



STUDENT DEVELOPMENT THEORY RESOURCE GUIDE

Application in Fraternity/Sorority
Advising

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
FOUNDATIONAL THEORIES	
Chickering & Reisser's Theory of Identity Development	4
Sanford Psychosocial Development Model	7
Schlossberg's Theory of Marginality and Mattering	9
Myers-Briggs Theory of Personality Type	11
SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORIES	
Kohlberg's Moral Development Theory	13
Perry's Cognitive Development Theory	15
Schaller's Second-Year Experience	17
Renn's Ecological Model of Multiracial Identity Development	19
Torres' Bicultural Orientation Model	21
Cross' Model of Psychological Nigrescence	22
D'Augelli's Model of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Identity Development	23
Gilligan's Theory of Women's Moral Development	25
INTEGRATIVE THEORIES	
Baxter Magolda's Theory of Self-Authorship	27
Strange & Banning's Environmental Theory	30
THE IMPORTANCE OF ASSESSMENT	33
CONCLUSION	34
REFERENCES	35
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	38

Student affairs professionals have used student development theory to guide their work for almost 40 years (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998; Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010; Hamrick, Evans, & Schuh, 2002) and those working with fraternity/sorority life are no exception. Professionals in this field must utilize student development theory to help students learn and grow within the context of membership in a fraternal organization. While student development theory often places the responsibility for growth on the student, professionals can and should play a vital role in this process with their students. By effectively using theory, one can draw from best practices and add intentionality to their work (Evans, Forney, & Guido-Dibrito, 1998; Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010; Hamrick et al., 2002).

McEwen (2003) divided the body of student development theory literature into seven families: Cognitive Structural, Psychosocial, Social Identity, Developmental Synthesis, Environmental, Organizational, and Student Success, as well as including a section on theoretical applications and typologies. Within this resource guide, many of these theories, and their particular relevance in the fraternity/sorority context, are examined. Discussion of these theories has been sectioned into three topical areas: foundational, social, and integrative. Foundational theories are those that provide a general framework for understanding student development, while social theories explore how identities are socially constructed. Finally, integrative theories include those models that focus on identities that are informed by the environmental context of the situation. Suggestions for practical application of these theories within fraternity/sorority life are provided, as well.

This resource is neither exhaustive nor meant to provide an in-depth review of the almost 100 theories (Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010; McEwen, 2003) that can be used to inform student affairs and fraternity/sorority advising. For a thorough review of theories, readers should consult both editions of *Student Development in College: Theory, Practice and Research* (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998; Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010). The reference list located at the end of this document can be used to identify other resources for those who are interested in continued study of student development theory.

The application of student development theory is highly dependent on context, and professionals should be careful not to employ a one-size-fits-all approach (Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010; Hamrick et al., 2002). It is important to note that many of the theories discussed within this resource were developed from research that examined predominately White, traditionally aged students. Keeping this in mind is especially important when working with diverse or non-traditional populations of students. To successfully apply theory to practice, fraternity/sorority professionals must keep in mind the specific needs, culture, and diversity of both the individual students and the groups/communities with whom they work.

Furthermore, readers should note that particular terminology has been selected to lend consistency to this resource and is not meant to be exclusive in any manner. While reference is made to fraternity/sorority professionals, we mean for this document to be helpful to any individual that works with the fraternity/sorority community. This includes, but is not limited to, campus-based professionals, inter/national organization staff, alumni, student affairs practitioners, graduate assistants, and volunteers.

CHICKERING & REISSER'S THEORY OF IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Chickering, a psychosocial theorist, originally developed an identity development theory in the early 1960s, eventually publishing the first edition of *Education and Identity* in 1969 (Chickering, 1969). A few decades later, Chickering partnered with Reisser to expand the theory by including additional research on gender, race, and non-traditional students. The result was a second edition of *Education and Identity* (Chickering & Reisser, 1993) in which the authors identified seven vectors that provide a comprehensive representation of the development that occurs during the collegiate years (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998).

This theory is unique in that it does not employ the use of stages or steps to conceptualize growth. Rather, the vectors are described as having “direction” and “magnitude,” which are meant to recognize that development rarely occurs in a linear progression (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). Movement along the vectors can be sporadic or non-sequential; individuals may even revert backward depending on the situation (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). This freedom allows for individuals to measure their own development in a unique and personal way. The seven vectors are developing competence, managing emotions, moving through autonomy toward interdependence, developing mature interpersonal relationships, establishing identity, developing purpose, and developing integrity (Chickering & Reisser, 1993).

The first vector, developing competence, consists of three different masteries: intellectual competence, physical and manual skills, and interpersonal competence. Intellectual competence can be described as mastering knowledge as well as developing analytical and critical thinking skills. Physical and manual skills can be developed through creative and artistic outlets in addition to physical and athletic endeavors. Developing interpersonal competence consists of learning how to communicate effectively with others, while discovering appropriate social behaviors needed to successfully build and maintain relationships (Chickering & Reisser, 1993).

The second vector, managing emotions, focuses on developing the ability to identify, understand, and exert control over feelings and emotions. Students must strike a balance between positive and negative emotions, as well as learn to act on or release these feelings in a responsible manner.

The third vector, moving through autonomy toward interdependence, focuses on the individual moving away from codependence toward independence, eventually gaining an understanding of one's place in relation to the larger community. College often represents the first physical separation a student experiences away from his/her parents. Living independently presents new challenges and students must learn to problem solve

autonomously and self-motivate for the first time. This newfound understanding of personal responsibility helps students to develop or redefine relationships based on mutual giving and interdependence, rather than using others for validation or approval (Chickering & Reisser, 1993).

The fourth vector, developing mature interpersonal relationships, builds upon the interconnected community component of the previous vector and consists of two parts: the development of an appreciation of differences and the development of intimate relationships. This process involves more than just negating stereotypes; it is the promotion of positive intercultural interactions. The second part of this vector speaks to the ability to enter into intimate relationships based upon trust, responsibility, mutual respect, and an acceptance of flaws.

The fifth vector, establishing identity, focuses on the process of developing self-acceptance and self-esteem. Individuals within this vector grapple with the question “who am I?” and must look to the various facets and intersections of their identity to determine the answer. This process requires gaining comfort in one’s appearance, gender, social-economic status, race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, and sexual orientation, just to name a few (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). Competency in this vector will not only lead to a sense of personal stability, but also successful integration and interactions with others.

The sixth vector, developing purpose, requires an individual to determine his/her career path and discover personal interests, while remaining committed to interpersonal relationships (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). Individuals must remedy any discrepancies between his/her goals and strike compromises to achieve a healthy life-balance. Chickering and Reisser (1993) suggest the most important developmental task is the discovery of one’s life calling: an activity, vocation, or field that one is both passionate about and utilizes personal skills and talents.

The seventh vector, developing integrity, is characterized by three stages that are sequential in nature, but often overlap throughout one’s development. The three stages are humanizing values, personalizing values, and developing congruence. Movement within vector is observed when a person identifies his/her personal values, confirms these values as his/her own, and then, ultimately establishing a congruence between personal values and those which society promotes.

