Innovations in Research and Scholarship Features

Fraternities and Sororities Shaping the Campus Climate of Personal and Social Responsibility

Cassie L. Barnhardt, *University of Iowa*

Data from 9,760 college students on 20 campuses were used to explore the extent to which fraternity and sorority organizations assert an influence over the manner in which students experience the climate for personal and social responsibility while in college. Results demonstrated greater exposure to fraternities and sororities can function to both enhance and detract from the ways in which students experience a climate that reinforces the ideal of contributing to a larger community.

In 2003, 10 college presidents, leaders of higher education associations, and fraternity executives issued a *Call for Values Congruence* to insist upon greater cooperation and commitment from campus administrators, fraternity headquarters, and professional associations to improve the experiences offered by campus fraternal organizations (The Franklin Square Group, 2003). The *Values Congruence* declaration reinforced a prevailing assumption regarding contemporary fraternity advising practice (Association of Fraternity Advisors, 2002; Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education [CAS], 2012): A fraternity and sorority (FS) community is best suited to contribute to the educational community when its culture and climate actively promotes a strong sense of personal and social responsibility (PSR) among members. Despite the call for values to play a prominent role in FS communities, research has often portrayed a culture among affiliated students as inconsistent with the lofty ideals expressed in fraternal missions and creeds, and organizational policies regulating member conduct. Scholarship highlights the pervasiveness of alcohol and drug abuse (Kuh & Arnold, 1993; Weschler, 2001), hazing (Baier & Williams, 1983; Campo, Poulos, & Sipple, 2005; Kimbrough, 2004; Nuwer, 1990, 1999), homogeneity and elitism (Bryan, 1987; Hughes & Winston, 1987; Matthews et al., 2009), sexual abuse or assault (Reeves Sanday, 1992), and anti-intellectualism (Alva, 1998; Kuh & Arnold, 1993; Pascarella et al., 1996) among FS members—all conditions that could be identified as antithetical to fostering a culture that encourages PSR. Undergirding the rhetoric regarding fraternities and sororities are arguments about the relative influence of the organizational culture and climate on members, as well as the influence these groups have on the educational climate writ large.

There is wide agreement that engendering a climate that nurtures PSR is fundamental to fostering change, improving behavior, promoting policy adherence, and decreasing high-risk behavior among affiliated students (Bureau, 2007; CAS, 2012). There is limited evidence detailing the manner in which FS membership contributes to how all students experience the campus climate of PSR. This analysis is designed to illuminate these issues by asking: (a) Do FS members' perspectives diverge from other students' with respect to their desire to be a part of a campus that supports PSR?, (b) Is the peer climate for PSR notably different for FS members?, and (c) How does the FS culture shape the climate of contributing to a larger community (CLC)?

Relevant Literature

Aside from the previously mentioned findings regarding the potentially high-risk climate of FS membership; other data suggest the climate within fraternities and sororities can function to bolster college persistence (Astin, 1984; McClure, 2006) or increase students' overall levels of satisfaction with the college experience (North-American Interfraternity Conference, 2002; Thorson, 1997). Some research has demonstrated that students' cognitive engagement is notably different for FS members compared to unaffiliated students (Hayek, Carini, O'Day, & Kuh, 2002; Martin, Hevel, Ansel, & Pascarella, 2011; Pascarella et al., 1996; Pascarella, Flowers, & Whitt, 2001, 2006; Pike, 2000, 2003). There is also evidence that FS members are more involved in philanthropic, volunteer, or service activities compared to their unaffiliated peers (Hayek et al., 2002; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

To date, few studies (mostly qualitative) have focused on deciphering the connections between the culture of FS organizations and the campus climate of PSR. Matthews et al. (2009) observed FS members' public behaviors to be contrary to the rhetoric of their organizational values. Mathiasen's (2004, 2005) case analysis of a fraternity chapter provided evidence that organizations can offer members models of moral character. In Jackson and Iverson's (2009) single-campus study of 16 affiliated students, they observed members receiving inconsistent lessons on citizenship. These studies have provided an introduction to the PSR culture and climate as it relates to fraternities and sororities, but cross-case analyses are needed to begin identifying larger patterns at work.

Conceptual Constructs

Theoretically, organizational culture and climate are distinctive (Peterson, 1988; Peterson & Spencer, 1990), but have been used interchangeably when discussing the importance of understanding pervasive social views, assumptions, or collective history and contexts that permeate the community of FS members in a chapter or on college campuses broadly. It is well established that the culture of an organization impresses a dominant mode of interpreting and understanding organizational phenomena over time (Becher, 1984; Clark, 1972; Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Schein, 1992; Tierney, 1988). Schein specifically argues that the premise upon which an organization was founded leads to implicit and normative perspectives that endure over the course of an organization's existence. Guiding organizational assumptions provide cognitive stability and manifest in practices, interactions, interpretations, and the way a group chooses to react to its circumstances and environment throughout time. FS leaders point to founding mission statements, creeds, or oaths as evidence of an underlying culture that nurtures ideals such as truth, integrity, honesty, and compassion for others—ideals that are concomitant with PSR and educationally compatible with fostering students' ethical development (Earley, 1998).

Climate is distinct from culture although these concepts are inextricably linked. Climate is a snapshot in time of the manifest behaviors and attitudes born from the enduring organizational

culture, but shaped by the present social conditions, environmental realities, and structural forms to which it adheres or is subjected (Peterson & Spencer, 1990). Compared to the enduring nature of organizational culture, climate is penetrable, and is likely to modify as institutional goals and functions shift, decision patterns change, teaching and learning patterns evolve, and participant behaviors and interactions alter (Peterson & Spencer, 1990). Perhaps the penetrable aspect of climate is one reason why FS administrators work towards changing it in ways more compatible with PSR.

