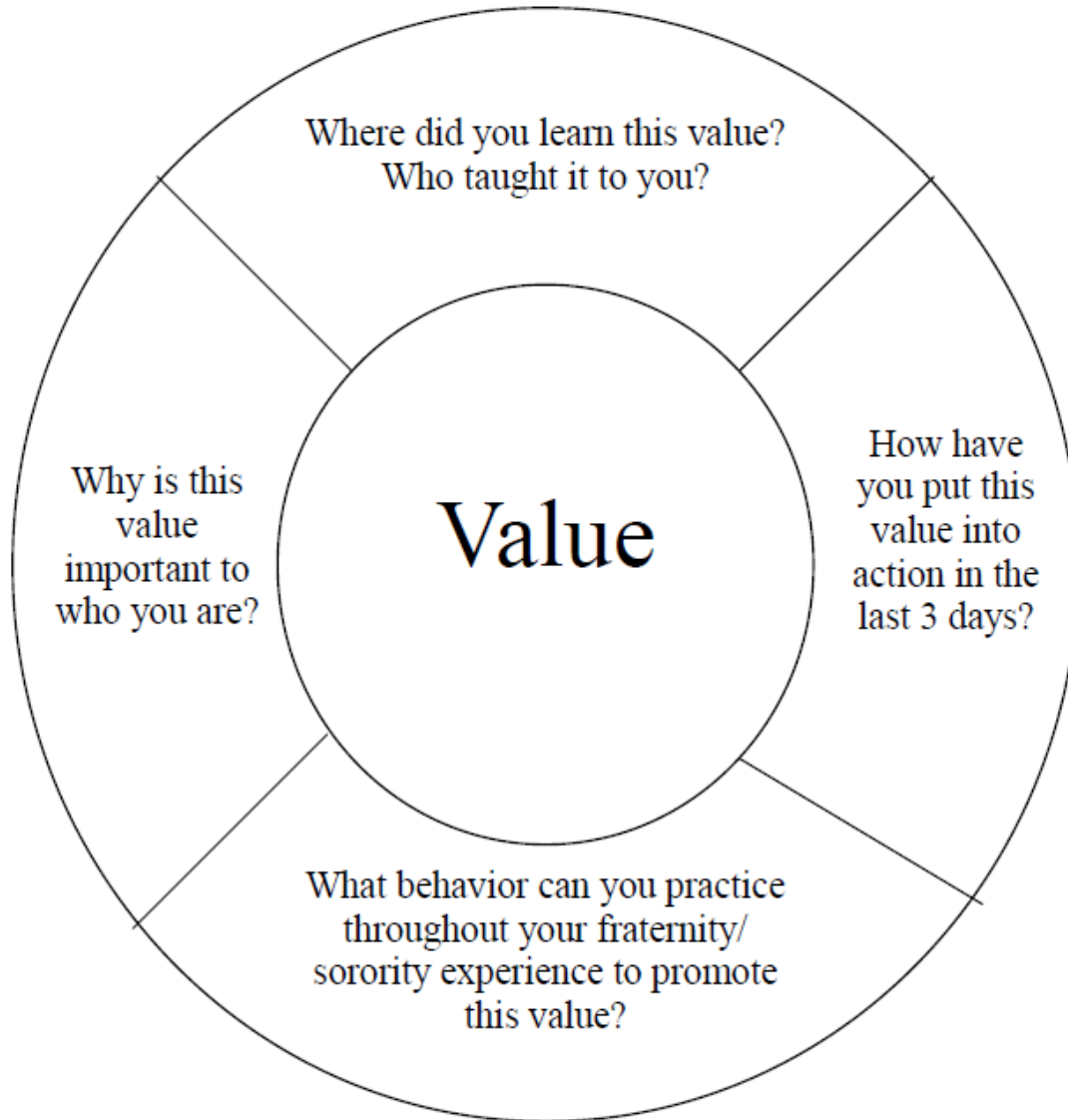
What does it mean to trash your values?

How do we trash our values on a regular basis?

Can you truly value something you don't practice?

Write values on nametag and close with any Q & A!

Inspired by the North American Interfraternity Conference Undergraduate Interfraternity Institute



Inspired by the North American Interfraternity Conference Undergraduate Interfraternity Institute

My Values

Academics

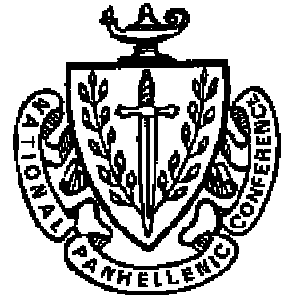
- Learning
- Faith
- Fairness
- Responsibility

Relationships

- Family
- Friendship
- Loyalty
- Truth
- Relationships
- Equality

Personal/Community

- Justice
- Service
- Credibility
- Honesty
- Community
- Hope
- Love
- Accountability
- Health
- Change
- Compassion
- Collaboration
- Harmony
- Ambition
- Advocacy
- Acceptance
- Integrity
- Courage
- Spirituality



Chapter Values Reflection

What are you giving up this week in order to participate in sorority Recruitment?