When applying Chickering and Reisser’s (1993) theory to practice, there are a few points that should be considered. First, the theory and the vectors should not be utilized as a checklist for professionals to benchmark students’ successes or failures throughout the identity development process. Instead, these vectors should be used as a guide when interacting with individual members of a fraternal organization. Chickering and Reisser (1993) noted that movement and growth along the vectors has to be self-perceived, essentially stating that the individual has to acknowledge the growth. Therefore, when

counseling, mentoring, advising, or even sanctioning fraternity/sorority students, understanding the identity development process will assist in the facilitation of these discussions. By understanding Chickering and Reisser's theory of identity development, practitioners can effectively design interventions and tailor conversations to assist in the student's identity development.

The friendships and bonds created throughout these brotherhoods or sisterhoods facilitate the development of trust, mutual respect, and empathy. Corresponding to the fourth vector, fraternities and sororities function as a space for students to begin developing mature interpersonal relationships with peers. Furthermore, fraternal organizations help their members to develop a purpose through meaningful interactions with alumni mentors, helping to guide career decisions and assist in the development of a professional network. The growth and development that occurs through fraternal membership can be quite significant, providing professionals that work with these students a unique opportunity. By utilizing this theory in daily interactions with students, fraternity/sorority professionals have the opportunity to help further develop students' identities.

SANFORD PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL

In 1962 Sanford brought forth the idea of “challenge and support,” a psychosocial theory that is considered fundamental in the world of student affairs (McEwen, 2003). This theory pays particular attention to the experiences of first-year students, specifically exploring the concepts of differentiation and integration. Differentiation refers to the process of students identifying personality characteristics and how these characteristics shape and support their individual identities. Integration is the understanding of how the context of the environment either affirms or rejects one’s identity. The environment typically provides expectations, which can be challenges to the student’s way of knowing. Through support, the student can reconcile the differences or understand how he/she must work to conform to or leave the environment. Once students understand their own identity, and it has been positively supported through environmental factors, students can succeed (Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010; Sanford, 1962).

Students’ understanding of their identity mitigates their level of dissonance when challenge and/or support are provided. In turn, the amount of challenge one receives is in direct correlation to the level of support given. Awareness of the developmental conditions a person brings to the environment is helpful for practitioners in recognizing the varying levels of challenge and support that one offers to students (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998).

Sanford’s theory examines three development conditions: readiness, challenge, and support. Readiness is the maturity and preparedness that a student brings to the experience. How students are able to move through experiences, interact with others, and manage emotions are indicators of student readiness. Challenge, the second condition, is a necessary component in helping to guide students through their own development. According to the theory, students must have a healthy level of challenge in order to move through the college experience in a way that prepares them for young adulthood. It is worth noting that challenging students more than they are adequately ready for can prove problematic, often resulting in a relapse to earlier stages of development (Sanford, 1966).

The last component of the three developmental conditions is support. Support requires an environment that is conducive to student exploration of his or her own identity in a safe and encouraging way. Examples of the concept of support can be seen in the inclusivity of the organization, the value placed on individual learning, and the regard given by the institution to the holistic development of students (Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010).

Fraternity/sorority professionals can apply the theory of challenge and support to their work by inviting students discuss how their individual identities and characteristics align and differ from those of the group. It is important to note that when students feel

incongruent with the group, they may conform by dimming dimensions of their own identities to fit in. This compromise can lead to some of the challenges noted in within the fraternity/sorority community: binge drinking, substance abuse, hazing, and mental health issues.

As those who work with, advise, and support fraternities and sororities, it is also important to educate the members of these organizations about being intentional in the experiences planned for potential new members. Questions such as, “How does the organization affirm and support individual differences?” are important to ask prior to organizations engaging in new member recruitment. Furthermore, it has often been said that organizations should look at whom they are recruiting and how they fit with the organization, but Sanford’s theory invites fraternities and sororities to reframe this question. Instead of posing the question as to fit with the organization, the question can be reframed to ask about the individual’s readiness to join a fraternity or sorority. The new member process asks students to remain grounded in their individual traits while supporting the espoused values of the organization and it is important for an individual to be ready for this. An environment where the concept of the individual is supported will lead to greater success for the organization as a whole.

As fraternity/sorority professionals, an integral component of challenge and support is holding fraternity/sorority members accountable. Helping students to uphold the expectations of his/her organization and the university is a critical component of the development that occurs through fraternal membership.

SCHLOSSBERG'S THEORY OF MARGINALITY AND MATTERING

Through her theoretical model, Schlossberg (1989) sought to explain how students conceptualize feeling valued or marginalized within their college environment. Drawing on prior research that indicated involvement influenced student satisfaction, Schlossberg explored why students who were involved were considered successful. Schlossberg studied involvement within the constructs of marginality and mattering. Marginality is a sentiment that can manifest when transition or change occurs in one's life, such as going away to college for the first time. Once confident in his/her place in life, an individual in a new environment will often be unsure of where he/she fits in and may not feel needed or valued. If unable to develop connections and relationships within the new environment, this feeling of marginality can also be a long-term sentiment.

To build upon her theory of mattering, Schlossberg looked to literature from Rosenberg (1981), which found that adolescents who felt they mattered were less likely to engage in delinquent behavior. From this, Schlossberg created four dimensions of mattering – attention, importance, ego-extension, and dependence and found that all four dimensions were important components of feeling connected. Later, Schlossberg added a fifth dimension that impacted mattering – appreciation. She was able to apply these constructs in three aspects of the participants' lives – close relationships, work, and activities.

In the preliminary dimension, attention, students understand that other people notice them. As they move into the importance dimension, students begin to understand that they are cared about. The dimension of ego-extension results when students perceive others to be proud of them; there is some sense their contributions matter to a greater good. In the fourth dimension, dependence, students understand that others rely on them to accomplish individual and shared goals. Appreciation is understood as external recognition of a student's positive contributions.

Schlossberg contends simply defining the feelings of marginality and mattering is not sufficient and articulates the importance of creating opportunities that reduce marginality and cultivate a feeling of mattering. She explains that it is important to listen to student voices, in both what they are saying, as well as the underlying message. All students have an inherent need to belong, and student affairs professionals are charged with creating opportunities and spaces for to make this happen.

There are numerous ways that this theory applies to the fraternity/sorority experience. At its core, the fraternity/sorority experience is one that works to create a sense of mattering for members. Fundamentally, fraternities/sororities provides a place for connection among members. They are organizations that can make a campus seem smaller and ideally

create a family environment where members can thrive and grow with others who care about them. However, there are negative choices that fraternities/sororities can make that would threaten a member's sense of mattering. For example, a new member experience that involves hazing can significantly devalue an individual's sense of self, a phenomenon that Schlossberg has found to have seriously hinder one's success at a university. As fraternity/sorority professionals, it is important to keep this correlation in mind in challenging students to adopt healthy and inclusive new member practices.

Furthermore, in developing curriculum and programs, fraternity/sorority professionals should remember that different students have different strengths and talents; it is important to create space for students to explore and develop skills. Providing an emerging leaders program and coordinating an alternative spring break experience can provide such a forum for students.