Peterson and Spencer (1990) recommend that any inquiries focused on understanding climate and culture should examine certain properties - *clarity*, *consensus*, *congruence*, and *strength*. *Clarity* addresses the specific content of the climate; *consensus* represents the extent to which members' hold similar beliefs about the climate; and *congruence* is the relative degree of compatibility of members' personal values with the climate. The *strength* of a culture or climate integrates the prior three properties and speaks to how much a certain climate or culture subsequently shapes behavior.

Method

The four properties of culture and climate—*clarity, consensus, congruence,* and *strength*—provide the framework for assessing the role of fraternities and sororities in fostering a PSR climate. The study proceeds by examining the climate for each of the five PSR dimensions according to distinctive campus cultural contexts—communities without social fraternities and sororities; communities of unaffiliated students on campuses where FS organizations are present; and communities of FS members. Data and analyses were chosen to evaluate the relative favorability of strong support for each PSR dimension within these distinctive cultures by examining normative aspirations and impressions (*clarity* and *consensus* of the climate), and prior commitments (*congruence*) to the five PSR dimensions. In the second phase of the study the focus narrows to the dimension of CLC, on account of CLC being (relative to the other dimensions) operationally most closely tied to acting with awareness beyond one's self (Reason, 2013). Here, the data and analyses were selected to decipher the relative influence of a particular FS culture (or lack thereof) and its accompanying normative climate over individual student behavior, thus evaluating the *strength* of the culture and climate in cultivating the CLC PSR dimension.

Data and Sample

The Personal and Social Responsibility Institutional Inventory (PSRI) was designed for the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) *Core Commitments* initiative to gauge the degree of support for PSR on college campuses (Barnhardt, Antonaros, Holsapple, Ott, & Dey, 2010). The PSRI dimensions—(a) striving for excellence, (b) cultivating personal and academic integrity, (c) CLC, (d) taking seriously the perspectives of others, and (e) developing competence in ethical and moral reasoning—were determined by a team of leading scholars and advisors to AAC&U (2006a), and informed by an examination of the psychological and developmental literatures (Swaner, 2004). The PSRI student survey consisted of approximately 150 items, including: (a) *attitudinal items,* measuring one's agreement on a four-point scale; (b) *behavioral items,* measuring the frequency one experienced or observed a particular campus phenomenon on a three-point scale; and (c) *open-ended items* (Barnhardt et al., 2010). Demographic items gathered information about students' backgrounds and campus experiences.

PSRI data were collected in the fall of 2007 from campuses that AAC&U selected for their prior efforts to support PSR. In total, students from 23 campuses participated. Three campuses were dropped; the two military academies because they were outliers conceptually in this fraternal

context, and another campus that employed a unique data collection strategy. Although the sample was not intended to be representative of the universe of higher education, it included public, private, community colleges, sectarian institutions, large research, and regional comprehensive institutions (Barnhardt et al., 2010). Response rates varied by campus from 4.1% to 92.2% with an overall rate of 14.8% (Barnhardt et al., 2010) consisting of 9,760 cases of useable data. Probability weights (Barnhardt et al., 2010) were applied to assure that the representation of students in the sample mirrored the racial, gender, and class-year composition on each campus. This resulted in a weighted total of 9,034 cases.

Cultural contexts. In total, 7,551 students (representing 17 campuses) attended college where FS organizations existed. On FS campuses 1,324 respondents self-identified as members, labeled "FS-Members" (14.7% of sample). The nonmember students on FS campuses were classified as "FS-Unaffiliated" (68.9% of sample). The remaining 1,484 students were labeled "Non-FS" (16.4% of sample) on account of attending campuses without FS organizations; this group represented a cross-section of the broader sample with private, public, and denominational institutions. A 3-level variable was generated according to the amount of exposure students had to FS culture, with Non-FS coded 1, FS-Unaffiliated coded 2, and the FS-Member group coded 3 (M = 1.98, SD = 0.56, Table 1).

Measuring Campus Climate by Cultural Context

The *clarity* and *consensus* of the PSR climate in each cultural context (Non-FS; FS-Unaffiliated; FS-Member) were examined using two attitudinal items from each dimension. Items reflected respondents' level of agreement regarding whether each PSR dimension *should be* a major focus on campus, and whether said dimension *is currently* a major focus on campus (Table 1). Together, these 10 survey items have been used as overall indicators of the PSR climate (Dey, Antonaros, Ott, Barnhardt, & Holsapple, 2010; Dey, Barnhardt, Antonaros, Ott, & Holsapple, 2009; Dey, Ott, Antonaros, Barnhardt, & Holsapple, 2010). Analyses compared the percentage of "strongly agree" responses within each group (Non-FS, FS-Unaffiliated, FS-Member) using cross-tabulations and χ^2 statistical tests, and one-way ANOVAs with orthogonal contrasts.

Congruence of the climate (the relative match between the personal values of people within a particular organizational context, and values espoused by the organization) was evaluated using five survey items (one per dimension) measuring students' precollege PSR commitments. Items included self-ratings of the extent to which one came to college: "with a strong work ethic," "a well-developed sense of personal and academic integrity," "aware of the importance of contributing to the greater good through my community involvement," respecting "different perspectives from my own," and "a well-developed capacity for moral and ethical reasoning" (Table 1). Analyses compared the percentages of "strongly agree" for each item according to FS context, again using cross-tabulations and one-way ANOVAs.

