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The Influence of Fraternity and Sorority Characteristics on Alcohol Exposure: Who is at Risk?

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A thesis

presented to

the faculty of the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in Criminal Justice and Criminology

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by

Sydney Shupe

May 2022

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Keywords: Greek organization, alcohol exposure, fraternity, sorority, college campus

## ABSTRACT

The Influence of Fraternity and Sorority Characteristics on Alcohol Exposure: Who is at Risk?

by

Sydney Shupe

Fraternity and sorority membership has been among the highest contributing factors linked to increased exposure to alcohol consumption among college students. Many have argued that this association persists as a result of the drinking sub-culture among Greek organizations, and report that finding effective methods to minimize alcohol consumption among college students is critical. Using self-reported data from fraternity and sorority members at East Tennessee State University (n=107) the link between observed alcohol consumption and demographic characteristics of the individual Greek member and the Greek organization was examined through a quantitative lens. It was hypothesized that the demographic characteristics of the individual Greek member and the characteristics of the Greek organization would affect observed alcohol consumption. The results reveal no statistical significance for many of the hypotheses, however the data revealed significant findings when the living status of a Greek organization member and the link to observed alcohol consumption.

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## **Chapter 1. Introduction**

College is an exciting time of new experiences, friendships and making memories but unfortunately for many it is also a time where harmful and underage drinking occurs. About 80 percent of college students consume alcohol to some degree, while an estimated 50 percent of those students engage in binge drinking (NIAAA, 2021). The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) indicated that students see drinking while in college as an important part of the college experience and often tend to form excessive drinking habits that the college environment inhibits. The college environment, including the limited interaction with parents or adults, unstructured time, lack of enforcement regarding drinking laws and the availability of alcohol can intensify the issues surrounding alcohol use of college students (O’Conner, 2018). While there are many reasons college students consume alcohol, college is the first time in an individual’s life that guardianship is limited, especially for those who move into college dorms or off-campus living. No one is parenting their actions; therefore, they are entering into adulthood and drinking is an adult activity. More specifically, the first six weeks of freshman year are a particularly vulnerable time for alcohol related incidence and consequences to occur, 33 percent of freshman students consume alcohol within the first six weeks (Wetty et al., 2019). This can be a result of student expectations and the social pressures at the start of the semester (NIAAA, 2021).

Excessive alcohol use is prohibited in colleges and universities. Although the legal age to buy and consume alcohol is 21, the legislation bans underage drinking in many forms. Some colleges go much further and prohibit the consumption of alcohol on campus, otherwise known as having a “dry campus” Additionally violations of the alcohol laws on a campus can subject the violator with discipline from the school along with legal consequences. Although these laws

are well-intentioned, many college students experience the effects of alcohol misuse regardless of prohibition or other school policies that are put in place to control or counteract the negative consequences surrounding alcohol use. In recent years, alcohol related fatalities, assaults, arrest, and serious injuries on college campuses have sparked a developing interest surrounding what factors increase the likelihood of alcohol consumption.

While there are many reasons college students drink, there are equally as many consequences associated with abusive college drinking that not only affect college students but their families and the community. Death, injury, assault, sexual abuse, unsafe sex, academic problems, poor class attendance, hangovers, alcohol abuse and dependency, drunk driving, suicide attempts, health issues and potentially police involvement could all occur because of actions made while under the influence of alcohol (NIAAA, 2021). Stemming from epidemiological data from a variety of sources, Hingson and colleagues (2002) found that more than 1,400 college students die each year because of alcohol-related events, primarily car accidents, over 2 million college students drive under influence of alcohol or ride with a drinking driver. Moreover, most undergraduate students are unaware of the harmful effects of alcohol, the majority are unaware of the long-term consequences that heavy episodic drinking can cause; major liver problems, heart attacks, high blood pressure, irregular heartbeats, and cancer of the liver, throat, esophagus, colon, and rectum (Radcliffe, 2019).

Turrise and colleagues (2006) suggest that some groups of college students are at an increased risk compared to others of over-consuming alcohol and experiencing increased problems because of alcohol consumption. Research shows that Greek-letter social organizations, otherwise known as fraternities and sororities, are at the greatest risk for heavy drinking and alcohol related problems (Borsari et al., 2009). There are a variety of studies that

point to the correlation of Greek letter organizations and alcohol related problems, many of which focus on membership in a Greek organization and how it contributes to drinking behaviors in college, such as drinking frequency, motivations to drink and culture of Greek Life.

### **The Current Study**

As noted, the prevalence of alcohol on college campuses is notable, specifically the relationship between Greek organizations and alcohol use. While the original intention of Greek organizations has been academic clubs, the subculture has evolved into a predictive factor for increased alcohol consumption among college individuals. According to researchers, finding effective methods to minimize alcohol consumption among college students is critical (Moore et al., 2005). By identifying potential new variables, new insights into the efficacy of educational programs can lead to new, chapter-focused treatment approaches and interventions for fraternity alcohol misuse.

In this study the demographics specific to individuals in Greek letter organizations and the characteristics of the organization itself is examined at a *mid-sized university in the Appalachian region of the United States*. There is a clear correlation in alcohol prevalence on college campuses and an undeniable relationship between excessive alcohol use among individuals who are affiliated with Greek organizations. Additional research is needed in the context of alcohol use by fraternities and sororities, as alcohol continues to play a prominent role within these organizations posing a significant health risk to its members. The goal of the present research is to examine characteristics specific to a Greek organization and the members to determine predictive factors that will aid in the development of alcohol specific policy and programming that aims to reduce the misuse and abuse of alcohol among Greek organizations.

## Definition of Terms

**Alcohol Culture.** The general trend of college students' consumption of alcohol defining the students' social experience, which often leads to heavy and drinking. (Miller, 2020)

**Binge drinking.** The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA, 2021) defines binge drinking as “a pattern of drinking alcohol that brings blood alcohol concentration (BAC) tot 0.08 percent- or 0.08 grams of alcohol per deciliter- or higher. For a typical adult, this pattern corresponds to consuming 5 or more drinks (male), or 4 or more drinks (female), in about 2 hours.

**Chapter.** Chapter is a term that describes the local group of the larger national organization, which has its own Greek name (Fraternity & Sorority terminology).

**Fraternity.** A group of male college student who share a mutual purpose building a friendship (IFC, 2019).

**Greek Organizations.** Social organizations, known as a fraternities and sororities, at colleges and universities (Whipple & Sullivan, 1998).

**Interfraternity Council (IFC).** Campus level governing body for the North American Interfraternity Conference for 73 (inter)national fraternities (IFC, 2019)

**Leader.** In the context of this study, a leader is referred to as a student involved in fraternity or sorority life who holds or has held a position within the organization. Generally, those holding these positions in an organization will have been elected to the role by their peers. A leader may also include a person serving in any leadership role on a governing council, such as the Interfraternity Council, Panhellenic Council, or National Pan-Hellenic Council, which are also student-led organizations that govern the fraternities and sororities. (Miller, 2020)

**National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC).** Nine international Greek letter fraternities and sororities that are historically African American (NPHC, 2020).

**Panhellenic Conference (PHC).** Umbrella organization for 26 Greek-letter (inter)national women's sororities (National Panhellenic Conference).

**Sorority:** A society for female students who attend a university (Webster's New World Dictionary, 2004).

## **Chapter Summary**

Chapter One presents a brief overview of the issues and challenges associated with alcohol use. Noting that there are many changes that occur as an individual enters college years, pointing to the shift in lifestyle types. First year students are at an increased risk of the negative effects of alcohol, however all college students are at an increased risk in comparison to their counterparts who are not enrolled in college. While college students are among those who are consuming an increased quantity of alcohol at an increased rate, there are specific groups that are at a higher risk than their peers. Those who are members of Greek organizations are among those who are at the highest risk of over-consumption along with the negative effects associated with alcohol use. This chapter presents a brief overview of the issues and challenges associated with alcohol use by members of Greek organizations on a college campus.

Chapter Two provides a comprehensive review of the research specific to alcohol use on college campuses along with alcohol use among Greek organizations. Specifically, how individual, and environmental characteristics of fraternities/sororities and their members play a role in drinking motivations and facilitate alcohol consumption. The literature review will discuss the prevalence of alcohol on a college campus, how the pandemic played a role in the prevalence of alcohol on a college campus, the subculture of alcohol prevalence among

fraternities/sororities and the existing research that points to the reasons as to why this subculture is more at risk.