Schlossberg's work also shows us the importance of assessment. Studying retention statistics is one of the key ways that fraternity/sorority professionals can do this. If students are leaving the fraternity/sorority experience, it is important to take a critical look at why this is happening. Often, this could be because of a feeling of marginality. Professionals then need to provide organizations with the tools to elevate the experience offered. For some, this will involve critical conversations about traditions that may have a negative impact on members. These conversations are not easy but are necessary to create a higher quality experience for all members.

MYERS-BRIGGS TYPE INVENTORY (MBTI)

Based upon Jung's personality type theory (1971), the Myers-Briggs Theory of Personality Type assesses personality dispositions about how "individuals orient themselves to the world around them, how they take in information from their environment, how they come to conclusions about what they observe, and how they relate to their environment" (Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010, p. 35). The theory draws upon four dimensions, extraversion-introversion (EI), sensing-intuition (SN), thinking-feeling (TF), and judging-perception (JP), each using bipolar scale (Myers, McCauley, Quenk, & Hammer, 1998).

The EI dimension explores a person's attitude to the external world and how he/she directs his/her energy toward environments. For introverts (I), interactions with others, while fulfilling, are often draining in high doses. They appreciate ideas and concepts and tend to value time alone to reflect and make sense of their interactions. Extraverts (E) are stimulated by interactions with others and draw energy through such interactions (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998; Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010; Myers et al., 1998).

The SN dimension, also known as the perceiving function, explains how individuals take in and apply information. For those who are sensing (S), there is an inclination to apply any or all of the five senses as they seek to interpret and use information. They prefer concrete examples of concepts, whereas those who are intuitive (N) often perceive information in less concrete ways. A person with an intuitive predisposition relies on imagination and possibilities and places a great amount of trust in personal connections, which often allows him/her to think "big picture" (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998; Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010; Myers et al., 1998).

The TF dimension seeks to explain how individuals engage in the decision-making process. For thinkers (T), choices are based upon concrete information and facts. Those who rely more on the feeling (F) function may rely more on personal values and beliefs, even preferences, than on hard data (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998; Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010; Myers et al., 1998).

The judgment-perception (JP) function seeks to measure how individuals relate to the outside world. Those with a predisposition for judgment (J) like to take an organized approach in life, preferring to have things planned out in advance. Perceptive types (P) are considered more spontaneous, living moment-to-moment and keeping options open. Often (J)s will collect, examine, and process information quickly while (P) prefer to take their time. It is important for professionals to note that the JP terminology can be misleading; the term "judgment" does not imply that the individual is judgmental and the term "perceiving" does not imply that the individual is perceptive.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator has been used to assess the attitudes and behaviors associated with the personality preferences explained in the theory. Scores are presented along each bipolar dimension. Higher scores indicate preference for certain personality traits (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998; Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010; Gohn & Albin, 2006). Sixteen different personality types can be assigned to individuals. A person's type may change throughout the lifespan and within diverse contexts (Evans et al, 1998).

There are implications for fraternity/sorority professionals when applying the Myers-Briggs Theory of Personality Type. First, the theory is often applied through the use of its inventory, the Myers-Briggs Typology Inventory (MBTI). The inventory has been popularized in student affairs through its use in student leader retreats and career centers (Salter, Evans, & Forney, 2006). Using the inventory with students can be a great tool in helping them gain self-awareness and a deeper understanding of why they prefer to work in certain settings. Applying the inventory's results in a community setting, say among a Panhellenic or Interfraternity Council executive board, can help team members better understand their peers. By having individuals discuss their MBTI score in a group setting, professionals can help educate students about how to work with conflict, manage relationships, and delegate within their fraternity/sorority. Simple conversations about preferences to approaching the world can help leaders understand the complexity of leading a fraternity/sorority and allow them to apply diverse tactics depending on the approaches of others. For fraternity/sorority professionals, it is important to help students identify how the MBTI is a launching point for developing well-rounded leadership capabilities and diverse approaches to working with others.

The Myers-Briggs Theory of Personality Type explains preferred approaches to interaction with others and making sense of the environment. Those using the inventory should be cognizant not to let labels define students; the determination of personality type is based on preferences, not a definitive description of the person's sole approach to the world. If used correctly, it does not "box" individuals in, although some may experience such feelings after their first exposure to the inventory. Gradually, people identify that personality types may shift slightly depending on the context and can shift across the lifespan.

KOHLBERG'S MORAL DEVELOPMENT THEORY

Kohlberg (2005) identified six stages of moral development. The stages build upon each other and advancement through stages is characterized by an increase in moral understanding. This increase is characterized by how an individual uses reasoning in a dilemma. It is important to note that an increase is not determined by what the response is, but rather how an individual arrives at it. Increases are spurred by ongoing exposure to situations containing moral dilemmas. Individuals become better able to effectively analyze complex situations, understanding both the personal and societal ramifications of a decision.

Among the six stages, Kohlberg (2005) identified three levels of development: preconventional (Stages 1 and 2), conventional (Stages 3 and 4), and postconventional (Stages 5 and 6). The preconventional level typically involves young children and some adolescents who cannot yet conceptualize the importance of upholding society's traditional roles and expectations. These individuals might be aware of the presence of rules and expectations, but they lack a personal connection to them. Individuals who have an understanding of rules and expectations and work to personally abide by them are within the conventional level. This level is where most adults are located. An individual at the postconventional level not only understands and abides by society's rules and expectations, but also recognizes the principles and reasoning behind these constructs. In addition, these individuals are able to reflect critically on the societal standards they do and do not agree with.

Regarding moral development, it is crucial to not only identify the levels of reasoning, but also specific stages. Within the preconventional level, there are two stages. The initial stage has a focus on rules. Individuals' decisions are centered on the fear of getting in trouble, being punished, or being blamed. The second stage also centers on rules, but the focus is more on personal gains. These individuals see rules as a means to achieve what is in their best interest. They believe their own needs are the top priority. They do not fault others for making decisions that center around this mindset (Kohlberg, 2005).

Progressing into the conventional level, the focus turns more to expectations. In the third stage, the motives for abiding by rules center on others. Individuals recognize how upholding expectations can result in personal benefit and can also strengthen relationships with others. Being "good" is a priority. Within the fourth stage, individuals believe in the importance of rules being upheld by and for everyone. They see the systematic aspect of society, and they recognize that one person's misstep has the potential to impact other parties (Kohlberg, 2005).

When one reaches the postconventional level, there is an internalization of external rules and expectations. In the fifth stage, one becomes more aware of individual choices. They have an understanding of the current protocol, but they also are able to identify changes that would lead to improvements. To these individuals, rules and expectations are not as concrete; rather they have the potential for evolution. The final stage encompasses individuals who keep universality as a priority. These individuals, a constituent that is very rare, identify certain principles and values to be unwavering for all of humanity (Kohlberg, 2005).

Fraternity/sorority professionals often help students address moral decision-making in the course of day-to-day work. Whether it is examining a risk management decision, exploring members' lack of congruence between espoused organizational and community values and their actions, or advising student leaders on managing chapters and councils, professionals must be prepared to help students make moral decisions; such decisions are often influenced by context, but common perceptions of what is morally acceptable can be found within fraternity/sorority communities. By utilizing the mission statements and founding values of fraternal organizations, professionals can begin a dialogue with students that can help them to better understand and conceptualize the ramifications of individual actions. Professionals must help students internalize these values and understand how failure to live up to these impacts an entire community. Understanding how students make moral decisions and applying strategies to help them enact socially acceptable decisions is an important skill for fraternity/sorority professionals.