Do you have any hesitations about participating in this process? Is there anything that makes this experience uneasy for you?

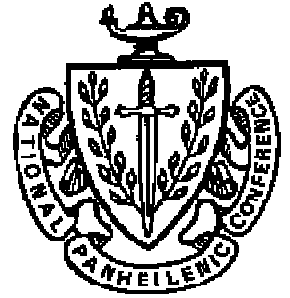
Do you feel like your personal values corresponded with any of the sororities' values? Or its members' values?

What does it mean to be a member of a sorority?

What role will gaining membership in a sorority play in your life?

What do you want to gain by participating in this experience?

Sisterhood Reflection



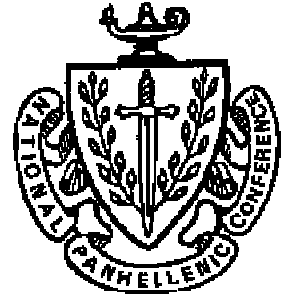
After tonight's activities, how would you define sisterhood?

Why do you think it is important to have sisterhood in a sorority?

How do you think the sororities you visited displayed sisterhood?

Have you ever experienced sisterhood? How did it make you feel?

Civic Engagement Reflection



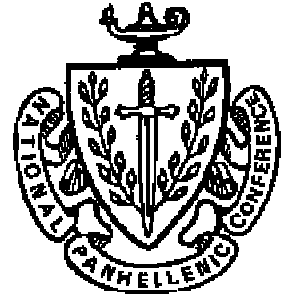
What does it mean to be Philanthropic?

What is the difference between philanthropy and service?

Why do you think Philanthropy is an important part of being a sorority member?

How do you feel about collaborating with a diverse group of people to serve others?

Have you ever participated in community service before? What did you do? How did it make you feel?



Preference Reflection

What factors are you relying on to aide you in making your decisions?

What did you gain by participating in this experience?

How are sorority women relevant in 2010?

What did you enjoy most about this experience?

What did you learn most about yourself through this experience?

APPENDIX C
POTENTIAL NEW MEMBER PRE-TEST

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Panhellenic Recruitment

Potential New Member
Pre-Evaluation

I am a: Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Other

Ethnic/Racial Group I identify with: _____

Highest Education Completed by my Parent(s)/Guardian(s): _____

As of today, my age is: _____

I attended _____ high school

Where did you hear about this event? :

Orientation Website Mail
 Friend Family Other

I am knowledgeable about The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga:

Agree Neutral Disagree

I am knowledgeable about Panhellenic organizations:

Agree Neutral Disagree

I understand UTC Panhellenic Council's definition of a personal value:

Agree Neutral Disagree

I have an understanding of my own personal values:

Agree Neutral Disagree

I understand interpersonal skill development through conversation and relationships:

Agree Neutral Disagree

I was given adequate notice about dates, times, and locations of recruitment events:

Agree Neutral Disagree

Through participation in UTC Panhellenic Recruitment, I hope to learn:

APPENDIX D
POTENTIAL NEW MEMBER POST-TEST

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Panhellenic Recruitment

Potential New Member
Post-Evaluation

I am a: Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Other

I am: _____ years old

I attended _____ high school

I gained knowledge about The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga:

Agree Neutral Disagree

I gained knowledge about Panhellenic organizations:

Agree Neutral Disagree

I have a better understanding of my own personal values:

Agree Neutral Disagree

I gained interpersonal skills through conversation and relationships:

Agree Neutral Disagree

I would recommend this experience to another student:

Agree Neutral Disagree

What did you learn from participating in this experience?

What could have been done differently to make this experience better for you?

Feedback/Suggestions for the future:

APPENDIX E
WITHDRAWAL SURVEY

UTC Panhellenic Recruitment Withdrawal Survey

Classification: ___ Freshman ___ Sophomore ___ Junior ___ Senior

I am _____ Years Old.

Reason for Withdrawal (Check all that apply):

___ Finances ___ Time Commitment ___ No interest in joining ___ Delta Zeta Recruitment

___ Other (Please be specific):

I gained knowledge about The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga:

___ Agree ___ Neutral ___ Disagree

I gained knowledge about Panhellenic organizations:

___ Agree ___ Neutral ___ Disagree

I have a better understanding of my own personal values:

___ Agree ___ Neutral ___ Disagree

I gained interpersonal skills through conversation and relationships:

___ Agree ___ Neutral ___ Disagree

I would recommend this experience to another student:

___ Agree ___ Neutral ___ Disagree

What did you learn from participating in this experience?

What could have been done differently to make this experience better for you?

Feedback/Suggestions for the future:

APPENDIX F

UTC PANHELLENIC RECRUITMENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

UTC Panhellenic Recruitment

What students should learn from participating in Panhellenic Recruitment...

Learning Outcomes for Potential New Members:

1. Develop an appreciation for The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and the fraternity and sorority community.
2. Develop interpersonal skills through conversations and relationships.
3. Identify personal values and apply these values to an organizational experience.