Chapter Three offers breakdown of the methodology that will be beneficial in determining the results of the study and provides the framework for the study. This chapter will describe the procedures used in the study such as the sample selection, design, instrumentation, data collection, and provide an explanation of the procedures used in analyzing the data. Lastly, chapter three will explain the limitations of the study.

## **Chapter 2. Literature Review**

Students across college campuses view their time at school as a period when heavy drinking is the norm (White & Hingson, 2013). The prevalence of drinking on college campuses is certainly present although research has suggested there are a variety of factors that may increase the prevalence. While considerable research has been conducted on alcohol consumption among Greek organizations, this research has been limited in several ways. For example, much of the research on alcohol focuses on college students and populations within the student body, with Greek life being a variable that is often a predictor of alcohol consumption (White & Hingson, 2013), without looking internally at the organizational characteristics.

The studies on Greek letter organizations that focus on internal factors are typically increasingly narrow, such as only looking at a specific variable (e.g., consequences, moral development, dependency issues) that develop because of alcohol consumption. While this research is important, the demographics of individual Greek members and chapters are equally important in further developing the current research. The current research is lacking the detail of other important factors such as differing between individual characteristics (gender, race/ethnicity) while also looking at the classification of the organization (social, academic, or religious) or council affiliation (National Panhellenic council, Pan-Hellenic, Inter-fraternal council). Past research examines Greek letter organizations, without considering demographic characteristics that were previously mentioned. These specific demographic factors: gender, race/ethnicity, classification, and affiliation, can provide a unique perspective while they are also important to include as characteristics that are vital in determining predictive factors of a Greek members alcohol consumption.

## **Alcohol Prevalence on College Campuses**

College students are in an exploratory stage of development, which contributes to increasing levels of substance use such as alcohol (Davis et al., 2018). Individual, environmental, and demographic factors have all been linked to a higher risk of alcohol use and abuse. Individual characteristics such as age, year in college, having a job, cognition (drinking intentions), perceived norms, participation in athletics or Greek organizations (Iconis, 2014) and peer influence (Windle et al., 2017) impact the prevalence of alcohol use. Environmental factors such as type of residence, college size (Iconis, 2014), unsupervised freedom (Kaynack et al., 2013), and increased access or exposure to alcohol (Garnier-Dysktra et al., 2012) also influence the likelihood that a student will consume alcohol. Arria et al. (2017) suggest that some college students have a history of alcohol use prior to college enrollment, and others begin to experiment while in school.

### **Individual Characteristics**

The prevalence of high episodic drinking in early adulthood was revealed in a World Health Organization (WHO: 2018) status report on alcohol and health. Globally the report indicated that increased drinking is lower in the 15-19 age group, and increased heavy drinking is higher in the 20-24 age group when compared to the overall population. It is worth noting that the legal age to drink varies from across the world. Regardless of when they first begin to drink, data shows that college students have higher levels of alcohol use and a drinking culture (Bravo et al., 2017; Piacentini & Banister, 2009). Although the World Health Organization does not directly compare the United States to other countries, the National Survey on Drug use and Health (NSDUH, 2019) reported similar findings; approximately 2.6 million people aged 18-25 one out of every ten had an alcohol disorder. According to the 2019 National Survey on Drug use



and Health (NSDUH, 2019) presented by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration, 52.5 percent of full-time college students ages 18-22 drank alcohol in the past month compared to 44.0 percent of others the same age that were not enrolled in college. The NSDUH also found that 33.0 percent of college students in the same age range reported binge drinking in the past month compared with 27.7 percent of non-college students the same age. Furthermore, 38% of college students reported being drunk in the past 30 days compared to the 24% of non-college peers (WHO; 2018) Thus, it appears that college-aged students are more prone to consume alcohol than other ages, and at an increased rate in comparison to their non-college peers.

Not only do college students drink more than other ages and their non-college peers, but they also seem to drink to excess. Haworth-Hoeppner et al. (1989) used a sample of first year college students to undertake a two-year longitudinal study assessing college student's adherence to the NIAAA (2021) standards (five and four drinks for men and women). Findings revealed 65.6% of first year college students exceeded the NIAAA limit for both weekly and daily drinking. In their study of incoming freshman, Boekeloo, Novik, and Bush (2001) found that the occurrence of drinking to get drunk- defined as the premeditates, purposeful consumption of alcohol with the intent to reach a state of intoxication- was most common among incoming freshmen. Demayo (2017) suggest that a first-time freshman is more vulnerable to the negative effects and consequences of alcohol, while upperclassmen, juniors, and seniors, are more likely to engage in drinking more often because the ease of getting the alcohol.

Given that college years are marked by social activity, peer use is one of the strongest predictors of adolescent alcohol use. Leppel (2006) suggested that working while in college may decrease the opportunity to drink because individuals have limited opportunity to drink as well as

not being associated with their college peers. More recent research shows that the likelihood of having a job is a predictor increased drinking in college students, about 70% of college students have a job while attending school (Rollins, 2021). Burch et al. (2021) findings suggested there is a positive correlation between working and alcohol use among employed, full time undergraduate college students. Butler and colleagues (2010) found that men are more vulnerable to work stress induced drinking.

There are significant differences in drinking habits based on the gender of students, amount of alcohol consumption and factors that influence them to drink. According to several studies, men report higher levels of alcohol intake than women, however men consumed fourteen drinks per week on average compared to seven drinks per week for women (Koebler, 2013; Popvska, 2012) These studies revealed that 60% of men and 64% of women exceed weekly limits. More specifically, Windle et al. (2017) suggest white males are identified as those who have the highest risk of consuming an increased amount of alcohol, more often than their counterparts. While males drink more often, Harrell and Karim (2008) suggested males' frequency of drinking is attributed to the desire of "feeling high," whereas females' drinking behaviors were attributed to coping with depressive symptoms. Similarly, Demayo (2017) suggest that females more often than males used alcohol as a stress relief and confidence booster. Considering the results, there is some evidence of gender convergence in drinking behaviors, and widespread alcohol consumption among college students and its implications needs additional examination.

Clarke et al. (2013) found that while there are significantly different drinking patterns and problems based on gender, women experience more problems and men drink more often, there are little to no differences in alcohol use and problems related to drinking when it comes to black

and white college students, regardless of gender. Although McCabe et al. (2005) report that data consistently show Caucasian students report the highest prevalence of heavy drinking followed by Hispanic and black students. Brawner (2015) rereports that African American college students do not have comparable levels of alcohol use or abuse than their white peers. According to McCabe et al. (2019), the link between perceived drinking norms among college students and level of alcohol use was not as strong among minority ethnicities that it was among white students, implying that minority ethnicities do not consume alcohol at levels that are comparable to white students.

### **Environmental Factors**

Consequently, several researchers consider alcohol consumption among college students to be normative behavior. Student drinking can be affected by factors related to specific college environments. Many of the traditional ways that college students meet new people or socialize involve alcohol consumption. The alcohol culture on a college campus can influence and direct students to drink to “fit in” or to make friends. According to Iconis (2014) fitting in is the most compelling reason college students’ drink. Being in college is directly related to heavy alcohol use (McCabe et al., 2005).

College marks a time when many youths first get a chance to experience with alcohol, and others go from experimentation to frequent use. Not only are college years a period of unsupervised freedom but also a time where there is an increase in responsibility and stress which leads to an increased use of alcohol. Ross and DeJong (2008) indicate that many individuals entering college are expecting to drink heavily, and campus environments tend to facilitate that choice by allowing for easy access to alcohol, marketing or advertising high risk drinking and weak enforcement from institutions. Students who live on campus in residence halls

use alcohol more often than students who live with their parents. Overall, the campus environment establishes alcohol related behavior patterns, specifically in the fall semester due to holidays, academic breaks and special campus events that are all times of greater risk.

Furthermore, alcohol use and abuse on a college campus can be influenced by the college environment, particularly the availability of alcohol and type of institution. Iconis (2014) notes that “party schools” have a reputation for being an institution where students can abuse alcohol with no repercussion. Abusing alcohol is also known to occur during 21<sup>st</sup> birthday celebrations, spring break, athletic events or tailgating, holidays, and “pre-gaming” events on college campuses. Foster (2010) discusses institutional traditions that involve excessive alcohol consumption, for example the University of Virginia is known for their “Fourth Year Fifth” where college seniors consume a fifth of liquor for the last home football game. Overall, drinking appears to be engrained in the culture of college in the United States (Wechsler et al., 2002; Iconis, 2014).

