

## **Examining and Transforming the Campus Hazing Culture**

*An Initiative of the North American Interfraternal Foundation  
and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators*

**Request Summary:** The consequences of hazing are profound. For individuals, psychological and physical harm are common outcomes—and sometimes hazing can be lethal. For educational institutions, the risks include student attrition, abusive campus climates, and negative publicity to name a few.

Unfortunately, many students and professional staff in colleges and universities are uninformed about the realities of hazing. Stereotypes shape perceptions of hazing as only a problem for Greeks and athletes and/or simply harmless antics and pranks. These views are shortsighted and may jeopardize the health and safety of students affected by hazing in other arenas, and hinder the overall quality of the learning environment in schools and postsecondary institutions.

### **One Tragic Story**

Plattsburgh State University, NY: In 2002 brothers of the Psi Epsilon Chi fraternity house instructed freshman pledge Walter Dean Jennings to drink massive quantities of water through a funnel. His blood thinned, his brain swelled, and he died. Plattsburgh police said the pledge was forced several times during the 10-day pledge period to drink large amounts of water through a funnel until he vomited. The last time, it was fatal.

***Examining and Transforming the Campus Hazing Culture*** is a multi-year initiative that will explore the prevalence and nature of hazing among undergraduate college students. The project will examine hazing behaviors across a broad cross-section of student groups affiliated with diverse postsecondary institutions. The results of this research will serve as a critically needed platform for the development of policies, educational programming, and accountability measures that prevent hazing among higher education institutions as well as secondary schools in the U.S. We will learn new insights about the nature hazing, characteristics of students and institutions most at risk for hazing, factors that facilitate and/or impede the reporting of hazing, and qualities of effective policy and educational efforts designed to prevent hazing.

This project is endorsed by several national organizations, which gathered in March 2003 to review the research prospectus. These include the North American Interfraternal Foundation, National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, National Collegiate Athletic Association, and the Association for Student Judicial Affairs. Other national associations including: American College Personnel Association, National Association of Campus Activities, National Orientation Directors Association, and the National Consortium of Academics and Sports have since agreed to support the project as co-sponsors.

Given The Lloyd G. Balfour Foundation's continuing interest in innovative projects that support education, along with Mr. Balfour's personal involvement in the North American Interfraternal Foundation, we believe that this project merits your thoughtful consideration and respectfully request a grant of \$200,000.

**Need:** News accounts and personal stories increasingly document the problem of hazing among college and university students. Such reports range in nature and severity, but commonly include forced and/or coerced consumption of alcohol, sexual simulations, ingestion of vile substances,

personal servitude, public humiliation, sexual assault, and participation in theft and other illegal activities.

#### **Hazing Defined**

- Involves behavior that is humiliating, degrading, emotionally, and/or physically harmful.
- Participation is expected in order to maintain one's status in a group.
- Occurs regardless of willingness to participate.

Despite the documented problems related to hazing, scholarly attention to this issue remains relatively scant. The most extensive empirical data regarding hazing practices were generated from the Alfred University/NCAA study on college athletes (1999), which found that over 76% of all athletes at more than 1,000 National Collegiate Athletic Association schools experienced some form of sports-related hazing during 1998-99. Other accounts of hazing have been provided by author/journalist Hank Nuwer (1990, 1999, 2000),

and a number of thesis and dissertation studies have focused on hazing in the context of Greek life (Holmes, 1999; Lowery, 1998; Shaw, 1992) and athletics (Johnson, 2000).

The hazing problem in postsecondary education, however, moves well beyond the athletic and fraternal environments, affecting students of diverse identities and experiences. Hazing incidents have been frequently reported in marching bands, theatre groups, ski clubs, freshman camps, orientation groups, residence living units, and other social and academic clubs.

Clearly, more research is needed. Scholars are now considering how hazing is shaped by many social and institutional forces rather than understanding it as solely a problem rooted in personality traits or other individual characteristics. We must clarify the causes, identify environmental and socio-economic factors, and create new strategies for combating these disturbing trends.

**Project Description:** *Examining and Transforming the Campus Hazing Culture* will be the first comprehensive investigation of hazing practices across a broad range of student groups within among diverse postsecondary educational institutions. The following questions will guide the research:

#### **1. Incidence of Hazing**

- a. What is the prevalence of hazing behaviors among undergraduate students at postsecondary institutions in North America?
- b. Does the incidence of hazing behaviors differ among institutional types (i.e. public research universities, private liberal arts colleges)?
- c. Are there regional differences in the incidence of hazing behaviors?
- d. Are there race, gender/sex, cultural, and/or socioeconomic status differences?