To advance the community, the establishment of accountability is important. Rather than just being able to recite the rules and draw the line between "right" and "wrong," those in the community must learn that living and leading with values falls on everyone's shoulders. Beyond each person making the commitment to uphold values, it is up to the members of the community to hold one another accountable. Accountability is often something students struggle with, as it means difficult conversations with peers. However, if students can see how this advances the community and further establishes credibility, then they may feel more empowered and obligated to do this. Professionals should aim to empower students to develop the competence to make moral decisions and enforce them within their fraternity/sorority community.

It should be noted that it is unlikely that all members of a fraternity/sorority community will advance to the higher-level stages of moral development in their time as members. Traditionally aged students rarely accomplish Stage 4 and 5 during the course of four to five years in college. That being said, the responsibility of the fraternity/sorority professional is not to ensure every member of the community progresses through these all of these stages, but rather is to seek to provide thought-provoking questions, educational programs, and continued forums for discussions about the establishment and enactment of values.

PERRY'S COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT THEORY

In his cognitive-structural theory that focuses on levels of cognitive development (McEwen, 2003), Perry (1970) wanted to account for the varieties of ways students learn in the classroom. The theory focuses on thought patterns developed across nine positions. The first position explains how a student views authorities as having all of the right answers. For the student, there is one correct answer and he/she places a considerable emphasis on figuring out how to get the “right” information. During the transition between the first and second position the students start to wonder why some authorities disagree with each other. In the second position the students start to see a difference in authorities. Students start to believe that true authority figures have all the answers, and they believe that teachers and administrators as those true authority figures (Perry, 1970, 2005a).

The third position is where the students start to understand that even their authorities are searching for the right answers, but students believe that the uncertainty from authorities is only temporary. When the students continue to see the authorities as uncertain about various topics students start to search for their own answers. This brings the students to the fourth position where they start to believe everyone has a right to an opinion. While in the fourth position, students may also start to notice how professors, typically authority figures, grade them on their thoughts and opinions and not necessarily on the aspects of having the right answer. This way of thinking continues as the students transition to the fifth position, where students believe that everything is relative but not all information is equally valid. While a wide variety of answers and opinions are acceptable, they now understand that not all answers and opinions are equal. In the sixth position students understand that no one else will make a decision for them and that they must find ways to weigh the different options. Some options have more reasoning and rationale, and thus, are more valid (Perry, 1970, 2005a).

It is in the seventh position that students start to make commitments to their values. In the eighth position students start to make multiple commitments to their values and struggle to understand how to balance all of their values. In the transition from the eighth to the ninth position students start to understand that they are still learning about their values and decisions. In the ninth and final position students are ready to continue to learn more about their values as well as fight for those values while respecting others (Perry, 1970).

The process of cognitive development can have great implications for how students come to view and participate in the fraternity/sorority experience. Perry's theory is particularly useful when it comes to issues of policy such as anti-hazing or risk management. A student in the first position may see only the rule and breaking the rule. He/she often fails to see the rationale for policies. These students may also be hesitant to share the realities

of what is occurring, for example hazing, for fear of repercussions from an authority. These types of students are uncomfortable with gray area and may look to administrators and advisors for clearly defined boundaries and structure. Students tend to follow rules because they exist, not because they understand the rationale.

A student that has developed into the fourth position conceptualizes right and wrong differently. He/she will likely explore multiple perceptions of policy. The student may test the waters and not see any issues with policy violations. Students also have a growing potential to understand rationale for policies. The few positions are where students really “get it.” They have come to view knowledge creation as both internally and externally defined. These students can easily see many sides of the issue. Whereas students in the first stage of development may not approach an administrator for assistance with event planning for fear of getting in trouble, these students may be more open to working with an administrator.

Opportunities for applying Perry’s theory in working with fraternity/sorority members are extensive. As students progress through the positions, professionals can have conversations with students, which allow for learning and development. Asking intentional questions with students (e.g., Tell me how you arrived at this decision; how could this have gone better?) can help elevate students to the later positions of thinking.

As professionals, it is of the utmost importance to recognize students have varying competence to make decisions, such as the choice to obey or disregard policies. Peers in the environment also influence students. Since fraternities and sororities consist of students at different positions of development, there is a potential for members, alumni, and professionals to set examples of appropriate behaviors. Strong examples of strong decision making and opportunities for fraternity/sorority members gain a better understanding of university and organizational policy can elevate thinking and allow students to view issues in a new way.

SCHALLER'S SECOND-YEAR EXPERIENCE

By focusing on the common challenges that often befall students in their second year of college, Schaller (2005) developed her developed second-year experience theory. At this secondary collegiate period, students have navigated their first year of college and are beginning to learn from their successes and failures. The second year becomes a time of increased competence, confidence and commitment. Schaller identified four stages that second-year students experience: random exploration, focused exploration, tentative choices, and commitment.

Random exploration begins during the first year of college and can continue into the second year. This rings especially true for students beginning their second year in a new environment after transferring institutions. Students continue to examine academic and extracurricular choices, while still remaining hesitant to commit to any one activity or major in particular.

However, once engaged in more focused exploration, students begin to see the errors of time spent in random exploration. They begin to feel an increased pressure to make choices and establish a clear path. While often a frustrating stage, these students may also express relief that they have the opportunity to reflect more deeply and intentionally. Feeling overwhelmed at all the decisions that still need to be made is common in this stage (Schaller, 2005). However, students begin to understand that committing to specific involvement opportunities will positively influence their college experience.

Once students start making choices, they move into the tentative choices stage. In this stage, students begin to settle into how they want to define their collegiate experience and beyond. For example, a student in this stage may have initially joined many student organizations as a way to find his/her niche. While making tentative choices, a student may decide to maintain involvement in or pursue officer positions in select organizations. Students in this stage begin to more clearly understand their limits and are more realistic about the number of activities they can stand to take on (Schaller, 2005).

The final stage is commitment. In this stage, students engage in active planning for the future. They develop a clear sense of what they want and feel a sense of responsibility over their own future (Schaller, 2005). Students in this stage tend to seek out mentors and internships that will better prepare them for future careers. The second year is a particularly important time to help students make commitments to academic majors and co-curricular connections (Schaller). While not all second-year students achieve this stage, interventions by faculty and staff to support student movement to commitment is vital.

Working with fraternity/sorority members provides for an opportunity to apply and see Schaller's theory in action. Second-year fraternity/sorority members are in the process of observing the actions of their peers and deciding to what extent he/she might commit to such actions. These students are beginning to formalize what they want their membership to be and may be looking for leadership opportunities. As professionals, it is important to ensure that fraternity/sorority chapters are creating opportunities for these students to become engaged within chapter operations and to test out possible positions.