According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (2021), students who are attending colleges with Greek Life organizations or strong athletic programs are inclined to drink at an increased level and more often than other types of schools. Forse (2021) reported that social, enhancement, coping and conformity are all strong predictors of alcohol use in college students while positive reinforcement and team/ group, and sport related motivators are common in student athletes. Yagoda (2016) elaborated on the specific aspects of college life that attribute to alcohol use: drinking goes hand in hand with college sports (pre-gaming, and partying after the game) and Greek life is built around college drinking culture and tends to recruit individuals who already have an established drinking culture consequently condoning heavy drinking. Meilman et al. (1999) looked at athletic involvement and Greek involvement

simultaneously and found that those who participated in both consumed the most alcohol, although those who are Greek life members were more involved with alcohol consumption than athletes. Not only are Greek affiliated students more likely to drink, but they seem to be more likely to drink excessively. Those in college who are members of fraternities and sororities, Greek letter organizations, tend to be the heaviest drinkers (Wechsler et al., 2000; Wechsler et al., 2002). Findings from Wechsler et al. (2002) indicate that peer pressure for college students can be notably more intense for college students who are involved in the Greek life subculture. Chauvin (2011) found that Greek members are at a greater risk for abusing alcohol than their counterparts, this is attributed to the social norms surrounding alcohol use within the organization. Peer and social influences become the means throughout college, therefore students form of social norms allowing them to embrace standards that are compatible with their peers. Greek students stand out in the collegiate atmosphere because they see overuse of alcohol as a norm more than other students.

While there are a variety of studies that are focused on individual, environmental and demographic factors associated with the alcohol use of college students, additional research is necessary to identify direct factors associated with alcohol consumption of college students, specific to the target audience. To address the concerns of alcohol use on college campuses, understanding why college students abuse or misuse alcohol is the first step in creating effective policy and programming to combat this issue. According to Helle et al. (2021) college students are open to a wide variety of approaches concerning their alcohol use although Calnan and Davoren (2021) found that students were skeptical or ambivalent about the potential efficacy of alcohol prevention programming. In a systematic review of alcohol education programs, Calverley, Petress and Blitvich (2020) suggest that some have the compacity to be effective,

however it is important that the educational programs are specific to the target group. Therefore, understanding the target population is vital in developing effective programming to help combat the health and safety issue surrounding alcohol use and misuse on a college campus.

### **The Origins of Greek Organizations**

The Greek letter organizations have a history that goes back hundreds of years where the first recognized Greek organization, Phi Beta Kappa, was created by a group of men at the College of William and Mary in Virginia in 1776. Phi Beta Kappa was created in response to literary societies, which were exclusive social groups that have a mutual interest in a specific form of literature and were the only other social organizations on a college campus at this time. The purpose of Phi Beta Kappa was to achieve high academic standing, form strong friendships among members and uphold high moral standards. These values have been carried forward into the future by current Greek letter organizations, although fraternities and sororities are facing more scrutiny from the public, stakeholders, and campus leaders as reports of policy violations that are commonly discussed on news outlet (e.g., Miller, 2020). Biddix et al. (2014) suggest while reviewing other issues associated with Greek life, there are many publicized instances of sexual assaults, drug use, hazing and academic dishonesty that cause in a negative perception of Greek life in the eyes of the public.

The term “Greeks,” is also used to refer to members of fraternities and sororities. The concept of Greek-letter organizations comes from Phi Beta Kappa, which was the first organization to use Greek letters instead of the Latin letters that had previously been used to name student organizations. The Phi Beta Kappa chapter expanded and established chapters on other campuses, such as Yale and Harvard (Phillips, 2005). While Phi Beta Kappa did not remain a social fraternity after rebranding into an academic honor society at both Yale and

Harvard, the principles in which it was founded were adopted by several other Greek-letter organizations across the world, many of which have survived to this day. Sororities arose not long after fraternities, and like the counterparts they were modeled after, sororities expanded to other campuses as well.

### **Fraternities and Sororities**

Until the early 1800s, women attended male-dominated colleges. As the number of women who were attending college increased, many male-dominated colleges became coeducational and the topic of women joining a fraternity was presented (Torbenson & Parks, 2009). Although there were a few cases of women joining fraternities, the documentation is limited, women were never allowed full membership. As a result, women established their local Greek organizations, still known as fraternities. Alpha Delta Pi and Phi Mu were the first women's fraternities, established at a women's only college, Georgia Wesleyan, in 1851 and 1852 (Torbenson, 2012). Gamma Phi Beta was the first sorority, established in 1874 at Syracuse University (Torbenson, 2012). The terms sorority and fraternity then became the terms used to distinguish female and male Greek organizations. Fraternities and sororities hold many similar characteristics including the use of badges, secret initiation rituals, motto's, and hand signs.

Even though this specific subculture of students and the foundation are still relevant in numerous college campuses across the world, Greek letter organizations have experienced their fair share of adversity. Greek letter organizations are influenced by almost every impact felt by the college or university it is a part of, considering they are entities within the larger campus community. Student enrollment and student moral principles are two of the most critical consequences. Colleges are affected by changes that occur within society therefore so are the Greek letter organizations within the community. According to Brown, Parks and Phillips

(2005), World War I, the great depression, World War II, The Vietnam War, and The Civil Rights Movement all had impactful effects on the enrollment of members and participation within fraternal men. As particular events had caused fraternities to fall out, many persevered through. Many events in history had other effects on Greek organizations. Particularly, when racial tensions were high in history, several race-based Greek letter organizations sprang up such as Alpha Phi Omega, the first African American fraternity which was established in 1906 at Cornell University. Following the lead of fraternities and sororities, “Latino Greeks” and “Asian Greeks” followed the footsteps of the “Black Greeks.”

Following the emergence of fraternities and sororities, an umbrella (aka “National organization) became an important part of Greek life. The national organizations are in place to keep consistency of rules and regulations that the fraternities and sororities must follow as they were developed as a response for collaboration and resources. Many campuses enforce regulations that require an organization to be recognized by a national association to be recognized on a specific campus. Greek letter organizations are part of a larger umbrella organization, known as a national council. Fraternity and sorority councils hold their own set of rules and resources from national headquarters along with professional staff members that can guide chapters (Johansen & Slantcheva-Durst, 2018). The national councils that will be discussed are National Panhellenic Conference (NPC), North American interfraternity Conference (NIC), and National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC).

First known as the inter sorority conference, the National Panhellenic Council was formed in 1900 as an umbrella organization that housed sororities (Johansen & Slantcheva-Durst, 2018, p.5). Following the NPC, the North American interfraternity conference (NIC) emerged as the umbrella organization for fraternity (Johansen & Slantcheva-Durst, 2018). As



racial segregation was still prevalent, the NIC did not invite any non-white or non-Christian organizations to join. In 1930, the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) was established as the umbrella organization for the historically black fraternities and sororities that are known as the “Devine Nine” (Johansen & Slantcheva-Durst, 2018). Other national organizations were formed for multicultural fraternities and sororities, such as the national association of Latino Fraternal Organizations (NALFO), the National Multicultural Greek Council (NMGC), and the National Asian Pacific Islander American Panhellenic Association (NAPA) were established in 1997 (Johansen & Slantcheva-Durst, 2018).

Fraternities and sororities hold many similar characteristics including the use of badges, secret initiation rituals, moto’s, and hand signs while also having specific recruitment guidelines they must follow by the national organization. The initial documents for Greek life organizations generally included the expectations set for members such as high academic expectations, perpetuating brotherhood, or sisterhood, striving for individual excellence, developing leadership qualities, and emphasizing campus and community involvement (Torbenson & Parks, 2009). The appeal of these organizations was to find a brotherhood or sisterhood, as many organizations may say “a home away from home” while attending college. While there may be benefits of joining a Greek letter organization, Torbenson and Parks (2009) suggest there has been a shift in the focus of membership to excessive drinking through playing games or drinking songs, that result in peer pressure, as a way for brothers to participate. Although the negative components of Greek life that are highlighted in the media may sway public perception to believe fraternities and sororities do not live up to the values and standards upon which they were founded, the principles and beliefs are still present and influential in the Greek system. For example, Yanoschik (2016) demonstrates how a Greek organization must reconstruct their image as a

national organization that was misrepresented by the actions of a few members. The public perception of Greek organizations come from news reports of sexual assaults, rape cases, and cases of alcohol-related deaths (Biddex et al., 2014). While some stereotypes may have some validity to them, the analysis of fraternities and sororities needs more in-depth investigations before conclusions can be drawn.