#### **2. Nature of Hazing**

- a. What types of hazing practices are experienced?
- b. Does the nature and/or incidence of hazing behaviors differ between types of student groups?
- c. What are students' past experiences of hazing prior to enrollment in postsecondary education?
- d. What factors influence student reporting of hazing initiations?

- e. To what extent do students report being exposed to information about anti-hazing policies, state laws and/or educational programming about hazing?

### 3. Institutional Responses

- a. How do institutions respond to reports of hazing violations?
- b. What are the types of educational efforts and policies related to hazing?
- c. To what extent are postsecondary student affairs administrators prepared to respond to hazing behaviors among students on their campuses?
- d. What is the perceived effectiveness of educational programming and organizational and institutional policies on hazing?

Over the next three years, we will incorporate both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to answer these questions. Quantitative analyses will include basic descriptive and advanced statistical analyses of student responses to a nationally administered web-based survey. Qualitative analyses will be based on data generated from student responses to open-ended survey questions, follow-up individual interviews with undergraduate students who complete the web-based survey, as well as surveys and individual interviews with key student affairs leaders and administrative staff at selected institutions (estimated 10-20 individual interviews at 20 different campuses). Additional data sources include educational and policy documents related to hazing and an archive of U.S. news articles related to hazing from 1998 to the present.

Work products generated by the study will include:

- Reports and research articles for public forums and journals.
- Book on findings from the study with recommendations for action.
- Workshops and multi-media materials for education professionals and general public.
- Conference presentations for scholarly and professional meetings.
- Consultations with school boards, higher education leaders and communities.

The anticipated timeline is as follows:

#### *Pre-Study Tasks: (in process)*

- Refine study design
- Identify samples (student and professional staff) for web-based surveys and interviews
- Determine subject incentives, consent forms, and interview protocols
- Design and conduct pilot study prior to formal investigation to test instruments and data analysis.

#### *Year One:*

- Design and launch study web site
- Administer and analyze web-based survey
- Establish preliminary findings from survey data
- Schedule, conduct, and transcribe interviews

*Year Two:*

- Analyze survey data in-depth
- Analyze interview data
- Prepare reports for public forums
- Write research articles for scholarly forums
- Prepare dissemination plan
- Submit conference proposals

*Year Three:*

- Present research at conferences
- Prepare book proposal
- Write book on findings and recommendations
- Develop and distribute workshop and educational materials
- Submit research articles for publications and continue conference presentation

**Cost Justification:** Project costs are consistent with research projects of similar size and scope. The project's web-based data collection will be anchored to the StopHazing.org site, which will cover webhosting and related expenses. In addition to the Principal Investigator, the project expenses include: salaries for three full-time professional researchers, travel expenses for interviews at selected campuses in different regions of the country, transcription services for interviews. The Center for Research and Evaluation in the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Maine will provide the infrastructure needed for a research study of this magnitude. The Center already employs full-time researchers who would be assigned to this project representing cost savings in hiring and training of staff for the project.

**Project Personnel:** The project will be carried out by Principal Investigator Elizabeth Allan, Ph.D. and Project Director Mary Madden, Ph.D. Dr. Allan is an Assistant Professor in the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Maine where she teaches courses for the Masters and Doctoral degree programs in Higher Educational Leadership. She has been involved in education about hazing since the early 1990s when she proposed and coordinated lobbying efforts for the passage of a statewide anti-hazing law in New Hampshire. She has written a number of essays, book chapters, and encyclopedia entries on the topic of hazing, and is the co-founder and manager of the educational website, [www.StopHazing.org](http://www.StopHazing.org). Dr. Allan has been invited to speak about hazing at colleges, national education conferences, and schools. She has been interviewed about hazing for newspapers and radio shows throughout the country and periodicals including *Sports Illustrated*, *TeenPeople*, *Glamour*, *Rolling Stone*, *British Cosmopolitan*, *Good Housekeeping* and the *Congressional Quarterly*. Her research related to campus climate has been published in the *Harvard Educational Review* (2003) and the *Maine Journal of Education* (forthcoming in Spring 2004).

Dr. Mary Madden is an Assistant Research Professor in the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Maine where she is a faculty member in the Center for Research and Evaluation. She is currently coordinating the evaluation of a school-based initiative in youth suicide prevention and intervention, school-based bullying prevention programs, and several initiatives aimed at improving the health of youth. Her current research project examines how middle level schools can work with girls to: (1) increase their understanding of societal messages and pressures which encourage girl-to-girl meanness, betrayal, and fighting; and (2) encourage girls to build alliances with each other. A Research Advisory Group has been established to inform and guide project design and assist in obtaining project funding. Members include:

- **Louise Kier Zirretta**, professional researcher and Pres., North American Interfraternal Foundation
- **Hank Nuwer**, nationally recognized hazing expert, author of three books on hazing, member of the advisory committee to the 1999 NCAA hazing study, Adjunct Professor at Indiana University-Purdue University and Faculty member at Franklin College (IN)
- **Dr. Judith Ramalay**, Asst. Dir. National Science Foundation and past-President of the University of Vermont
- **Dr. Stephen Sweet**, sociologist, statistician, and author of several articles about hazing, Professor at Ithaca College, NY

- **Timothy Clark**, Expert on programming and education efforts with college athletes, Asst. Dir., Education and Outreach, NCAA
- **Dr. John Zacker**, Pres., Association for Student Judicial Affairs and Dir., Student Discipline, University of Maryland
- **Dr. Gwen Dungy**, Exec. Dir., National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)
- **Dr. Terence Hogan**, Dean of Students, Ohio University, Chair of NASPA Knowledge Community on Fraternity/Sorority Life
- **Dr. Richard McKaig**, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs & faculty member in Student Affairs & Higher Education, Indiana University

The combination of an experienced public research university, highly qualified project personnel, a national advisory team, and the endorsement of several national organizations, offers strong indicators for the success of *Examining and Transforming the Campus Hazing Culture*. With a leadership gift from The Lloyd G. Balfour Foundation, we can shine new light on the causes and impacts of hazing on college students.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

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#### References

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The University of Maine is the state's center for learning, discovery, and service to the public, awarding more undergraduate and graduate degrees than any other higher education institution in the state. Established as a Land Grant University under the Morrill Act in 1862, the University was accorded Sea Grant College status by the Federal Government in 1980. Today, the University offers nearly 160 academic programs of study for undergraduate and graduate students.

#### UMaine Facts

- Undergraduate Enrollment: 8,872
- Graduate Enrollment: 2,250
- Student/Faculty Ratio: 14:1
- Full-Time Faculty: 519
- Part-Time Faculty: 201

As the state's principal research and graduate institution, the University proactively pursues research projects that create new knowledge and technologies in many disciplines including the biological sciences; earth and environmental sciences; economic development; engineering and information technologies; human and animal health; libraries, museums and exhibits; physical sciences; and social sciences and humanities.

The University's Center for Research and Evaluation (CRE) provides schools, communities and public agencies with research, program evaluation, custom-designed studies and informative publications, and serves as a clearinghouse for state and national educational data. CRE's staff of three faculty and seven full-time Research Associates and Assistants are experts in survey design, interview techniques and data analysis strategies proposed for this research.

Co-sponsors for this project include the following organizations:

- **North American Interfraternal Foundation:** NIF is dedicated to promote and support leadership, educational, and research initiatives that advance the North American college fraternal experience.
- **National Association of Student Personnel Administrators:** NASPA provides professional development, promotes exemplary practices, and is a leader in policy development in student personnel administration.
- **National Collegiate Athletic Association:** NCAA is a voluntary association of [about 1,200 colleges and universities, athletic conferences and sports organizations](#) devoted to the sound administration of intercollegiate athletics.
- **Association of Fraternity Advisors:** AFA is an international organization providing resources, recognition and support for campus fraternity/sorority advising professionals.
- **American College Personnel Association:** ACPA fosters college student learning through the generation and dissemination of knowledge, which informs policies, practices and programs for the higher education community.
- **National Association of Campus Activities:** NACA links the higher education and entertainment communities in a business and learning partnership.
- **National Orientation Directors Association:** NODA provides education and leadership in the fields of college student orientation, transition and retention.
- **National Consortium for Academics and Sports:** The mission of the NCAS is to create a better society by focusing on educational attainment and using the power and appeal of sport to positively affect social change.

Fundraising for *Examining and Transforming the Campus Hazing Culture* began in earnest in the 2003. Research was conducted, letters of inquiry were created, and the first full proposal – to The Balfour Foundation – was developed.

A leadership gift from The Lloyd G. Balfour Foundation will not only provide critically needed dollars, but also help to leverage additional support from other prospective grant makers. **The \$200,000 gift from Balfour will fund the personnel, consulting and materials needed to develop and administer the web-based survey and establish preliminary findings from these data.** Additional financial support will be used to fund collection and analysis of data from interviews and to develop educational materials based on the research findings.