Learning Outcomes for Active Members:

1. Develop interpersonal skills through conversations and relationships.
2. Develop the value of supporting women from all backgrounds and experiences through mutual respect.
3. Communicate the espoused values of the individual's chapter and UTC Fraternity and Sorority Community.

Learning Outcomes for Recruitment Counselors:

1. Develop interpersonal skills through conversations and relationships.
2. Design a facilitated experience that supports growth and learning for potential new members.
3. Communicate the espoused values of the UTC Fraternity and Sorority Community.
4. Develop a personal leadership credo.

How will we know that students are learning something through recruitment?

- Pre- and Post-Evaluations/Tests
- Focus Groups (If time/resources permit)
- Individual Interviews (If time/resources permit)
- Retention/Attainment Tracking (If time/resources permit)
- Diffusion of Innovation...*

APPENDIX G

UTC RECRUITMENT SCHEDULE 2009, 2010, 2011
FIRST WEEK OF FALL ACADEMIC COURSE WORK

Recruitment Schedule – First Week of Fall Semester Classes (2009, 2010, 2011)

Monday – Recruitment 101, UC Auditorium

9:00am – 4:00pm – Nametags & all Recruitment 101 supplies completed

6:00pm – Recruitment 101 Set Up

7:00pm – Recruitment 101

Tuesday – Round 1

Party 1 5:30-6:00

Party 2 6:20-6:50

Party 3 7:10-7:40

Party 4 8:00-8:30

1:00pm – Party List on ICS

3:00pm – Pi Chi's report to Greek Life Offices

4:30pm – All PNM's report to UC Lobby to receive nametags & schedules

Wednesday – Round 1

Party 1 5:30-6:00

Party 2 6:20-6:50

Party 3 7:10-7:40

Party 4 8:00-8:30

6:00am – List Due From Chapters

3:00pm – Pi Chi's report to Greek Life Offices

4:30pm – All PNM's report to UC Lobby to receive nametags & schedules

8:00-11:00pm – PNM Prioritization in UC Computer Lab

Thursday – Round 2

Party 1 5:00-5:40

Party 2 6:00-6:40

Party 3 7:00-7:40

Party 4 8:00-8:40

Party 5 9:00-9:40

6:00am – List Due From Chapters

9:00am – RFM Specialist

1:00pm – Party List on ICS

3:00pm – Pi Chi's report to Greek Life Offices

4:00pm – All PNM's report to UC Lobby to receive nametags & schedules

8:00-11:00pm – PNM Prioritization in UC Computer Lab

Friday – Round 3

Party 1 5:00-5:45

Party 2 6:05-6:50

Party 3 7:10-7:55

Party 4 8:15-9:00

6:00am – List Due From Chapters

10:00am – RFM Specialist

1:00pm – Party List on ICS

3:00pm – Pi Chi's report to Greek Life Offices

4:00pm – All PNM’s report to UC Lobby to receive nametags & schedules
8:00-11:00pm – PNM Prioritization in UC Computer Lab

Saturday – Round 4

Party 1 4:00-5:00

Party 2 5:20-6:20

Party 3 6:40-7:40

Party 4 8:00-9:00

6:00am – List Due From Chapters

8:00 am – RFM Specialist

2:00pm – Pi Chi’s report to Greek Life Offices

1:00pm – Party List on ICS

3:00pm – All PNM’s report to UC Lobby to receive nametags & schedules

4:00-10:00pm – Preference Cards Signed in UC Computer Lab

11:15pm – Bid Lists Due, every one minute past 11:15pm is fined with \$50.00

11:30pm – RFM Specialist

11:30pm – Bid Matching

Bid Day/Running Out the Doors – Sunday – Patton Chapel

9:00am – Pi Chi’s report to Patton Chapel

9:00am – Bid Cards due to Greek Life Office

10:00am – PNM Bid Acceptance

10:30 am – Sororities come to Chapel

11:00am – Running Out the Doors

VITA

Sara Lynne Jahansouz was born in Fort Scott, Kansas and raised in suburbia surrounding the Kansas City, Kansas area. Sara attended Kansas State University studying Biology and Life Sciences where she served in a number of student leadership capacities including chairing a task-force that secured over a million dollars in funding to support a Fraternity and Sorority Life Department staffing five full-time staff members.

Sara earned a Master's Degree in Higher Education and Student Affairs Administration from Indiana University-Bloomington, where she served as the Interfraternity Council Advisor through employment in the Indiana University Student Activities Office. Sara founded the Department of Greek Life for The University of North Carolina at Pembroke (UNCP) as a strategy for improving student retention and degree attainment. Sara earned a second Master's Degree at UNCP in Public Administration with a focus on emergency and crisis management.

Sara currently serves as the Assistant Dean of Students for The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC). Sara has served as a member of the Board for CEOs for Cities Talent Dividend Initiative in Chattanooga; she currently serves on the Region III Board for NASPA as the Fraternity and Sorority Knowledge Community Chair, and was recently named 2012 Professor of the Year by the Student Government Association of UTC. Sara has published research in a number of academic journals as well as facilitated invited presentations, keynotes, and lead session of The LeaderShape Institute across the globe. In her free time, Sara enjoys working with college students in International Environments, travel, and laughter.