### **Greek Life Experience**

Among college campuses in the United States, there are approximately nine million students who are currently members of fraternity or sororities (Cheney et al., 2017). Supporters of fraternities and sororities point to the leadership, philanthropic, and community service initiatives that are offered to students through these organizations (Binder, 2003). Meanwhile, those in opposition argue that Greek organizations promote students self-segregating into same-sex groups whose members share similar characteristics and shift the student's focus from academics to social (Maisel, 1990; Strange, 1986).

Greek life recruitment websites highlight benefits offered to students because of joining a fraternity or sorority. Among the benefits are the increased opportunity for leadership and campus involvement, lifelong friendships and social networking, the potential to provide a place to live, service, philanthropy, and volunteering opportunities, and an increased level of academic performance compared to other students on campus. Long (2012) studied the outcomes of fraternity and sorority membership, with a focus on the academic, personal development, and social outcomes of affiliation. While there is a positive relationship between student success and Greek life affiliation, there are mixed results regarding the impact of joining a fraternal organization on a student's academic performance. For example, DeBard et al. (2006) and Davis et al. (2018) found that students who joined a fraternity were more likely to attain a lower grade

point average by the end of their first year in comparison to their non-affiliated peers. In contrast, Debard and Sacks (2010) found a positive correlation between fraternity and sorority involvement and their academic performance within the first year of affiliation. The research surrounding academic performance of Greek affiliated students focuses on first-year students or seniors (Debard et al., 2006; Debard & Sacks, 2010; Hayek et al., 2002; Pike, 2000), and is conducted at single institutions (Debard et al., 2006; Pike, 2000).

Leadership development is often pointed to as a benefit of being affiliated with Greek life. Of those who have studied leadership development, findings indicate there are limited differences in affiliated and non-affiliated individuals in campus leadership initiatives (DiChiara, 2009; Kelley-Weeder, 2008). Kimbrough (1995) studied leadership involvement of affiliated and non-Greek affiliated among African American men at a predominantly white university. Findings show that black fraternal organizations (NPHC affiliated men) offer significant leadership development for African American students at predominantly white universities.

Few studies explore the community service involvement of Greek affiliated members. Asel et al. (2009) and Hayek et al. (2002) did find that first-year students and seniors are more likely to be involved in service activities than nonaffiliated peers. More recently, Bureau and McCall (2011) found there was no difference in the number of community service hours performed by fraternity and sorority members. This is not surprising as many national councils (NPC and IFC) require community service hours to be submitted from each member.

Another notable benefit of joining a fraternity or sorority is the lifelong friendships that develop and the increased ability to network. Long (2012) found that fraternity and sorority members reported a high sense of belonging and peer interaction because of their membership experience, and a heightened level of social integration is associated with persistence and strong

interpersonal abilities are associated with career success (Myers & Lawson, 2005). Although Mara and colleagues (2018) found that fraternal membership lowered a student's grade point average by approximately 0.25 points, they found that among those who were affiliated future income was raised by approximately 36%, suggesting that fraternal membership produces large gains in social capital. However, Grubbs (2006) suggests that Greek students may begin a job with a lower starting salary due to their lower grade point averages. Routon and Walker (2014) suggest fraternal membership increases the probability of finding a job post-graduation, Marmaros and Sacerdote (2002) also find that membership is positively associated with networking and with finding a high-paying job post-graduation. Parcarella and Terenzini (2005) discussed the positive impact Greek life involvement has on social networking skills with brother and sister but also with successful alumni.

On the other hand, membership into Greek life can be expensive and time-consuming and come along with a negative social stigma or reputation. From weekly meetings to daily events, Greek life is undoubtedly time-consuming. Nesloney (2013) studied Greek student's over-involvement and found that female students who were sophomores or juniors who took on a leadership role were feeling overwhelmed within their sororities. Although the origins of Greek life are academic in nature, Greek life organizations have come under fire in the last century. Given the alleged negative social impacts of Greek-letter organizations, such as rape culture, hazing of new initiates, and cases of alcohol poisoning, recent literature has sparked debate (Syrett, 2009). Today's media highlights these incidents that showcase irresponsible behavior and insensitivity of fraternity and sorority members.

Murnen and Kolman (2007) found that fraternal membership was positively related to rape-supportive attitudes and self-reported sexually aggressive behaviors although in 2014

Corprew and Mitchel examined the same relationship and found no significant interaction between membership and rape-supportive attitudes and self-reported sexual aggressive behaviors. It is interesting to note that in a study published by Mohler-Kuo, Dowdall, Koss, and Weschler in 2004, sorority members were 74% more likely to experience rape than non-sorority women. Sanday (2007) hypothesizes that this finding is a result of sorority members' increased interaction with fraternity members. Several studies point to alcohol as the primary contributor (Benson et al., 2007; McCauley et al., 2009), and as a result fraternity, parties are contributors through the availability of alcohol.

There are many characteristics that have been discussed as negative results that correlate with Greek affiliation, specifically for fraternity men, an increase likelihood of problematic gambling (Biddex et al., 2014; Rockey et al., 2005), increased academic dishonesty (i.e. cheating) (Vandehey et al., 2007; Premeaux, 2005), campus civility (i.e. disrespectful disruption, problematic behaviors) (Caboni et al., 2004) an increased likelihood of fake ID ownership (Martinez & Sher, 2010; Nguyen et al., 2011). Most notably, hazing may occur as a negative result of Greek affiliation. Joyce (2018) describes hazing practices to include but are not limited to: binge drinking, ridicule, isolation, sleep deprivation, paddling, beating, and physical exhaustion.

While there are a variety of negatives associated with Greek life, the common predictor of those discussed is the use of alcohol. The subculture of drinking could be the factor that is increasing the negatives within fraternities and sororities. For those participating in a Greek organization, alcohol use may have serious implications. Although many members suffer from the harmful effects of alcohol, many non-members are also vulnerable to the risky habits exhibited within the Greek subculture. Many studies show a clear correlation between Greek

organizations and increased alcohol consumption in college, although other variables must be considered in research and creating policies. While the organization and the members must be considered, leadership roles, the environment such as living status, council affiliation and purpose of the organization, and individual characteristics should also be collectively considered. Prior research has given some consideration to each of these potentially influential variables although there has been little attention that addresses each of these characteristics together to determine if they are independent or dependent on one another.

### **Leadership Roles**

In a study that included both fraternity and sorority leaders, Cashin et al. (1998) found that those in leadership roles consumed more alcohol and consumed alcohol more frequently than regular members. Subsequently, Capece and colleagues (2002) found as level of participation in a Greek letter organization increased so did the amount of time spent drinking, those who had leadership positions were found to participate in drinking most often. In contrast, Fairlie et al. (2010) found that Greek leaders at a southern U.S. university consumed less alcohol than other members. They go on to suggest that future research surrounding alcohol consumption in relation to Greek leaders and members is needed to explore the extent of the variability. Miller (2020) conducted a qualitative study on undergraduate leaders in Greek organizations and found that most participants indicated that their role caused them to decrease their use of alcohol and they made efforts to change the habits of the members in the organization. It is worth noting that Coleman and Glover (2010) notes that students in leadership roles, not just Greek organizations, were more likely to drink at higher rates. This could be attributed to the idea that certain leaders who consume more alcohol may be attracted to the title rather than representing the values of the organization. Following Bidde et al. (2014) implications for research, it is suggested to use an

engagement scale or frequency participation measure to represent involvement more accurately among leaders.

### **Role of the Environment**

White and Hingson (2013) took a qualitative approach to understand undergraduate alcohol use and focused on students living situations. Consistent with Lorant et al. (2013), and Wechsler et al. (2002) findings, Greek affiliated housing inhibits those who are most vulnerable to alcohol use and alcohol related problems. According to Lorant et al., (2013) environmental factors specific to housing situations have been studied less than the social or individual factors related to alcohol use. The specifics of the environment a college student lives in can contribute by accounting for characteristics of their living situation that may be predictors of increased use of alcohol. Biddix et al. (2014) revealed that college students drank and binged more often in fraternity and sorority houses than other locations.