Professionals should also be cognizant that there will be a discrepancy between first-year and second-year students going through recruitment. Given these differences, it may be helpful to have groups consisting of only upperclassmen in formal recruitment scenarios. Recruitment counselors should be prepared to address different concerns of these students. Training chapters to have different conversations with these groups is also important.

As professionals, it is important to recognize that there is a need for programming at the sophomore level. Often, there is a tendency to focus on new member orientation and emerging leader programs with first-year experience ideologies in mind. Schaller's theory explained there is perhaps even more of a need for these programs to occur in the second year. These programs can be helpful in retention of students as well as cultivating strong leaders within organizations.

RENN'S ECOLOGICAL MODEL OF MULTIRACIAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Social identity theories have been increasingly used to examine the diverse student populations of today's college campus (McEwen, 2003). Many models of identity formation for college students focus on a student's transition through stages. Some argue these models assume linear development and a universal student experience. Application of these stage models to minority students or those students of mixed race can be problematic because of the different types of social and environmental influences to which they are exposed. Renn (2003) argued that an ecological perspective would better illustrate the development of mixed race students. Renn addressed how mixed race students negotiate identity through individually imposed labels and ecological factors.

Renn (2003) identified five fluid and nonexclusive patterns that a mixed race student may identify with: monoracial, multiple monoracial, multiracial, extraracial, and situational. Monoracial individuals only identify with one culture. An individual is more likely to have a monoracial identity if one of his/her parents is White, as an individual usually identifies with their non-dominant ancestry (e.g., if one parent is White and one is Latino, then the student will most likely self-identify as Latino). Individuals with a multiple monoracial identity identify equally with all parts of their cultural heritage. These individuals are equally knowledgeable about each part of their cultural heritage. Those with multiracial identity identify outside of the monoracial paradigm. They may label themselves as mixed, multiracial, or biracial. Furthermore, individuals identifying as extraracial do not use racial categories common to the United States or may not use racial categorization at all. This is common among individuals who were raised outside of the United States or viewed race as a social construct rather than a biological one. Situational identity occurs when an individual's identity changes fluidly based on the environment he/she is in at a given moment.

Fraternalities/sororities may recruit individuals who identify with any one of Renn's categories. Organizations should pay particular attention to how mixed raced members conceptualize their identity differently over the course of membership. Students who identify monoracially upon joining a fraternity/sorority may move to a different level of identification as they become more familiar with their non-dominant ethnicity. Fraternalities and sororities who do not value such self-exploration or are not educated on the implications of ethnic identity may foster an intolerant environment for this individual.

Fraternity/sorority members must also understand that some mixed race individuals are fluid in their identity and may choose to identify differently based their current context. An individual may identify differently when interacting with the chapter than he/she does when interacting with the greater campus community or when with others from his/her same racial or ethnic

group. For example, an African American member of a predominantly White organization may find his/her ethnic identity is different when he/she attends Black Student Union meetings. Professionals must push fraternities/sororities to create safe spaces for diverse and mixed raced members to explore their identities and be their authentic selves. Encouraging interaction between councils is a good practice that may help fraternity/sorority members conceptualize identity in new ways.

TORRES' BICULTURAL ORIENTATION MODEL

Social identity theories have been increasingly used with the continued diversification of college campuses (McEwen, 2003). Hispanic students are an increasing population on campuses. Sensing a need for student affairs professionals to better understand this population, Torres developed the bicultural orientation model.

The bicultural orientation model examines a Hispanic student's cultural orientation based on his/her level of ethnic identity and acculturation. Ethnic identity is defined as "a construct or set of self-ideas about one's own ethnic group membership" (Torres, 1999, p. 288). Acculturation is defined "as the process of adapting one's self to the broader social surroundings" (Torres, p. 287). The model has four different cultural orientations placed in quadrants that are created by intersecting acculturation and ethnic identity (Torres).

The four cultural orientations are: Bicultural Orientation, Anglo Orientation, Hispanic Orientation, and Marginal Orientation (Torres, 1999). A student with an Anglo Orientation has a preference to function within the dominant White culture due to his/her high level of acculturation and low ethnic identity. Whereas, a student with a Hispanic Orientation chooses to function more within the Hispanic or Latino culture due to his/her low acculturation and high ethnic identity. A student with both low acculturation and low ethnic identity has a Marginal Orientation, because he/she does not identify with either the White or Hispanic cultures. This is often due to insufficient time to examine identification with either group, likely because these students have not been in the United States as long as those who develop a more defined sense of ethnic identity. A student in with a Bicultural Orientation is just the opposite and is able to function within and navigate between both cultures. Biculturalism is defined as "a synthesis of two cultures and languages out of which a third arises that was previously not present" (1999, p. 288).

This theory is useful in illustrating the effects of particular types of fraternities and sororities on members' cultural orientation. Potentially, historically or predominantly White fraternities and sororities may increase a member's level of acculturation. On the other hand, a historically Latino organization may increase a member's connection to ethnic identity (Guardia & Evans, 2008). Both types of organizations have the potential to move a student more toward a Bicultural Orientation.

The increase in numbers of Hispanic students on college campuses has resulted in the creation of several Latino fraternal organizations. This theory can help professionals understand why Hispanic students may be drawn to join a Latino fraternity or a historically White fraternity. Professionals should be able to support students as they explore what conditions in a fraternity or sorority are essential to their individual ethnic growth and development.

CROSS' MODEL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL NIGRESCENCE

Cross' theory of psychological nigrescence explains how Blacks come to conceptualize their racial and ethnic identity (Cross, 1978). Cross's model has six sectors: infancy and childhood in early Black development, preadolescence, adolescence, early adulthood, adult nigrescence, and nigrescence recycling (calling into question existing thoughts of one's own Blackness). For Black students, the process of adult nigrescence is heavily influenced by the college context and, thus, the overview here will focus heavily on this sector (Evans et al., 2010).

Adult nigrescence is comprised of four stages: preencounter, encounter, immersion-emersion, and internalization/internalization commitment (Cross, 1978; Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010). For students who are in the preencounter stage of their racial identity there is a low salience in race and presence of internalized racism. Individuals move through this stage when they have an encounter that forces reflection upon their understanding of racial identity. They move into the second stage of adult nigrescence. Examples of this could be a racial slur being used by someone of another race or questioning difference of treatment by others of a dominant racial group.

Immersion-emersion is the third stage and explains how students explore their new understanding of their racial identity after the initial encounter. In entering Stage 3, students have a clear understanding of their race, but struggle in understanding how to assume roles within this new identity. As people move through this stage they begin to develop a more authentic understanding of their racial identity (Evans et al., 2010).

Last is the internalization stage. This stage represents a sense of coming to terms with the other three stages. These individuals showcase a healthy sense of pride in their racial identity and seek out ways to advance political and social causes that concern the Black community (Cross, 1995). Progression in this stage shows individuals incorporating their Black identity into the other identities that they hold in an effort to hold a more balanced understanding and perspective of being Black.

Cross' model, although potentially applicable for other groups of color, is primarily vested at looking at the experiences of Black people. Professionals working with fraternities and sororities should be intentional about enacting forums for conversations about racial diversity. For historically White organizations it is important to introduce conversations about race and diversity without tokenizing those within the organization. Furthermore, professionals should support historically Black fraternities/sororities in efforts to serve as the vehicle for racial understanding and internalization for their members.