Measuring Strength of Culture and Climate

Isolating distinctive aspects of climate and culture is useful, but understanding the extent to which climate influences individual outcomes is a marker of its relative *strength*. This set of analyses applied an outcomes-based approach involving OLS regression modeling to evaluate the effect of the FS climate (or lack thereof), alongside more typical measures used in college outcomes research including: students' personal characteristics, campus characteristics, student experiences (Astin, 1984, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), and perceptions of PSR. Such an I-E-O (inputs-environments-outcomes) approach to college outcomes research holds that what a student gains

Table 1

Variables and Descriptive Statistics

Cultural Context	Mean	SD
Fraternity-Sorority Context (Non-FS, 1; FS-unaffiliated, 2; FS-member, 3)	1.98	0.56
Clarity and Consensus: Impressions and Aspirations of PSR Climate		
Work ethic *is* a major focus of this campus.	3.23	0.74
Work ethic *should be* a major focus of this campus.	3.62	0.59
Personal and academic integrity *is* a major focus of this campus.	3.43	0.66
Personal and academic integrity *should* be a major focus of this campus.	3.70	0.53
*Contributing to a larger community *is* a major focus of this campus[b].	3.25	0.74
*Community *should be* a major focus of this campus[b].	3.54	0.62
Taking seriously the perspectives of others *is* a major focus of this campus.	3.17	0.72
Taking seriously the perspective of others *should be* a major focus of this campus.	3.56	0.60
Ethical and moral reasoning *is* a major focus of this campus.	3.09	0.74
Ethical and moral reasoning *should be* a major focus of this campus.	3.46	0.68
Congruence: Precollege PSR Commitments		
I came to college with a strong work ethic.	3.40	0.74
I came to college with a well-developed sense of personal and academic integrity.	3.73	0.50
*I came to college aware of the importance of contributing to the greater good through my community involvement.	3.33	0.70
I respected perspectives different from my own when I first came to college.	3.53	0.62
I came to college with a well-developed capacity for moral and ethical reasoning.	3.52	0.59
Strength: CLC Dimension		
*I have meaningful discussions with other students about the need to contribute to the larger community.[c]	1.91	0.69
*This campus has helped me learn the skills necessary to effectively change society for the better.[b]	3.10	0.83
*My commitment to change society for the better has grown during my time on campus.[b]	3.15	0.82
*Male[a]	0.44	0.50
*Class-year (first-year, 1; sophomore, 2; junior, 3; senior, 4)	2.62	1.12
*Age (18–24, 1; 25–30, 2; 31–40, 3; 41–50, 4; 51+, 5)	1.19	0.63
*Minority[a]	0.26	0.44
*Parental education level[d]	6.37	1.78
*Campus Size (1,000s)	12.28	11.04
*Acceptance rate (%)	69.60	12.43
*Mean SAT	1034	293
*Time volunteering[d]	1.80	1.07
*Studying abroad[a]	0.10	0.30
*Working[a]	0.61	0.49
*Engaging with faculty[a]	0.73	0.44
*Students publicly advocate the need for other students to become active and involved citizens.[c]	1.63	0.61

Notes: *CLC dimension measure; ~= (a) dummy; (b) 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree; (c) 1 = never, 2 = occasionally, 3 = frequently; (d) ordered increasing scale

from college is a function of background and involvement during college, or how much time and/or psychological effort is expended on educational or enriching experiences (Astin, 1984, 1993).

Three outcomes addressed the CLC PSR dimension, the dimension most focused on social responsibility (Reason, 2013), and reflected students' self-reported views of their behavior and growth, including: (a) how often students had meaningful discussions with their peers about contributing to the greater good, (b) how strongly they agreed that they had learned skills necessary to effectively change society for the better, and (c) deepened their commitments to changing society for the better while in college. These outcomes were featured in other similar work using the PSRI (Dey et al., 2009). Independent variables were conceptualized into five blocks. Block 1 was the FS cultural context variable. Block 2 included student characteristics, with dummies for gender and race, and ordinal variables for a student's class-year, age, and parents' level of educational attainment. Block 3 concerned campus characteristics, including factors identified as important covariates for a range of college outcomes (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), such as campus mean SAT score, percentage acceptance rate, and enrollment size. Block 4 addressed students' experiences, with dummies for studying abroad, working (full or part-time), or interacting with faculty; and a variable for time spent volunteering. The fifth block accounted for students' perceptions of the CLC dimension, including students' level of precollege commitment, the aspirations for and impressions of the campus on this dimension, and students' views on the extent to which their peers "publicly advocate for the need for other students to become active and involved citizens" (Table 1). Correlations were generated among all variables, and variance inflation factor (VIF) scores were calculated to determine the measures were appropriate regression modeling. All VIF scores were less than 1.0, far below the recommended limit of 10 (O'Brien, 2007).

Limitations

Since this study involves data gathered in 2007 from campuses that were selected for their prior commitments towards advancing PSR ambitions, one might interpret this sample as possessing novel characteristics that preclude its generalizability. Notably measures obtained in 2007 may not reflect current conditions. As such, any adjustments to practice must be made with conventional administrative finesse. Regarding the fact that sample campuses had already made PSR commitments, the sample is unique. Even so, the *Core Commitment* campuses reflect the popularity of sentiments that have been growing for PSR. An additional 100 campuses applied but were not selected to participate in the 2007 survey. More than 300 college and university presidents expressed commitments to advance the five dimensions in undergraduate education (AAC&U, 2006b). Campuses that are most inclined to act based on the results of this study are also likely to have made deliberate decisions to promote PSR, like campuses in the sample.