Traditionally, Greek letter organizations have recognized houses where members of the organization reside throughout their time in college. Although it is worth noting that over the past decade, universities have strayed away from having houses for these organizations, or have developed alternative forms of housing, and some colleges have never had housing for the organizations at all. Gibson et al. (2017) looked at the role of the environment among Greek-affiliated students. In comparing a campus with university recognized Greek housing and a campus with non-recognized Greek housing, findings revealed that universities with recognized Greek housing reported significantly lowered levels of alcohol use. The findings suggest that universities consider having on-campus Greek housing to provide a safer option for students. Universities and colleges that recognize Greek housing on campus will have the ability to have a greater influence on regulations and behaviors of students consuming alcohol. While this is

interesting, the research has failed to consider universities that are classified as “dry,” meaning they do not allow alcohol on the campus at all. Although Brown-Rice and Furr (2015), find that banning alcohol in Greek housing does not reduce levels of drinking. Along the same lines, Lorant et al. (2013) suggest that having alcohol free Greek housing on a college campus can lead to the assumption that alcohol use will be displaced rather than reduced. Tyler et al. (2018) also looked at environmental factors and housing type on alcohol consumption among college students. Consistent with other research, students who live in Greek housing and those who live off campus had the highest drinking levels.

While the research discussed is relevant it is lacking in accounting for specifics of the living status such as determining if every resident who resides in the same place on off campus housing are all Greek affiliated or if a house that Greek life members reside in off campus is considered an unofficial Greek house. In a study related to drug use among college students, Sidani et al. (2015) examined associations between Greek involvement and living arrangement by classifying students as non-member, non-resident member and resident member. The literature on Greek letter organizations and living status related to alcohol consumption also lacks focus on college campuses that do have Greek letter organizations yet do not have recognized Greek houses or have alternative forms of housing for the members.

### **Council Affiliation**

Early literature suggests that minorities within a college do not drink as much as whites because they do not participate in white campus culture that encourages drinking, such as Greek life (Engs & Hanson, 1985; Haworth-Hoepfner et al., 1989; Wechsler et al., 1998). While looking at the alcohol consumption of Greek organizations, Capece and colleagues (2002) determined that race was more of a predicting factor than Greek organization involvement, age



and gender concerning alcohol use. Findings suggest that alcohol is predominate among males who do not participate in Greek organizations although race does matter. Participation in Greek organizations has more of an effect for white students than black students within the sample. Furthermore, in comparing white and black Greek organizations Whipple et al. (1991) and Berkowitz and Padavic (1999) suggested that black Greek organizations (NPHC affiliated) are more service oriented while their white counterparts focused more on social ties. According to Colman and Glover (2010) and Capone et al. (2007) future research should include a more ethnically diverse representation in this field of research. Over a decade later, Cheney et al. (2017) suggested the same thing, saying there is little ethnic diversity among participants when it comes to research surrounding Greek organizations, while

A synthesize of research conducted by Biddex et al. (2014), found that there is a lack of research that distinguishes between council affiliation, the Interfraternity Council (IFC), National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC), National Panhellenic Conference (NPC), and core focus of groups (academic, cultural, professional, service, religious, and/or social). Most research that focuses on alcohol use and Greek affiliation focus on fraternal men (IFC and NPHC) while Biddex et al. (2014) and Huchting et al. (2007) mention the increased number of sorority women consuming alcohol over the past few decades and the need for research on sorority women and alcohol consumption to improve policy initiatives. This may be result of the historical context of sororities and the alcohol-free policies surrounding affiliated housing and events. In fact, the National Panhellenic Council (NPC) planned or sponsored events must be alcohol free. Although Ragsdale et al. (2012) indicated that sorority members, regardless of alcohol-free policies, still display an increased level of drinking than (female) students who are not members of sororities. Turrisi et al. (2006) suggested that possible differences of fraternities and sororities alcohol

consumption could be explained by policy differences. As Biddix et al. (2014) mentions, the national council datasets do not allow researchers to desegregate members by organizational council, size of organization, or member engagement. Many researchers have classified fraternity and sorority involvement as a discrete classification, which has prevented distinguishing gender, a major limitation to the current research.

### **Purpose of the Organization**

When looking up the purpose of Greek life, each university or college has a unique vision statement that represents Greek life on that specific campus. More specifically when looking up a national fraternity or sorority, each organization will have a purpose or a vision statement that is more specifically tailored to them as it is in line with the historical context upon the values that organization was founded on. More specifically, Sigma Kappa, a national Panhellenic sorority (NPC) states “The purpose of Sigma Kappa sorority is to provide lifelong opportunities and support social, intellectual and spiritual development by bringing women together by positively impacting our communities.” Sigma Alpha Epsilon, a national fraternity (IFC), states that “The mission is to promote the highest standards of friendship, scholarship and service for our members based on the ideas set forth by our founder.” Beta Upsilon Chi, another national fraternity (IFC), states their “purpose is establishing brotherhood and unity among college men based on the common bond of Jesus Christ.” Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc., (NPHC) states the purpose of their organization is to “Strengthen and serve proactively the brotherhood... reaffirm and maintain a strong commitment to brotherhood, scholarship and service.”

Each organization has a purpose unique to them, while this statement is the forefront of each fraternity and sorority, there is a significant lack of research that includes any information about the purpose of each organization. While each fraternity or sorority has their purpose

statement, understanding how members classify their organization and the relation to alcohol exposure could lead important policy implications for preventive and educational measures. Considering the lack of research, the purpose of Greek organizations in relation to alcohol exposure warrants further investigation.

### **Greek Organizations and Drinking Activities**

Park et al. (2008) states “Greek members are more likely to drink, drink heavily, to experience negative consequences due to drinking and to meet the criteria for an alcohol use disorder” compared to their non-Greek counterparts. McCabe et al. (2005) suggest the subculture of drinking in college environments paired with the enabling environment that Greek organizations create are the leading factors of heavy drinking. Even non-Greeks believe that Greek members norms surrounding alcohol use are greater than those of non-Greeks (Cashin et al., 1998.) Consuming more alcohol, at increased levels above the environmental norm, is more conventional and acceptable for Greek members resulting in increased levels of binge drinking among these individuals (Carter & Kahnweiler, 2000). Furthermore, Greek organization members are 65% more likely to engage in heavy episodic drinking than non-Greek students and suffer increased negative consequences related to alcohol consumption such as driving under the influence, experiencing hangovers, and skipping class. Greek organizations have a variety of events that facilitate alcohol use, such as formals or informal, date parties, pregameing for chapter events, tailgating, recruitment, and intermural sports. Although Read et al. (2003) studied motives for consuming alcohol that are specific to Greek members and found no notable variable other than the friendship networks that develop in Greek organizations alongside the social norms of the organization

## **Alcohol Use Among College Students in a COVID Era**

In Spring of 2020 the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) spread quickly across the world, and as result U.S. universities shut down their campuses and moved to virtual instruction to slow the spread of the virus (Sahu, 2020). As a result of the shutdown, Elmer et al. (2020) reported that students were faced with changes in living situations, social distancing protocols, lack of social interaction, and increased stress that ultimately resulted in declining mental health. As previously discussed, alcohol prevalence among college students is a notable attribute of the college experience. Given that COVID-19 is rather recent, there are limited research that discuss how the pandemic affected college students drinking habits. Among the limited research, there are mixed results. Jackson and colleagues (2021) conducted two studies concerning COVID-19 and college alcohol consumption, in both studies COVID-19 related to increases in consuming alcohol were followed by decreases in quantity, heavy drinking and drunkenness. Although in the second study, those who were heavier drinkers (pre-COVID-19) reduced their drinking and those who were not heavy drinkers either increased or remained the same. The results suggested a decrease in social drinking, this can be attributed to the social distancing or “quarantine” requirements proposed by the Center for Disease and Control (CDC). Consequently, increases were attributed to more time and boredom. This data also suggests that the decline in alcohol consumption was due to the change in living condition.

College binge drinking declined by 33 percent over the past decade in 2020, three out of four students reported that they did not binge drink. From 2019 to 2020 alcohol consumption rates significantly decreased at multiple measures, overall consumption, underage binge drinking, and heavy drinking. Particularly 30-day alcohol use and 30 days been drunk, asked on The Monitoring the Future Survey (Johnston et al., 2004; Schulenberg & Maggs, 2002),

decreased significantly from 6.4 and 7.2 percentage points. In considering the pandemic, declines from 2019 to 2020 could be attributed to a reduced social time with friends although The Monitoring the Future Study (2015-2020) data showed high intensity drinking has continued to decline for college students.

While there is limited research surrounding the impact that COVID-19 had on college students and alcohol use, the NIAAA suggest that the return to college post-COVID will propose more of a risk for students on campus. A concern of the NIAAA is the reduced inhibitions because of alcohol impairment may reduce their risk of contracting the coronavirus or spreading it. Alcohol may also be used to calm anxiety that may be inclined due to the pandemic.