D'AUGELLI'S MODEL OF LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

D'Augelli's (1994) model of sexual orientation explains lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) identity as influenced by one's social environment and the support one receives while beginning to conceptualize his/her sexuality (Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010).

D'Augelli's (1994) model of LGB development was in part created to counter the model of sexual orientation identity formation created by Cass (1979). Unlike those before him, D'Augelli (1994) contended the process of developing understanding of one's sexuality is not linear (1979), but rather a complex evolution that occurs over one's life span.

Factors that influence sexual orientation identity can include: individual perceptions of identity, which can be formed as a result of sexual behaviors and their interpretation of the feelings resulting from such behaviors; the influence of immediate family, partner relationships and peer groups; and the person's culture which includes societal norms and laws, organizational policies, and individual, family, peer, and societal values (D'Augelli, 1994; Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010)

According to D'Augelli, individuals examine sexual identity over the life span, noting that sexual identity may be at times "very fluid, while at other times it will be more solidified" (Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010, p. 316). Humans respond to environmental and biological changes. For individuals who may identify as LGB, life experiences vary greatly at some periods. In less homogenous environments, they may find more choices about how to live their lives. The level of support from others influences how one examining a possible LGB identity may come to identify as such. LGB persons face difficulty in becoming socialized to their evolving identity in mainstream society. D'Augelli found that full acceptance of one's LGB orientation can be difficult to achieve when interacting primarily with heterosexuals (Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010).

D'Augelli (1994) outlined six interactive processes that trace out sexual orientation development over the life span. During the first process, exiting heterosexual identity, one's primary feelings and attractions become recognized as not heterosexual. Individuals may begin sharing their shifting orientation and identity with others (Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010).

The second process is developing a personal lesbian/gay/bisexual identity status. D'Augelli (1994) explained that in this process individuals create distinct meanings about their LGB identity. The process includes self-examination of internalized perceptions of what life as a LGB person is like. During this process, it is also important for the individual to create an understanding of LGB with others who identify as non-heterosexual (Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010). Once an individual constructs an idea of his/her sexual

orientation, the third process is developing a lesbian/gay/bisexual social identity. To form identity, the person must have a support network that understands and accepts his/her sexual orientation. This process is a period of exploring the roles of relationships with peers, friends, family, and intimate partners (Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010).

D'Augelli (1994) specified the fourth process in relation to parents and redefining such relationships after the coming out process. Redefining oneself as a lesbian/gay/bisexual offspring to one's parents can require reshaping previous familial relationships. The extent of parental support from the time the person discloses is important to be successful in the fourth process (Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010). The fifth process, developing a lesbian/gay/bisexual intimacy status, focuses on how individuals come to explain their sexual relationship to others. The process is made more difficult due to heterosexual relationships as societal norms. Because the individual examining her/his status and his/her sexual partner may be at different points in the process of identification and disclosure, forming a relationship identity can be a time of exploration that leads to increased or decreased participation in the LGB community (Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010).

The sixth process is entering a lesbian/gay/bisexual community. Individuals make decisions to engage in varying degrees of action, both social and political, in this process. Each person examines the level of involvement he/she wishes to have in the LGB community (D'Augelli, 1994). This can ebb and flow across the life span (Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010).

The implications of D'Augelli's processes in the fraternity/sorority context are numerous. First, as an environment within the larger campus community, it is important to examine how the fraternity/sorority community and individual organizations foster the appropriate environmental conditions for LGB students. Environments have a great impact on student development (Strange, 2003); therefore professionals must work with students and campus constituents to foster environments that are supportive to persons who have identified as or are struggling with their identity as LGB (Windmeyer, 2005).

Additionally, individual students come to college often still in the examination period of their sexual identity (Evans, Forney, Guido, et al., 2010). Because students join fraternities and sororities at any time during college, professionals must ensure that organizations are providing safe spaces for students to explore and accept their sexual identity. Furthermore, it is important for fraternity/sorority professionals themselves to serve as allies to the LGB community, regardless of their own sexual identification (Bureau, 2005).

GILLIGAN'S THEORY OF WOMEN'S MORAL DEVELOPMENT

While serving as a research assistant under Kohlberg at Harvard University, it struck Gilligan (1982) that men and women differ greatly in their moral development. Gilligan noted that Kohlberg's theory should not be generalized to both genders, as initial research only used male participants. Consequently, Gilligan conducted research investigating the moral and identity development of both male and female college students. Gilligan (1982) concluded women view the world differently than men, leading to different moral orientations. While men focused on rules, rights, and justice, women's moral development was highly influenced by relationships (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998; Gilligan, 1982). Gilligan's 1982 work, *In a Different Voice*, introduced the cognitive-structural theory of women's moral development.

Gilligan's (1982) theory consists of three levels and two transition periods. The three levels are orientation to individual Survival, goodness as self-sacrifice, and morality of non-violence. The two transition periods are selfishness to responsibility and goodness to truth. The focus of Gilligan's theory is on the relationship one has with others and how those relationships impact one's understanding of self (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998).

The first level, orientation to individual survival, is typically experienced when an individual is self-centered and attentive only to their needs, which stunts the development of any serious relationships. During this stage, one might be preoccupied with working long hours just to pay the bills, without regard to friendships or familial matters (Gilligan, 1982). One example of a person at this level would be a new member who makes selfish decisions, regardless of whether they negatively impact the organization.

The first transition, selfishness to responsibility, occurs when the individual experiences cognitive dissonance and begins to question his/her self-concept. One begins to consider different opportunities for building relationships as well as the responsibility to care for others and society. After moving through this transition, one enters into the next level (Gilligan, 1982).

While in the second level, goodness as self-sacrifice, the individual tends to focus on the needs of others. A female in this stage will tend to put the needs of others above her own. It is common for individuals in this level to feel the need to be accepted by family, friends, co-workers, as well as society in general (Gilligan, 1982). An example that would aptly fit in a sorority context is the member who is always volunteering to take on extra tasks and projects for the organization, leaving no time for her own schoolwork and responsibilities. She may notice a decline in health or academic success at the expense of aiding others, which may, consequently, push her into the second transition.

The second and last transition occurs when the individual realizes her needs are just as important as the needs of others. This transition, labeled goodness to truth, will result in an individual asking herself, “Why do I continue to put others before myself?” This realization allows the person to then examine her own needs and devise a solution to meet these needs (Gilligan, 1982).

After moving out of this transition and into the third level, morality of non-violence, one begins to understand and embrace the concept of self-care. The individual comes to believe that her personal thoughts, values, choices, and needs are just as important as those of others. At this level, the principle of care is elevated to include oneself and others. The person balances commitments by ensuring there is ample time to meet the needs of others as well as oneself (Gilligan, 1982). An executive officer that effectively and successfully serves her organization, while also ensuring time is made for studying, working out and eating healthy, is a prime example. She is committed to her relationships and organization, but also understands she needs take care of herself as well, to successfully help others.

Gilligan’s theory of women’s moral development presents a unique viewpoint for discussing the moral development of female college students. Since fraternal organizations are founded upon the bonds of sisterhood, Gilligan’s theory can help educators better understand the behavior of today’s college student and examine different ways to support and help female students grow and develop through moral reasoning.