Results

Clarity and Consensus

With respect to all five PSR dimensions, all groups expressed strong agreement that the PSR dimensions *should be* a major focus on campus (Table 2), with agreement ranging between 52% to 75%. Even in the presence of mutual agreement on PSR ambitions, FS members (compared to unaffiliated students, and students on Non-FS campuses) were less likely to report their campuses *are currently* placing a major emphasis on CLC, taking seriously the perspectives of others, or developing competence in ethical and moral reasoning. A significantly smaller share of FS members expressed strong agreement with these statements (35.8%, 27.9%, and 24.5%, respectively for these items). Regarding the striving for excellence and cultivating personal and academic integrity dimensions, no significant differences were observed between FS members and their unaffiliated

Table 2

Percentage of "Strongly Agree" by FS Context Across PSR Dimensions

	FS Campuses				
	FS-Unaffiliated[a]	FS-Members [a]	FS Total	Non-FS [b]	Total
Striving for excellence					
Is	36.9%	37.0%	**36.9%**	43.1%***	**37.9%**
Should be	64.4%*	67.5%	**64.9%**	68.8%**	**65.6%**
Cultivating personal and academic integrity					
Is	48.3%	49.3%	**48.5%**	62.7%***	**50.8%**
Should be	71.5%	70.7%	**71.3%**	75.2%**	**72.0%**
Contributing to a larger community					
Is	38.9%**	34.8%	**38.2%**	54.6%***	**40.9%**
Should be	59.3%	58.7%	**59.2%**	62.3%*	**59.7%**
Taking seriously the perspectives of others					
Is	32.9%***	27.9%	**32.0%**	34.5%**	**32.4%**
Should be	60.1%*	56.8%	**59.5%**	59.4%	**59.5%**
Developing competence in ethical and moral reasoning					
Is	28.0%**	24.5%	**27.4%**	32.1%***	**28.2%**
Should be	53.2%	52.5%	**53.0%**	56.9%**	**53.7%**

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$; (a) Significance indicators compare FS-Unaffiliated with FS-Members; (b) Significance indicator compares Non-FS with FS Total

peers. Students on Non-FS campuses had greater clarity and consensus around the extent to which their campuses *are currently* upholding the five PSR dimensions, evidenced by higher percentages of "strongly agree" that each PSR dimensions *is currently* a major focus on campus. The Non-FS group also reported slightly higher PSR aspirations with respect to striving for excellence, academic integrity, CLC, and ethical and moral reasoning (68.8%, 75.2%, 62.3%, and 56.9% respectively, see Table 2).

Congruence

In Table 3, findings reveal that significantly higher percentages of students attending FS campuses came to college placing a high value (responding "strongly agree") on the PSR dimensions of academic integrity (75.7%), diverse perspectives (59.8%), and ethical and moral reasoning (57.7%), compared to their peers on Non-FS campuses (71.6%, 54.3%, and 52.6% respectively). Compared to all groups, the FS-unaffiliated group expressed the greatest overall congruence on the diverse perspectives (60.4%) and ethical and moral reasoning (58.4%) dimensions prior to attending college.

Even given the differences associated with FS context, it is noteworthy that the majority of students strongly agreed (greater than 50%) the PSR values they held prior to college were largely consistent with the PSR dimensions their campuses were pursuing in the *Core Commitments* initia-

Table 3

Students' Perceptions of Precollege PSR Commitments

	FS Campuses				
	FS-Unaffiliated	**FS-Members**[a]	**FS Total**	**Non-FS**[b]	**Total**
Striving for excellence					
I came to college with a strong work ethic.					
	55.0%***	49.4%	**54.0%**	52.2%	**53.7%**
Cultivating personal and academic integrity					
I came to college with a well-developed sense of personal and academic integrity.					
	76.0%	74.3%	**75.7%**	71.6%**	**75.0%**
Contributing to a larger community					
I came to college aware of the importance of contributing to the greater good through my community involvement.					
	45.0%	45.8%	**45.2%**	43.3%	**44.9%**
Taking seriously the perspectives of others					
I respected perspectives different from my own when I first came to college.					
	60.4%*	56.9%	**59.8%**	54.3%**	**58.9%**
Developing competence in ethical and moral reasoning					
I came to college with a well-developed capacity for moral and ethical reasoning.					
	58.4%**	54.3%	**57.7%**	52.6%**	**56.8%**

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$; (a) Significance indicators compare FS-Unaffiliated with FS-Members; (b) Significance indicator compares Non-FS with FS Total

tive. The only exception to this pattern was in the CLC dimension, where on average just 44.9% of students strongly agreed that they were aware of this PSR dimension before college. The CLC dimension was the only dimension without differences according to FS context. All students were equally unaware of the importance of CLC before college. This finding suggests: (a) the climate is congruent across differing campus cultures, and (b) college students are the most naïve about the importance of CLC as a component of PSR.

Even though students' precollege CLC commitments did not differ, Table 2 provides evidence of other differences on this dimension. A much larger percentage of students on Non-FS campuses, 54.6%, strongly agreed that their campus *is currently* helping students to learn about CLC, compared to only 38.2% of students on FS campuses (Table 2). These data suggest the degree of consensus regarding how effective the campus climate is in teaching students about CLC is quite different based on the presence or absence of fraternities and sororities.

With evidence indicating that students entered college with similar precollege PSR commitments, analyses were performed to further understand students' impressions of their campus climates according to FS context. Gap scores for the five dimensions were generated to calculate the difference between a student's PSR aspiration ("*should be*") and his or her interpretation of reality ("*is*"). Each calculation yielded either: (a) no difference, signifying a student's impression of campus reality being equivalent to his or her PSR aspiration; (b) a positive difference, demonstrating a student's aspiration for PSR exceeding his or her perception of how well the campus was uphold-

Figure 1. Gap between students' aspirations and impressions.