The restrictions that came along with the pandemic impacted college campuses in a variety of ways, McCreary et al. (2021) indicated that these restrictions were felt deeper within campus Greek organizations. While there is little data to point to the specific changes felt by these organizations, the 2021 Dyad Strategies White paper point to three trends that the impact of COVID-19 on the fraternity experience (McCreary et al., 2021). The data provided in this report points to three notable trends that are associated with the fraternities and the COVID-19 Pandemic. The most notable and applicable trend that applies to this discussion, is the increased alcohol use. Fraternity members report an increase in binge drinking and overall consumption over a three-year trend. Binge drinking had been steadily decreasing since 2016 among both sororities and fraternities, until Fall 2020 where the pattern of self-reported binge drinking is clear- fraternity members are consuming more alcohol and are moving further into alcohol dependency. Another trend points to a higher concentration of always joiners; students who were on the fence about joining a fraternity were less likely to join in Fall 2020 because of the pandemic. This is worth noting because previous research within the Dyad Strategies White

Paper research suggests that always joiners have higher social motivation, drink more, and are more likely to have alcohol- related risk incidents (McCreary et al., 2021). The last trend notes a significant spike in social dominance hazing motivation; researcher suggest this is due to new members not “earning their membership” because of the restrictions of the pandemic. While this study is one of the only studies that have data regarding fraternities and the affect that COVID-19 had in terms of alcohol use, the limitation here is the lack of information surrounding sororities.

Overall, there is a limited amount of research that involves Greek organizations, alcohol use and the impact of COVID-19. Among the limited research, the findings are mixed, with one study suggesting alcohol use decreased and another suggesting the increase. This is worth exploring further to contribute and develop shared strategies aimed at addressing alcohol trends that have developed because of the pandemic specific to a particular group of college students including Greek organization members.

## **Chapter Summary**

Much of the literature agrees that there is a positive correlation between college students and alcohol consumption depending on several individual and environmental factors. The prevalence of alcohol on college campuses across the United States is clear. There are many individual and environmental factors that increase the likelihood of alcohol prevalence on a college campus. One of these environmental factors could be the membership in a Greek organization. Furthermore, there is a clear relationship between Greek organizations and alcohol consumption. The research also agrees that certain characteristics that members of fraternities and sororities have put them at an increased likelihood of consuming a higher level of alcohol than their non-Greek peers. Throughout the literature review these themes were found in many

different studies, however, they had not been compared to one another. This study attempts to fill the gap by accounting for demographic characteristics of individual Greek members and the Greek organization. Chapter three will outline the research design that will be used for this study.

### **Chapter 3. Methodology**

The purpose of the current research is to explore the perceptions of the fraternity and sorority members when asked about individual and chapter characteristics and alcohol use. This chapter will address the research methods that will be used in this study, including research questions, hypotheses, research design, description of the sample, and sampling technique. A survey was created to collect self-report data from undergraduate students who are current members of a fraternity or sorority at East Tennessee State University.

#### **Data**

##### *Sample*

The population of the current study was students enrolled at East Tennessee State University who are active members of a Greek Organization. East Tennessee State University is a public state university that is in northeast Tennessee with 13,713 students including 10,704 undergraduate students and 3,008 graduate students. Of these students, 10,683 are full-time students and 3,030 part-time students. The gender distribution is 5,212 males and 8,501 females (Unvistats, 2021). In order to survey the individuals in this population, each member of a Greek organization will receive a survey link to their ETSU email. The initial roster of all Greek organizations indicates there are a total of 572 members. In an effort to intentionally oversample the survey was sent to all fraternity and sorority members. The recruitment of participants has occurred through an email to each fraternity and sorority member. The emails were obtained from The Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life.

Potential participants received an email at the beginning of the Spring 2022 semester, with a description of the purpose of the study, the potential participants were informed that the survey will take approximately five minutes to complete, and then the survey link was provided.



Before the potential participant began the survey, they were asked to read an informed consent document and agree to the terms listed. All participants were above the age of 18, and ETSU students who are active member in a fraternity or sorority and reside in the United States. There was no incentive offered for any individual completing this survey. All potential participants were informed that participation is completely voluntary, and their responses were kept anonymous.

### ***Data Collection Instrument***

Respondents were asked to respond to a survey (see appendix) containing questions designed to explore their perceptions of Greek life alcohol exposure in relation to Greek organizational characteristics. The first section of the survey explores demographic characteristics including age, gender, race, class standing, employment status, and time spent in a Greek organization. The next section asks about characteristics specific to the fraternity or sorority member and the Greek organization, by asking what council their organization is a part of (NPC, NPHC, IFC), classification of the organization (academic, religious, or social), current living situation, roommate demographics, and leadership position. The following section includes questions that are focused on alcohol observations and perceptions within fraternities and sororities. Additionally, the survey includes a similar set of questions as the previous two sections, yet this set of questions related to the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had on perceptions of alcohol exposure among the members of fraternities and sororities. The questions relating to the COVID-19 pandemic were contingency questions for Greek life members who self-report that they are juniors or seniors. Greek life members who participate in the survey who are freshman or sophomores have no experience in a Greek organization prior to the COVID-19

pandemic, therefore, their responses are not necessary. The survey was sent to all fraternity and sorority members, totaling 572 members.

## **Variables**

### ***Dependent***

The dependent measure is the level of alcohol exposure, which is a continuous variable. The dependent variables of the survey were measured by two questions: How many days a month did an individual observe fraternity members consuming alcohol, and how many days a month did an individual observe sorority members consuming alcohol. An ordinal regression model was used to facilitate the interaction of both fraternity consumption and sorority consumption with the independent variables.

### ***Independent***

There are a variety of independent variables in the current study. Some of these variables include demographic characteristics such as age, gender, race, academic standing, employment status, and number of years as a member of the Greek organization. The first independent variable, age, is measured at the ratio level, with participants providing their current age at the time of completing the survey. Gender was dichotomized into two categories; female received a value of 1 and male received a value of 0. Race and ethnicity were also dichotomous measures, white and non-white. Each category received a value, white received a value of 0 and non-white received a value of 1. Academic standing is measured as categorical variable by participants selecting one of four categories: freshman, sophomore, junior and senior, Employment status was dichotomized into employed and not employed, employed receiving a value of 1 and not-employed received a value of 0. The time, measured in semesters, an individual has been a member of a Greek organization was measured at a ratio level, with the highest value being eight

semesters. Residential status is also a categorical measure, while characteristics of a member's roommate are proposed as a contingency question, however the variable was dichotomized and having a Greek roommates was given a value of 1 and not having a Greek roommates was given a value of 0. The purpose of a Greek organization was dichotomized in to social and non-social categories, social was given a value of 1 and non-social was given a value of 0. The independent measure of leadership roles is a dichotomous measurement, holding a leadership role (1) and not holding a leadership role (0) were binary measures. When asking if I appeared that members drank more often because of COVID-19, no was given a value of 0 and yes was given a value of 1. There were five categories given when asking respondents where the heaviest drinking occurred during COVID-19 (see appendix).

## **Analysis**

### ***Hypotheses***

Research question 1: Will alcohol exposure among college students who are members of a Greek organization differ based on the individuals' demographic characteristics?

Hypothesis 1: The gender of a Greek member will influence their exposure to alcohol.

Hypothesis 2: A Greek members age will influence exposure to alcohol.

Hypothesis 3: A Greek member's race will influence exposure to alcohol.

Hypothesis 4: A Greek member's academic standing will influence exposure to alcohol.

Hypothesis 5: A Greek member's employment status will influence exposure to alcohol.

Hypothesis 6: The time a Greek member has spent in a Greek organization will influence exposure to alcohol.

Hypothesis 7: Leadership roles will influence the exposure to alcohol.

Research question 2: Will alcohol exposure among college students who are members of a Greek organization differ based on the characteristics of the organization?

Hypothesis 8: The Greek organizations council affiliation will influence a Greek members exposure to alcohol.

Hypothesis 9: The purpose of a Greek organization will influence the exposure to alcohol.

Research question 3: Will alcohol exposure among college students who are members of a Greek organization differ based on the residential status of the member?

Hypothesis 10: The living situation of Greek members will influence the exposure to alcohol.

Hypothesis 11: Members of a Greek organization who live with members of another organization will influence the exposure to alcohol.

Hypothesis 12: Members of a Greek organization who live with members of the same organization will influence the exposure to alcohol.

Research question 4: Will alcohol exposure among college students who are members of a Greek organization differ during the Spring 2020 and Fall 2020 semester (during COVID-19)?