Gilligan’s (1982) theory of women’s moral development can be used in individual or group interventions in which participants are struggling to understand how their actions impact others, a phenomena common for women in the first level of Gilligan’s theory. For example, with some risk management violations, the members charged do not fully understand how the violation can or will affect other members or the entire organization. By engaging in dialogue with this self-oriented member, fraternity/sorority professionals can help bring about cognitive dissonance and broaden her caring for others, hopefully allowing her to make smarter decisions in the future regarding risk management.

Gilligan’s theory can also be utilized when discussing the importance of philanthropic and service endeavors to sorority members. By raising money for a national philanthropy or spending a Saturday volunteering at a community service project, sorority women directly impact others and are exposed to individuals that have different needs than themselves. This contact has the potential to elevate service and fundraising into rewarding and sustainable experiences for sorority women.

BAXTER MAGOLDA'S THEORY OF SELF-AUTHORSHIP

Baxter Magolda's theory of self-authorship is a cognitive structural theory, which examines how one "takes in information, perceives experiences, and constructs meanings" (McEwen, 2003). Building on research conducted by Perry (1970) and Gilligan (1982), Baxter Magolda (1992) sought to consider how college students make meaning of their knowledge, with particular attention paid to how different genders underwent this process. During her research, Baxter Magolda found the influence of interpersonal and intrapersonal development on epistemological growth could not be separated. Over time, her research evolved to look at the ways in which students came to self-author their experiences rather than passively receive messages.

Baxter Magolda's research provided an empirical foundation for and expanded upon Kegan's (1994) idea of *self-authorship* (Baxter Magolda, 2001; Baxter Magolda & King, 2004). Self-authorship consists of three dimensions in which young adults create knowledge construction (epistemological), develop a personal identity (intrapersonal), and form relationships with others (interpersonal). This occurs at four developmental levels: external formulas, the crossroads, self-authorship, and building an internal foundation. The process begins in post-adolescence and continues for some time after, usually actualizing by age 30 (Baxter Magolda & King, 2004).

Baxter Magolda (2001) found that the influence of interpersonal relationships during college, primarily formed through participation in cocurricular activities, greatly influenced student sense of self. Students used these "external formulas" developed by others to make decisions. Even though students had developed more complex ways to make sense of things cognitively, they still looked to others to define their sense of self.

To successfully define one's own experience, an individual must move from "authority dependence [the external formulas] to the threshold of self-authorship" (Baxter Magolda, 2008, p. 279). Students that arrive at this crossroads must work to create an evolving sense of self not defined by the ideas of others. Some "provocative moment" likely propels students to move from the crossroads to self-authorship (Pizzolato, 2005). If powerful enough, this situation can "lead to commitment to, rather than only recognition of, the need to turn inward in a search for self-definition" (Pizzolato, p. 625).

The third developmental level in Baxter Magolda's theory, self-authorship, is the internalization of skills to ground one's decision-making process in one's own sense of self and the understanding of interdependence. These skills emerge from previous experiences that have shaped the person's sense of self. Previous experiences are evaluated in light of emerging internal beliefs, and one makes a decision to incorporate

the new information or dismiss it and rely on current ways of knowing. Baxter Magolda (1998) wrote:

Self-authorship requires evaluating one's own views in light of existing evidence and constructing a reasonable perspective as a result (the cognitive dimensions). Doing so however, hinges on one's ability to be influenced rather than to be consumed by others' perspectives (the interpersonal dimension). Being influenced but not consumed by others, or being interdependent, requires the possession of an internally generated belief system that regulates one's interpretations of experiences (the intrapersonal dimension). (p. 444)

In the fourth level, building an internal foundation, requires three elements: trusting the internal voice, building an internal foundation, and securing internal commitments. Trusting the internal voice is the most important element and must be enacted prior to the other two. Through the process, a person becomes aware of their epistemological, intrapersonal, and interpersonal processes of self-authorship and acquires increased self-confidence that allows for a consistent story of self to be enacted in diverse environments (Baxter Magolda, 2008).

Building an internal foundation allows one to carry their internal voice forth as a framework from which all decisions are made. Individual reactions to reality are influenced by this expanded belief system. The individual faces numerous external challenges to his/her sense of self, but continues to make sense of the world based on his/her internal compass. Individuals exist in a predetermined and self-developed way in spite of environmental factors; and they want relationships based on shared expectations and in which neither party loses their sense of individual identity. Securing internal commitments occurs when internal belief systems withstand the challenge of external forces. It is a reaffirming process necessary for persons to become their most authentic self (Baxter Magolda, 2008).

The implications for fraternity/sorority professionals are powerful. Students who begin to self-author their lives are encouraged to take ownership of their extracurricular experiences. Fraternity/sorority professionals must encourage students to write their own stories and create a sense of self that is authentic, independent, and interdependent. Important questions such as "Can a student begin to author individually unique stories in the context of a fraternity or sorority?" and "What are the environmental conditions that support or prohibit self-authorship in college students who are members of fraternities and sororities?" should be a focus of professional work in fraternity/sorority affairs.

Fraternity/sorority professionals should understand their role to aid students in moving from the external formula stage to creating internal confidence in making decisions. Students in the external formula stage approach fraternity/sorority advisors for assistance with many decisions and approval in making decisions based on authority figures. Fraternity/sorority professionals should encourage students to question why approval is

needed and use reflective questions to prompt their own thoughts and beliefs in a given situation. It is important to provide guidance, not answers, to allow students to formulate their own answers. Encouragement and guidance to develop students' own beliefs is essential.

In the crossroads stage students begin to form their own beliefs. These beliefs may or may not be aligned with those of the fraternity/sorority to which they belong. Fraternity/sorority professionals should prioritize advising on how to foster conditions in which members can grow and develop a sense of self while still connecting to a shared identity of being a member. Conversations with students about self-developed goals and those of their organization should be prioritized. It begins with a simple question: "What do you think?" They should help students speak openly and honestly about concerns and do so in an environment where they can explore and develop their own values and beliefs. Challenging students to critically reflect on their journey including positive and negative experiences is at the heart of self-authorship. The purpose is not to direct but to encourage students to acknowledge beliefs and articulate what makes the beliefs important. As students listen to their beliefs and voice, they are developing self-authorship.

Fraternity/sorority professionals also need to recognize their individual journey to self-authorship. Self-authorship is an ongoing process that one can engage in way into adulthood. There may be differences in opinion between professional and student, but understanding these differences will encourage reflection and growth of self-authorship for all involved.

STRANGE AND BANNING'S ENVIRONMENTAL THEORIES

Strange and Banning (2001) are viewed as experts on constructing and managing the impact of environments on student development. They outlined three aspects of the environment that influence student development: organized environments, aggregate/collective environments, and constructed environments.