- ■ Aspiration Exceeds Reality
- ■ Aspiration Equals Reality
- ■ Aspiration Lower than Reality
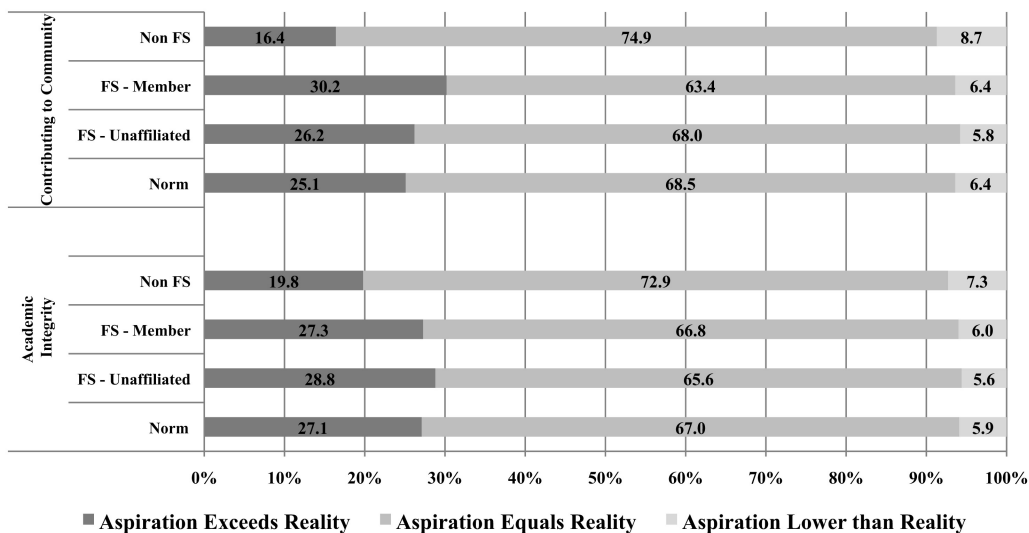
ing the dimension in reality; or (c) a negative difference, indicating a student's aspiration being lower than his or her impression of the reality of the PSR dimensions on campus. These differences were compared according to FS context, with significant differences for two of the five dimensions (academic integrity and CLC, see Appendix). Figure 1 offers a picture of the relative size of these aspiration-impression gaps. Figure 1 denotes that FS member, by comparison, had the largest share of students (30.2%) whose aspirations for CLC exceeded their impressions of the current reality on campus. The Non-FS group was most inclined to find no difference between their aspirations and the reality on campus, relative to academic integrity and CLC. For these two dimensions, Figure 1 highlights FS-Members' relative pessimism compared to their peers, where FS-Members were inclined to report that the quality of the campus climate fell below their aspirations.

Strength: CLC Dimension

Regression models accounted for a substantial proportion of the variance in the three CLC outcomes. Results ranged from $R^2 = 0.23$ (meaningful discussions), to $R^2 = 0.35$ (skills), and $R^2 = 0.30$ (commitments), see Table 4. Students' perceptions (block 5) accounted for most of the variance in the outcomes compared to all other blocks (Table 4), where the change in the effect size from blocks 4 to 5 increased in all three models with $\Delta R^2 = 0.146$ for the meaningful discussions model, $\Delta R^2 = 0.295$ for the skills model, and $\Delta R^2 = 0.242$ for the commitments model (Table 4).

With students' perceptions (block 5) accounting for the greatest proportion of the variance in the outcomes, the magnitude and direction of these variables are noteworthy (see Table 5). First, students' beliefs regarding the extent to which the campus *is currently* ($\beta = -0.022$) and *should be* ($\beta = -0.115$) focusing on the CLC dimension had a negative relationship to how frequently students engaged in meaningful discussions with their peers regarding contributing to the greater good (holding other variables constant). This negative pattern was the same for students' precollege CLC commitments ($\beta = -0.176$) and their inclination to engage in meaningful discussions about the greater good (Table 5). The inverse was true for the other outcomes. Students' precollege CLC commitments and their aspirations and impressions for the campus climate were positively as-

Table 4

FS Context Coefficients and Model Fit Statistics for CLC Dimension Outcomes

Block	R	Adjusted R^2	R^2 Change	β Coefficient for FS Context
DV: PSR Meaningful discussions				
1	0.003	0.002	0.003***	-0.051***
2	0.008	0.007	0.005***	-0.049***
3	0.010	0.009	0.003***	-0.049***
4	0.083	0.081	0.072***	-0.025*
5	0.228	0.227	0.146***	-0.027**
DV: PSR Skills				
1	0.001	0.001	0.001**	-0.026*
2	0.007	0.006	0.006***	-0.023*
3	0.022	0.021	0.015***	-0.005
4	0.056	0.055	0.034***	-0.022*
5	0.351	0.350	0.295***	0.013
DV: PSR commitments				
1	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
2	0.004	0.003	0.004***	0.000
3	0.013	0.012	0.009***	0.011
4	0.060	0.059	0.048***	-0.009
5	0.303	0.301	0.242***	0.017

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$; Blocks: (1) FS context, (2) student characteristics, (3) campus characteristics, (4) campus experiences, (5) PSR perceptions

sociated with students reporting that college had helped them acquire skills and commitments for changing society for the better (holding other variables constant, see Table 5). Students' perceptions of how frequently peers' advocated for active and involved citizenship was positively associated with engaging in meaningful discussion ($β = 0.240$) with peers, and negatively associated with acquiring skills ($β = -0.214$) and commitments ($β = -0.191$) for contributing to the greater good, holding all other variable constant (Table 5).