Hypothesis 12: COVID-19 will have an effect a Greek Member's exposure to alcohol.

### ***Statistics***

Descriptive statistics were computed for the variables within the current research that will determine the demographic statistics of the sample that was collected. Frequencies were analyzed for alcohol exposure and the independent variables to illustrate the fraternity and sorority members' characteristics and alcohol exposure. Ordinal regression was used to

determine the relationships and significance between the dependent variables, and the independent variables.

### **Chapter Summary**

This study is a quantitative approach to explore the perceptions of the fraternity and sorority members when asked about individual and chapter characteristics and alcohol use. This methodology is used to collect data that informs the researcher about the characteristics of the current study. The participants of the study are undergraduate members of East Tennessee State University who are members of a fraternity or sorority. The participants were contacted via email obtained from the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life. A total of 572 surveys were sent out to account for a potential low response rate. The instrument for the study was a self-report questionnaire, with questions pulled from Caron, Moskey, and Hovey's 2004 study "Alcohol use Among Fraternity and Sorority Members: looking at change over time." The self-report questionnaire was used as the best measure for fraternity and sorority members' alcohol exposure and observed alcohol use.

## Chapter 4. Results

Frequencies were computed for the data using SPSS software. Considering the dependent variables were asked on a Likert scale, the data is ordinal. Therefore, we can only say that one score is higher than another, not the distance between the points. Ordinal regression was used to predict an ordinal dependent variable given one or more independent variables.

### Descriptive Statistics

Frequencies of the data are reported in Table 1. Frequencies are reported for race, gender, employment status, time spent in a Greek organization, leadership roles, purpose of the organization (social or non-social), living status, and the impact of COVID-19 on observed alcohol consumption. There were 107 participants in this study (n=107). Of the data used, respondents who failed to respond to one of the categories used in the measurements for this study were counted as missing data. As shown in Table 1, the sample was overwhelmingly white (94.9%) and female (78.6%). The employment status was dichotomized and showed that 65.7% (64) of the participants were employed and 34.3% (34) were not employed. There were 43.4% (43) of participants who reported that they currently hold a leadership position in their Greek organization (see Table 1). There were 53.2% (50) of respondents who indicated that they had Greek roommates, and 44.9% (44) who did not. Additionally, 93.4% (71) of participants indicated that the purpose of their organization was social while only 6.6% (5) indicated that the purpose of their organization was non-social. Furthermore, 66% (33) individuals reported that COVID-19 had an impact on observed alcohol consumption.

**Table 1***Frequencies*

Variable		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	21.0	21.4
	Female	77.0	78.6
Race	White	94.0	94.9
	Non-white	5.0	5.1
Employment status	Employed	65.0	65.7
	Not employed	34.0	34.3
Hold a Leadership Role	Yes	43.0	43.3
	No	56.0	56.6
Purpose of Organization	Social	71.0	93.4
	Non-social	5.0	6.6
Greek Roommates	Yes	50.0	53.2
	No	44.0	44.9
COVID-19 Impact	Yes	33.0	66.0
	No	17.0	34.0

Descriptive statistics are shown in Table 2. The survey asked for the respondents' age using an open-ended question, allowing respondents to manually enter their age. The mean age of the sample was 20.09, with the youngest respondent being 18 years old (15.2%) and the oldest being 22 years old (15.2%), who on average have been a member of their organization for 4.21 semesters, a little over 2 years. Respondents reported spending 2.7 days a month attending a fraternity or sorority party. Greek members observed sorority members consuming alcohol about 4.15 days a month on average and observed fraternity members consuming alcohol 2.5 days a month on average.

**Table 2***Descriptive Statistics*

Variable	Mean	Median	S.D.
Age	20.09	20.00	1.31
Semesters in Greek Life	4.21	4.00	2.21
Days a month observing sorority members consuming alcohol	4.15	5.00	1.41
Days a month observing fraternity members consuming alcohol	2.50	2.00	1.47

**Statistical Analysis**

Because the major focus of this research is to establish the relationship between observed alcohol consumption, the dependent variable, and demographic characteristics of the individual Greek member and the Greek organization, the independent variables, an ordinal regression model was used. Ordinal regression allows the researcher to determine which of the independent variables have a statistically significant effect on the dependent variables. In order to get the data for exposure to fraternity alcohol consumption and the data on exposure to sorority alcohol consumption, two separate ordinal regression models were run for each hypothesis.

A goodness of fit test is used to make inferences about the values and to determine how well sample data fits a distribution from a population with a normal distribution. A Chi-Square test was used to determine goodness of fit, and the level of significance showed .139 in the observed sorority member consumption, and .205 in observed fraternity member consumption, both being above .05, showing that other predictors could have explained the data better.



Observed values for the pseudo R2 (using the Nagelkerke estimate) indicated that approximately 14% of the variation in sorority member exposure and 13% of the variation in fraternity members exposure were explained by the models.

### ***Research Question 1***

Building from the previous research, the first research question asked, “will alcohol exposure among college students who are members of a Greek organization differ based on the individuals’ demographic characteristics?” The dependent variable “How many days a month do you observe sorority (or fraternity) members consume alcohol?” and independent variables- age, gender, race, leadership status and time spent in a Greek organization-were analyzed. Research question one was analyzed through seven hypotheses, the ordinal regression model is shown in Table 3. Hypothesis one posits that “The gender of a Greek member will influence their exposure to alcohol.” Gender was collapsed into a dichotomous variable of male and female. The ordinal regression model showed no support for this hypothesis for either fraternity members (p=.243) or for sorority members (p=.196). The second hypothesis was that “A Greek member’s age will influence exposure to alcohol.” Findings from the ordinal regression model showed no significant differences between the age of an individual and exposure to alcohol for either fraternity (p=.102) or sorority members (p=.350). See table 3.

**Table 3***OLS Regression Results*

Variable	Observed Sorority Member Consumption		Observed Fraternity Member Consumption	
	Estimates	P-value	Estimates	P-value
Age	-0.242	0.35	0.441	0.102
Tenure	0.173	0.23	-0.145	0.329
Gender	-0.708	0.196	0.663	0.243
Employment	0.166	0.716	0.532	0.262
Social Organization	1.041	0.244	-0.294	0.743
Greek Roommates	-1.079	*.0150	0.936	*.0420
Leadership Roles	0.502	0.255	-0.293	0.52
R <sup>2</sup>		0.141		0.128

\*p<.05

Hypothesis three states, “A Greek member’s race will influence exposure to alcohol,” and hypothesis four states, “A Greek member’s academic standing will influence exposure to alcohol.” Due to lack of racial diversity within the sample hypothesis 3 was not analyzed. Hypothesis 4 was also not analyzed due to multicollinearity issues with age and academic standing. The fifth hypothesis posits that “A Greek member’s employment status will influence exposure to alcohol.” Employment was collapsed into a dichotomous variable of employed and not employed. Again, the ordinal regression models showed no significant differences between employment status and exposure to alcohol for fraternity members (p=.262) or sorority members (p=.716). Hypothesis six indicated that “The time a Greek member has spent in a Greek organization will influence exposure to alcohol.” The ordinal regression models showed no significant differences between the time an individual has spent in an organization and exposure to alcohol for either fraternity (p=.329) or sorority members (p=.230). Hypothesis seven stated, “Leadership roles will influence the exposure to alcohol.” The ordinal regression models showed no significant differences between the Greek organization’s member having a leadership role and

exposure to alcohol for either fraternity ( $p=.502$ ) nor sorority members ( $p=.255$ ). These hypotheses show no overall support for the overall research question.

### ***Research Question 2***

The second research question asked, “Will alcohol exposure among college students who are members of a Greek organization differ based on the characteristics of the organization?” Originally the second research question was analyzed with two hypotheses. Hypothesis eight stated “The Greek organizations council affiliation will influence a Greek members exposure to alcohol.” Due to the low response rate, no analysis was run for hypothesis eight. Hypothesis nine states, “The purpose of a Greek organization will influence the exposure to alcohol.” The purpose of the organization, social, academic, or religious- were analyzed. Due to the limited variety of responses, the responses were collapsed into a dichotomous variable, social and nonsocial. The ordinal regression models showed no significant differences for observed alcohol exposure of fraternity consumption ( $p=.743$ ) based on the social nature of the organization nor was their significance of observed exposure for sorority member alcohol consumption ( $p=.244$ ). Overall, the results do not support research question two.