Prospect	Amount	Status
100+ fraternal organizations nationwide	500-\$5,000 each	Submit in 2004
American College Personnel Association	\$500	Study sponsor
American College Personnel Association Faculty Research Fund	\$2,500	Submit in 2004
Association of Fraternity Advisors	\$500	Study sponsor
Carlisle Foundation	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit in 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2004</li> </ul>
Lumina Foundation	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit in 2004 as directed</li> </ul>
NASPA Foundation	\$5,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has contributed \$500 as study sponsor.</li> <li>• Submit proposal in 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2004</li> </ul>
National Consortium of Academics and Sports	\$500	Study sponsor
National Orientation Directors Association	\$500	Study sponsor
NCAA research grant	\$25,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has contributed \$500 as study sponsor.</li> <li>• Submit proposal in 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2004</li> </ul>
North American Interfraternal Foundation	\$12,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Received in \$5,000 in 2003; for pre-study tasks including preliminary project design, grant writing, funding research, various consultations</li> <li>• Pledged for 2004; for additional grant writing, travel, and meeting expenses</li> </ul>
Stewart Mott Foundation		Submit in 2004 as directed

**Pilot Study**

Prior to embarking upon the formal investigation, a pilot study will be conducted with representative institutions in various geographic regions. The formative evaluation will test the reliability of the survey instrument and effectiveness of recruitment strategies for respondents and facilitate a trial analysis of the data. The pilot study might also incorporate interview data as well.

**Data Sources**

The following methods will provide data needed to respond to the guiding research goals and questions:

1. Web-based surveys of undergraduate students at sample institutions.
2. Web-based surveys of student affairs and athletics administrators at sample institutions.
3. Follow-up individual, on-campus interviews with undergraduate students at sample institutions.
4. Follow-up individual, on-campus interviews with student affairs and athletics administrators at sample institutions.
5. Educational, training and policy documents from postsecondary institutions.
6. Educational, training and policy documents from national organizations and governing groups linked to postsecondary institutions (i.e. national fraternal groups, NCAA, etc.).
7. Archive of U.S. news articles related to hazing from 1998 to the present.

**Sample and Rationale**

The sample for the web-based surveys and follow-up interviews will draw from two populations: 1) undergraduate students enrolled at representative postsecondary institutions throughout the U.S., and 2) selected student affairs and athletics administrators (i.e. Student Conduct Officers, Deans of Students, Directors and Coordinators of Student Activities, Athletic Directors and Coaches) employed at representative postsecondary institutions throughout the U.S.

1. In order to gain a representative sample of the undergraduate population in the U.S., the *Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education* will be used as a guide for identifying sample sites representing a diverse range of institutional types (i.e. public research/doctoral granting, private research/doctoral granting, master's degree granting public and private, baccalaureate liberal arts, and baccalaureate general) across different regions of the country. The sampling methods will also incorporate a strategy for obtaining data that are representative of gender and racial diversity among students enrolled in U.S. higher education.
2. In order to generate data in reply to research questions included in #3, a sample of student affairs and athletics administrators from the selected institutions (same as those identified for sample #1), will be invited to participate in the study by responding to a survey and/or participating in individual interviews.

Undergraduate students are the focus of the first sample because they represent those most likely to have recent experiences joining or becoming a member of a campus organization or team. First and second year undergraduates are important to the sample because they will be more likely than upper level students to provide retrospective information about their secondary school experiences which may be precursors to hazing behaviors in postsecondary institutions. Upper level students are also important to the sample as they are more likely than early students to have had longer-term exposure to organizational and team cultures at their institution. Selected student affairs and athletics administrators (i.e. Deans of Students, Student Conduct Officers and Student Activities and Greek Life staff, Athletic Directors and Coaches) are the focus of sample #2 because they are the campus officials most likely to have knowledge of institutional policies and practices related to hazing among undergraduate students at their institutions.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

Members of a Research Advisory Committee for the project have been named and will be integral in refining design issues around data collection and subject recruitment.

The data for this study will be collected via a web-based survey to reduce costs and increase response rates through convenience to students who are typically accustomed to using email and the Internet for both academic and social endeavors. The Alfred/NCAA study (1999) provides important design groundwork for developing a survey instrument to gather data on the prevalence and nature of hazing. The survey used in that study can serve as a template for developing the survey instrument for this investigation. Student and institutional incentives will be employed to increase response rates for student surveys. For example, an institutional incentive might be access to the data relative to their student population if their campus achieves a pre-determined response rate goal.

Methods of analysis will include basic descriptive statistics as well as regression analyses to examine differences and patterns among variables. Established methods of qualitative data analysis will be used including both inductive and deductive approaches to coding and categorizing key themes from the interview and open-ended survey data.

### **Outcomes**

It is anticipated that empirical data generated from the study will inform best practices related to the intervention and prevention of hazing including:

- sharpened insights about the nature and prevalence of hazing;
- characteristics of students and institutions most at risk for hazing;
- factors that facilitate and/or impede the reporting of hazing; and
- qualities of effective policy and educational efforts designed to prevent hazing.

Results of the study will be shared with practitioners, scholars and the general public through reports, publications and presentations. Based on the outcomes of the study, the research team will develop and distribute a wide range of educational materials and serve as consultants to support educators with efforts to transform campus hazing cultures.