Related to organized environments, Strange and Banning (2001) proposed there are seven structures that characterize the dimensions of an organization. These included complexity, centralization, formalization, stratification, production, efficiency, routinization, and morale. These structures fall within a range of extremes, from dynamic to static. Dynamic organizations are highly complex and flexible in design, respond easily to change, have low levels of centralization, and emphasize quality. Static organizations have low complexity and are highly centralized, formal, quantity-focused, and efficient. Organizations are deliberately constructed and reconstructed to seek specific goals, affecting the overall design of the environment and its functions. This impacts one's attraction to, function in, and satisfaction with an organization.

In terms of aggregate environment, people have individual characteristics that interact with other aspects of their environment (Strange & Banning, 2001). This includes environmental differentiation, environmental consistency, and person-environment congruence. Environmental differentiation is the degree of homogeneity within a group, or its breadth of character. A focused environment will be highly differentiated with primarily one type dominating group membership. In addition, the group identity is distinguishable to outsiders. This reinforces the patterns of the organization. Alternatively, a diffuse environment is undifferentiated with a diverse membership. Its membership is difficult to characterize as it is accommodating to a variety of behaviors.

Environmental consistency includes the characteristics of member type within a group. This can be understood as a consistent or inconsistent environment. A consistent environment has individuals of similar type. Within the organization there are similar rewards and demands among membership. An inconsistent environment has individuals of divergent types and provides differing rewards and demands to members (Strange & Banning, 2001).

The degree of fit between an individual and his or her surroundings creates person-environment congruence. This predicts an individual's attraction toward, stability in, and satisfaction with a given environment. Congruence occurs as a result of one's own beliefs being aligned with those of the environment. There is person-organization compatibility. If there is incongruence, there are three methods of resolution: change environment, change self, or leave the environment.

Constructed environment is focused on the collective, subjective views and experiences of participants. Perceptions, evaluation, and construction are impacted by participants' attraction to, satisfaction with, and stability in the environment. This can be understood through both the individual and the collective. Individuals construct their own experiences in an environment. There is also a shared ideology of the environment constructed by all members.

The environmental press, social climate, campus culture, and levels of culture impact constructed environments. The environmental press is the magnitude and direction to which an environment can influence both the individual and the group. Growth is encouraged through the congruence between individual need and environmental press. Dissonance between the person and environmental press can inhibit growth, resulting in dissatisfaction and turnover. Social climate is created by the verbal and nonverbal cues within the organization, the interpretation of which can vary by subgroups and individuals.

Campus culture can reflect the shared experiences, beliefs, and values that influence an experience. These are valuable, meaning-making devices that guide and shape behavior. Campus culture can convey a sense of identity, facilitate commitment to community, and enhance the stability of the community social system. This can be seen through levels of culture including artifacts (e.g., rites, ceremonies, rituals, myths, symbols, and physical settings), perspectives (e.g., norms, customs, and social conventions), values (practiced or ideal concepts), and assumptions (implicit and fundamental beliefs but rarely articulated). In addition to Strange and Banning (2001), one may review the work of Kuh and Whitt (1988) for an overview of culture.

The impact of environment on the individual is clear throughout Strange and Banning's construction of the theories. Environment, including culture, rituals, climate, relationships, and values, are not simply magical creations. An environment and therefore a culture will exist, but when treated with intention it can hold greater magnitude to achieve intended outcomes. From the function of organizations to the culture communicated through the environmental press, the student affairs professional has many opportunities to interpret and inform understanding of individual fraternities and sororities. This provides a valuable theoretical basis to utilize for the purpose of advising students, working with alumni, and to guide practice.

There is limited work pertaining specifically to fraternity/sorority environments. An agenda for examining practical use of and research on environmental theories in fraternity and sorority life must be developed. Bureau (2007) highlighted a variety of research topics regarding fraternities and sororities. Among them was hazing, and not just the frequency or type that occurred, but rather the organizational cultures that lend themselves to these behaviors. DeBard, Lake, and Binder (2006) suggested student affairs professionals have a responsibility to influence the environmental press toward academic success in fraternal organizations. Further understanding of the creation and perpetuation of organizational

cultures would prove valuable in interceding harmful membership experiences and better understanding of the conditions that allow the behavior to occur.

Professionals should work with students to examine the effectiveness of environments in enacting organizational purpose. Additionally, since both the individual and aggregate influence environments, professionals who work with fraternity/sorority members should have a sense of how to advise constituents on addressing a range of environmental issues. Conversations with students about how they describe the environment to outsiders can also influence how students conceptualize and explain the fraternity/sorority context.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ASSESSMENT

As fraternity/sorority professionals look to integrate student development theory into their daily practice, there will be a growing need to provide evidence of program and advising effectiveness. Upcraft and Schuh (1996) outlined ways in which student affairs professionals can utilize assessment in their work. Assessment done in fraternity/sorority advising should examine the overall end result in comparison to the expected outcomes.

First, assessment should be done in a purposeful way. During the process, it is important to ask oneself: Why is the assessment being done? What will be assessed? How will it be assessed? Who will assess? How results will be analyzed? How will results be communicated and to whom? Through focused assessment, professionals can begin to look at how many of the theories introduced in this piece play out in the audiences and where those conversations are most germane (Upcraft & Schuh, 1996).

According to Upcraft and Schuh (1996), there are seven components to be considered in the assessment process. Firstly, one must track the use of programs, services, and facilities. By doing this, professionals can begin to understand how resources are currently managed and if those resources are impactful in supporting the intended outcomes. It then becomes necessary to determine if efforts are aligning or not aligning with the individual needs of students. This determination is most critical to the long-term success and sustainability of fraternity/sorority chapters.

Third, the environment and student culture should be identified. Depending on the norms within the community and espoused values of the institution, outcomes and expectations may differ. Understanding the environment and culture will aid in the next component, which is assessing outcomes. When the data are collected, how are they interpreted and assessed is hugely important to the entire assessment process. The last two components are using comparable organizations and professional standards. Many inter/national organizations and campuses have a list of organizations or institutions that they utilize for benchmarking purposes. Making sure that the comparable organizations are a good fit is important in making sure data are interpreted most accurately. Those who read this are encouraged to look at the appendix of Upcraft and Schuh's, *Assessment in Student Affairs*, to see a comprehensive list of assessment instruments and tools.

Assessment and theory both play important roles in helping professionals measure the development fraternity/sorority life members gain throughout their collegiate experience. Theories can help explain behaviors of students, as well characterize development and growth that occurs throughout their years in college. Understanding the stages/positions/vectors of theories should help professionals understand where students are developmentally, allowing professionals to develop programs that will best fulfill the needs of their audience.

As previously stated, this resource guide does not include all of the student development theories that exist to help frame the work for student affairs professionals. However, it does highlight some of the most prominently used theories in the work of fraternity/sorority life professionals. Not all theories apply to every student; professionals need to understand each theory and be cognizant of the context of each situation to avoid misuse. Please utilize the corresponding handbook as an abbreviated reference; full of activities and case studies, it should serve as an excellent resource for practical application of these theories.

Learning student development theories may seem large and daunting initially, but the knowledge gained when one familiarizes his/herself with the research in this field is instrumental in being intentional with students. Fraternity/sorority life professionals can make their work more impactful when they take the time to build their toolkit and hone best practices. By keeping student development at the forefront of all actions and decisions, professionals can ensure that the fraternity/sorority life movement advances forward.

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