Effects of FS culture. The effect size of block 1 (Table 4), which considered only the FS context, explained little of the overall variance in the three outcomes. Block 1 was significant for the meaningful discussions and skills models only ($R^2 = 0.003$, $p < 0.001$; $R^2 = 0.001$, $p < 0.05$, respectively). In Table 4, β coefficients indicate the effect of the FS context variable was most pronounced in the meaningful discussions model, with negative coefficients across all five iterations. In the skills model the influence of the FS context had a slightly negative influence (holding everything constant), but these effects were confined to the blocks that included student characteristics and experiences (Table 4).

Table 5

Regression Coefficients Examining the FS Context on CLC Dimension Outcomes

Variable	Meaningful Discussions	Skills	Commitments
	β	β	β
1: FS Context	-0.027**	0.013	0.017
2: Student Characteristics			
Male	-0.016*	0.036***	0.023*
Class-year	-0.001	0.011	0.045**
Age	0.038***	-0.030***	-0.029**
Minority	-0.035***	0.038***	0.039***
Parental education	0.015	-0.044***	-0.036***
3: Campus Contexts			
Size	-0.022*	-0.041***	-0.014
Acceptance rate	-0.004	0.033**	0.019*
Mean SAT	0.009	-0.005	-0.003
4: Student Experiences			
Time volunteering	-0.148***	0.069***	0.098***
Studying abroad	0.039***	-0.007	-0.002
Working	-0.015	-0.009	0.000
Engaging with faculty	-0.104***	0.058***	0.075***
5: PSR Perceptions			
Precollege CLC commitment	-0.176***	0.126***	0.111***
CLC is major focus	-0.022*	0.348***	0.250***
CLC should be major focus	-0.115***	0.090***	0.174***
Students publicly advocate the need for other students to become active and involved citizens	0.240***	-0.214***	-0.191***
Constant	0.000***	0.000***	0.000***
Full Model R^2=	0.228***	0.351***	0.303***
Adjusted R^2=	0.227***	0.350***	0.301***

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$; *Note.* Covariates entered simultaneously.

Discussion

Findings demonstrate the FS context has a distinctive role in cultivating a particular type of PSR climate. Campuses with FS organizations tended to attract a larger share of students who already possessed PSR commitments on four of the five dimensions, thus cultivating a climate comprised of students who already hold *congruent* PSR ambitions. Campuses without FS organizations tended to foster a strong sense of *consensus* and *clarity*. There was a large measure of uniformity among Non-FS students that PSR is something their campuses should strive for, and that the current climate conformed to these aspirations.

Although there were climate differences according to the FS context across several dimensions, there was strong *consensus* among all students that cultivating personal and academic integ-

rity was an important PSR aspiration. Students generally reported desiring a campus climate that encouraged personal and academic integrity; students on campuses with FS organizations were most inclined to view the current climate as not living up to these ambitions. A similar pattern emerged for the CLC dimension, only it was more isolated to FS members, with their aspirations exceeding their impression of how well the current climate affirmed CLC. This finding contributes to the idea that the culture of fraternities and sororities produces a distinctive PSR climate that is functionally different from the PSR climate cultivated among unaffiliated students or by students on Non-FS campuses. This finding raises important questions about the role of aspirations and collective ambitions within a community. Does an under-match between the evaluation of the status quo and aspirations for the community implicate the climate as being somehow deficient for having not generated parity; or does it provide evidence that the climate cultivates a sense of productive discontent that implies there's more to accomplish?

A partial answer to this question can be gleaned from some of the evidence about the relative *strength* of a distinctive FS culture with respect to the CLC outcomes. For all students, data revealed that the climate perception variables explained the bulk of the variance in the three outcomes, thus signaling that perceptions are important elements for fostering a PSR climate. Conceptually, the *strength* of a unique climate is the degree to which it shapes behavior (Peterson & Spencer, 1990). For FS members, the FS climate prompted two particular behaviors: (a) members tended to participate in fewer meaningful conversations with peers about contributing to the greater good; and (b) members' CLC commitments grew in a more pronounced manner relative to their unaffiliated peers or students on Non-FS campuses. Understanding that perceptions contribute largely to students' PSR, coupled with knowledge that FS members' perceptions are distinctive by virtue of a comparatively large share of them holding PSR aspirations that exceed their impressions of reality, it is possible to extrapolate how FS culture uniquely shapes the PSR climate. The FS perception is educationally productive for fostering a PSR climate that emphasizes CLC. For FS members' this gap protects them from declines in the meaningful discussions outcome, and the gap also accentuates the extent to which they develop CLC commitments. Regarding fraternities and sororities, fostering a PSR climate occurs by helping students identify inconsistencies between their espoused values and everyday actions and experiences; as well as encouraging them to seek models outside their own communities that could amplify PSR aspirations.

Implications and Conclusion

This study reveals how perceptions can operate as a resource for educating students in the FS context. The first order work in cultivating PSR on campus is pursued by administrators and FS leaders deliberately promoting campus-wide PSR initiatives. An important start is ensuring FS members have redundant and direct knowledge of all campus PSR efforts including educational panels, course offerings, service and public outreach programs, community aid work, or campus sustainability efforts. Publicizing PSR initiatives is perhaps the easy part, assuming local campus norms of communication are followed (e.g., being savvy to students' use of social media, classroom message boards, residence or dining promotions, kiosks, bus stops, direct marketing, etc.). The more critical aspects of publicizing campus PSR efforts are pursued by deliberately and clearly labeling initiatives as being valuable *because* of the PSR focus. Sharing details of campus happenings (time, place, sponsors) should be supplemented with a motivating rationale—the PSR rationale. A concerted PSR focus will (a) foster a coherent narrative about the range of actions and issues that constitute PSR and (b) support the cultivation of positive perceptions regarding the campus climate for PSR. Effective framing is an antecedent to both cultivating perceptions and eliciting participation on behalf of a common goal (Benford & Snow, 2000).

Administrators and FS leaders must engage in such active PSR framing to shape perceptions. Campus-wide PSR promotion to the FS community is achievable through discursive processes as well. Discursive efforts have been pursued by several of the *Core Commitments* campuses who brought greater attention to PSR, through a series of sustained dialogue programs focused on bringing campus members together to deliberate civic or social issues (see AAC&U, 2010). Dialogic approaches based on a topic of mutual interest are foundational in cultivating collective sentiments and action within interest groups (Benford & Snow, 2000). Discursive processes connect and align "events and experiences so that they hang together in a relatively unified and compelling fashion" (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 623) and become a cultural resource. Sustained discourse that frames community issues through a PSR lens engenders mutual commitment for PSR.

This study demonstrates that fostering a strong climate for PSR in fraternities and sororities is dependent on members' positive aspirations and critical assessment of reality. Striving for something better, and being able to notice the inconsistencies in the current environment, helps all students, but it is especially useful for FS members when it comes to the CLC dimension. Educators would be wise to reconsider administrative philosophies or procedures that willfully separate these groups from routine campus activities, functions, or practices. Partitioning out administrative support services (campus recognition, finance, housing, judicial matters, social event planning, etc.) may have the effect of separating FS groups from the rest of campus. Any separation could result in members being less aware or invested in the broader community, and therefore less able to observe inconsistencies between the FS culture and the broader environment. What is good for the campus writ large is good for fraternities and sororities in terms of helping fostering PSR. Any barriers that prevent fraternities and sororities from viewing themselves as mutual contributors to the larger campus community should be questioned.

References

Association of American Colleges and Universities. (2006a). *Core commitments: Educating students for personal and social Responsibility*. Retrieved from http://www.aacu.org/core_commitments/documents/brochure.pdf

Association of American Colleges and Universities. (2006b). *Core commitments: Educating students for personal and social responsibility—Pledge*. Retrieved from http://www.aacu.org/core_commitments

Association of American Colleges and Universities. (2010). *Core commitments: Educating students for personal and social responsibility—Promising practices resource bank*. Retrieved from http://www.aacu.org/core_commitments

Association of Fraternity Advisors. (2002). *Advising fraternities and sororities.* Indianapolis, IN: Author.

Alva, S.A. (1998). Self-reported alcohol use of college fraternity and sorority members. *Journal of College Student Development, 39*(1), 3–10.

Astin, A. W. (1984). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Personnel, 25*(4), 297–308.

Astin, A.W. (1993). *What matters in college: Four critical years revisited*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Baier, J. L., & Williams, P. S. (1983). Fraternity hazing revisited—Current alumni and active member attitudes toward hazing. *Journal of College Student Development, 24*(4), 300–305.

Barnhardt, C. L., Antonaros, M., Holsapple, M. C., Ott, M. C., & Dey, E. L. (2010). *Technical and Administrative Guide for the Personal & Social Responsibility Institutional Inventory* Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges & Universities.

Becher, T. (1984). The cultural view. In B. R. Clark (Ed.), *Perspectives on higher education* (pp. 163–198). Berkley, CA: University of California Press.

Benford, R. D., & Snow, D. A. (2000). Framing processes and social movements: An overview and assessment. *Annual Review of Sociology, 26*, 611–639.

Bryan, W. A. (1987). Contemporary fraternity and sorority issues. In J. R. B. Winston, W. R. Nettles III, & J. H. Opper Jr (Eds.), *Fraternities and sororities on the comptemporary college campus*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Bureau, D. (2007, Winter). Barriers to greatness: Using the concept of fraternal relevancy to create urgency for change. *Perspectives,* 8–11.

Campo, S., Poulos, G., & Sipple, J. W. (2005). Prevalence and profiling: Hazing among college students and points of intervention. *American Journal of Health Behavior, 29*(2), 137–149.

Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education. (2012). *CAS professional standards for higher education* (8th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Clark, B. R. (1972). The organizational saga in higher education. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 17*(2), 178–184.

Dey, E. L., Antonaros, M., Ott, M. C., Barnhardt, C. L., & Holsapple, M. A. (2010). *Developing a moral compass: What is the*

campus climate for ethics and academic integrity. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Dey, E. L., Barnhardt, C. L., Antonaros, M., Ott, M. C., & Holsapple, M. C. (2009). *Civic responsibility: What is the campus climate for learning?* Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Dey, E. L., Ott, M. C., Antonaros, M., Barnhardt, C. L., & Holsapple, M. A. (2010). *Engaging diverse viewpoints: What is the campus climate for perspective-taking.* Washington DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Earley, C. (1998). Influencing ethical development in Greek letter organizations. In E. G. Whipple (Ed.), *New challenges for Greek letter organizations: Transforming fraternities and sororities into learning communities*. New Directions for Student Services, no. 81 (pp. 39–47). San Fransico, CA: Jossey-Bass.

The Franklin Square Group. (2003). *A call for values congruence.* Retrieved from http://www.afa1976.org/Portals/0/documents/CallForValuesCongruence.pdf

Hayek, J. C., Carini, R. M., O'Day, P. T., & Kuh, G. D. (2002). Triumph or tragedy: Comparing student engagement levels of members of Greek-letter organizations and other students. *Journal of College Student Development, 43*(5), 643–663.

Hughes, M. J., & Winston, R. B. (1987). Effects of fraternity membership on interpersonal values. *Journal of College Student Development, 28*(5), 405–411.

Jackson, A., & Iverson, S.V. (2009). "Step it up and do it:" Fraternity and sorority members' beliefs about citizenship. *Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity Advisors, 4*(1), 1–16.

Kimbrough, W. M. (2004). *Black Greek 101: The culture, customs, and challenges of Black fraternities and sororities*. Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

Kuh, G., & Arnold, J. A. (1993). Liquid bonding: A cultural analysis of the role of alcohol in fraternity pledgeship. *Journal of College Student Development, 34*(5), 327–334.

Kuh, G., & Whitt, E. J. (1988). *The invisible tapestry: Culture in American colleges and universities.* ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report. Washington, DC: Association for the Study of Higher Education; ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education.

Martin, G. L., Hevel, M. S. , Ansel, A. M. , & Pascarella, E. (2011). New evidence on the effects of fraternity and sorority affiliation during the first year of college. *Journal of College Student Development, 52*(5), 543–559.

Mathiasen, R. E. (2004, Fall). A fraternity's impact on moral development. *Perspectives,* 8–10.

Mathiasen, R. E. (2005). Moral development in fraternity members: A case study. *College Student Journal, 39*(2), 242–253.

Matthews, H., Featherstone, L., Bluder, L., Gerling, A. J., Loge, S., & Messenger, R. B. (2009). Living in your letters: Assessing congruence between espoused and enacted values of one fraternity/sorority community. *Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity Advisors, 4*(1), 29–41.

McClure, S. M. (2006). Voluntary association membership: Black Greek men on a predominantly white campus. *Journal of Higher Education, 77*(6), 1036–1057.

North-American Interfraternity Conference. (2002). *2002 Report on Research Results.* NIC Publications, 1922–2010 (41/81/800, Box 1). Urbana-Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Archives.

Nuwer, H. (1990). *Broken pledges: The deadly rite of hazing* Atlanta, GA: Longstreet Press.

Nuwer, H. (1999). *Wrongs of passage: Fraternities, sororities, hazing and binge drinking .* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

O'Brien, R. M. (2007). A caution regarding rules of thumb for variance inflation factors. *Quality and Quantity, 41*(5), 673–690.

Pascarella, E, T, Edison, M., Whitt, E. J., Nora, A., Hagedorn, L. S., & Terenzini, P. T. (1996). Cognitive effects of Greek affiliation in college during the first year of college. *NASPA Journal, 33,* 242–259.

Pascarella, E, T, Flowers, L., & Whitt, E. J. (2001). Cognitive effects of Greek affiliation in college: Additional evidence. *NASPA Journal, 38*(3), 280–301.

Pascarella, E, T, Flowers, L., & Whitt, E. J. (2006). Research revisited: Cognitive effects of Greek affiliation in college: Additional evidence. *Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity Advisors, 2*(2), 117–132.

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (2005). *How college affects students: A third decade of research* (Vol. 2). San Fransico, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Peterson, M. W. (1988). The organizational environment for learning. In J. S. Stark & L. A. Mets (Eds.), Improving teaching and learning through research. New Directions for Institutional Research, no. 57 (pp. 23–37). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Peterson, M. W., & Spencer, M. (1990). Understanding academic culture and climate. In W. G. Tierney (Ed.), *Assessing academic climates and cultures*. New Directions for Institutional Research, no. 68 (pp. 3–18). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Pike, G. R. (2000). The influence of fraternity or sorority membership on students' college experiences and cognitive development. *Research in Higher Education, 41*(1), 117–139.

Pike, G. R. (2003). Membership in a fraternity or sorority, student engagement, and educational outcomes at AAU public research universities. *Journal of College Student Development, 44*(3), 369–382.

Reason, R. D. (2013). Creating and assessing campus climates that support personal and social responsibility. *Liberal Education, 99*(1). Retrieved from http://www.aacu.org/liberaleducation/le-wi13/reason.cfm

Reeves Sanday, P. (1992). *Fraternity gang rape: Sex, brotherhood, and privilege on campus*. New York: New York University Press.

Schein, E. H. (1992). *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (2nd ed.). San Fracisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Swaner, L. E. (2004). *Educating for personal and social responsibility: A planning project of the Association of American Colleges and Universities*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges & Universities.

Thorson, E. (1997). *Greek and non-Greek college and university alumni: Giving, community participating and retrospective college satisfaction*. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri-Columbia Center for Advanced Social Research.

Tierney, W. G. (1988). Organizational culture in higher-education: Defining the essentials. *Journal of Higher Education, 59*(1), 2–21.

Weschler, H. (2001). *Binge drinking on America's college campuses: Findings from the Harvard School of Public Health College Alcohol Survey*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.

Appendix A

Percentages Comparing Students' PSR Aspirations and Impressions

	FS-Unaffiliated	FS-Member	Non-FS	Total
Aspiration exceeds reality				
Striving for excellence	32.3	34.8	30.9	32.5
Cultivating personal and academic integrity	28.8	27.3	19.8	27.1***
Contributing to a larger community	26.2	30.2	16.4	25.1***
Taking seriously the perspectives of others	32.6	34.8	30.7	32.6
Developing competence in ethical and moral reasoning	29.9	32.3	30.5	30.4
Aspiration equals reality				
Striving for excellence	62.8	60.9	63.9	62.7
Cultivating personal and academic integrity	65.6	66.8	72.9	67.0***
Contributing to a larger community	68.0	63.4	74.9	68.5***
Taking seriously the perspectives of others	61.9	59.3	63.5	61.8
Developing competence in ethical and moral reasoning	65.3	63.4	63.9	64.8
Aspiration lower than reality				
Striving for excellence	4.9	4.3	5.2	4.8
Cultivating personal and academic integrity	5.6	6.0	7.3	5.9***
Contributing to a larger community	5.8	6.4	8.7	6.4***
Taking seriously the perspectives of others	5.5	5.9	5.7	5.6
Developing competence in ethical and moral reasoning	4.8	4.3	5.7	4.9

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$; *Note.* Values in italics indicate group with the largest percentage in the response category.