### ***Research Question 3***

The third research question asked, “Will alcohol exposure among college students who are members of a Greek organization differ based on the residential status of the member?” Research question three initially had three hypotheses. The tenth hypothesis states that “The living situation of Greek members will influence the exposure to alcohol.” Hypothesis twelve posits that “Members of a Greek organization who live with members of the same organization will influence the exposure to alcohol.” Hypotheses ten and twelve were not analyzed due to a low response rate.

Research question three was analyzed through hypothesis eleven. In agreement with prior research, hypothesis eleven states “Members of a Greek organization who live with members of another organization will influence the exposure to alcohol.” The ordinal regression models did reveal significant differences between the Greek organization member living with another Greek organization member and exposure to alcohol for fraternity ( $p=.042$ ) and sorority members ( $p=-.015$ ). Interestingly, the direction of the relationship varied between sorority alcohol consumption and fraternity alcohol consumption. All respondents who lived with other Greek members reported significantly higher levels of exposure to fraternity alcohol consumption but significantly lower levels of exposure to sorority alcohol consumption.

#### ***Research Question 4***

The last research question asked, “Will alcohol exposure among college students who are members of a Greek organization differ during COVID-19?” Although limited, hypothesis twelve agrees with prior research focused on Greek alcohol exposure and COVID-19. Hypothesis twelve states that “COVID-19 will have an effect on a Greek Member’s exposure to alcohol.”

COVID-19 is rather recent, therefore there is limited research that discusses how the pandemic affected college students drinking habits. Respondents report that it did appear that members of a fraternity or sorority drank more often because of COVID-19. Findings revealed that twice as many respondents indicated that fraternity or sorority members drank more often because of COVID-19 in comparison to the respondents that reported observing drinking less often (see Table 4). It is also worth mentioning that 63.3% (31) respondents reported that the heaviest drinking during COVID-19 was observed at off-campus apartments or houses. Frequencies can be found in Table 4.

**Table 4***During COVID-19 Heaviest Drinking Occurred*

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	Frequency	Percentage
On campus housing (residence hall)	3.0	6.1
Off campus apartments or houses	31.0	63.3
Greek affiliated fraternity events	3.0	6.1
Greek affiliated sorority events	1.0	2.0
At local bars	11.0	22.4

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**Chapter Summary**

The study's purpose was achieved through a survey that was created to collect self-report data from undergraduate students who are current members of a fraternity or sorority at East Tennessee State University. While some of the hypotheses presented in Chapter 3 were supported by the statistical analysis in this chapter, many were not. Ordinal regression showed that living status is an influencer in determining observed alcohol use among fraternities and sororities. However, these results do not support the other hypotheses that were expected to be predictors of alcohol use.

The parameter estimates results indicate that having Greek roommates is the only independent variable that is a significant predictor ( $p = .015$ ) of observed sorority alcohol use. Additionally, the results of having Greek roommates were the only independent variable that is a significant predictor ( $p = .042$ ) of observed fraternity alcohol use. Chapter 5 will interpret and describe the significance of the findings considering prior research about fraternity and sorority alcohol use.

## **Chapter 5. Discussion**

As a person approaches their college years, several changes occur, indicating a transition in lifestyle styles. First-year students are at a higher risk of negative consequences from alcohol use than young adults that do not pursue college. While college students are among those who consume more alcohol at a faster pace than the general population, certain groups are at a higher risk than their peers. Prior research has shown that members of Greek groups have an increased danger of overconsumption and the harmful consequences of alcohol abuse (Syrett, 2009).

A comprehensive review of the research specific to alcohol use on college campuses along with alcohol use among Greek organizations was conducted to analyze the broad concepts prior research had obtained. Specifically, how individual, and environmental characteristics of fraternities, sororities, and their members play a role in drinking motivations and facilitate alcohol consumption. The literature review discussed the prevalence of alcohol on college campuses, individual characteristics, environmental characteristics, the origins of Greek organizations, the Greek life experience, the role of the environment, council affiliation, purposes of organizations, and how the pandemic influenced the prevalence of alcohol on college campuses.

Many studies agree that there is a positive relationship between college students and alcohol intake, which is influenced by a variety of individual and environmental variables. It is undeniable that alcohol is prevalent on college campuses across the United States. Membership in a Greek group might be one of these contextual variables that contribute to the prevalence of alcohol (Turrisi et al., 2006). Furthermore, there is a significant link between Greek organizations and the usage of alcoholic beverages. The research also confirms that members of

fraternities and sororities have specific features that make them more likely to consume more alcohol than their non-Greek peers (Borsari et al., 2009).

## **Findings**

This study sought to fill this gap in research by accounting for the demographic characteristics of individual Greek members and the Greek organization. While some of the hypotheses presented in Chapter 3 were supported by the statistical analysis of Chapter 4, many were not. The first research question expected that demographic factors would influence exposure to fraternity and sorority members' consumption of alcohol, but the results showed that gender, age, employment status, time spent in the organization, and leadership roles had no statistical significance in this sample. According to several studies that focus on gender differences in comparison to alcohol consumption, men reported higher alcohol intake than women (Koebler, 2013; Popvska, 2012). Age was not a significant predictor of observed alcohol use among the sample. According to the 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH, 2019), 52.5% of full-time college students ages 18-22 drank alcohol in the past month. The same survey also found that 33% of college students reported being drunk at least once in the past 30 days (NSDUH, 2019). This study also confirmed that students are exposed to alcohol during college with the average respondent observing sorority alcohol consumption approximately 4.15 days per month and observing fraternity members using alcohol an average of 2.5 days per month.

Prior research (Windle et al., 2017) indicated having a job would impact the prevalence of alcohol use. Although in the current study, alcohol prevalence was measured by observed behavior. The lack of significance could be explained by Greek organization members working; therefore, they do not observe alcohol use as much as someone who does not work a job. Based

on Windle et al. (2017) had the research asked about personal use, if the Greek organization member works a job, their alcohol prevalence might be more than those who are not employed.

Prior research (Cashin et al., 1998), suggested that those in a leadership role consumed alcohol more frequently than members who were not in a leadership role. Biddex et al. (2014) suggested using a frequency scale to measure leadership engagement to paint a more accurate picture of involvement among leaders. Among this sample, over half (51.1%) of leaders reported spending less than one hour on their current leadership role. The lack of involvement within the Greek member's leadership role gives insight into the leadership role having no significant impact in the current study. Capece et al. (2002) found as the level of participation in a Greek letter organization increased so did the amount of time spent drinking.

Research question two posed hypothesis 6, which expected a relationship between the purpose of the Greek organization and the influence on observed alcohol exposure of Greek organization members. While many organizations have historical context upon which they are founded, many being academic, religious, or social, there was no current research that investigates the purpose of Greek organizations and alcohol consumption or exposure. However, this study did attempt to fill the gap; by dichotomizing the responses into social or nonsocial the results revealed that 89.36% of respondents reported their organization as social. Interestingly, all organizations on the current campus, according to their national standards are classified as academic organizations. Regardless, the low response rate was not able to achieve any significant findings in determining a relationship between the purpose of a Greek organization and the influence on observed alcohol exposure.

Research question 3 included hypothesis 7 which expected there to be a relationship between members of a Greek organization who live with other members of an organization who



will influence observed alcohol exposure of Greek organization members. Prior research has suggested that Greek affiliated housing inhibits those who are most vulnerable to alcohol use (Lorant et al., 2013; Welchsler et al., 2002; White & Hingson, 2013). However, according to Lorant et al. (2013), environmental factors specific to the housing situation have been studied less than any other factors related to alcohol use of Greek organizations.

Prior research has also suggested that universities and organizations have strayed away from having Greek housing (Brown-Rice & Furr, 2015). The university that the present study was conducted at, does not have Greek houses for all organizations. In this case, having Greek roommates was used as a measure of the role of the environment, and 53.2% respondents indicated that their roommates are members of a Greek organization as well, and 44.9% (44) did not have roommates or their roommates were not members of a Greek organization. Interestingly this was the only factor in the current research that showed statistical significance in regards to observed alcohol exposure.

However, the results were surprising when looking at the direction of the relationship between sorority alcohol consumption and fraternity alcohol consumption. It was expected that living with another Greek member would significantly increase observed alcohol consumption. This was true for fraternity men. Although the data reveals this was not true for observed alcohol consumption of sorority women. Perhaps this is a function of the low sample size of fraternity men that live with other Greek members. While the current results disagree with previous research, it is worth mentioning that the respondents of the current study were overwhelmingly females (78.6%). Future research should explore a larger sample size of Greek members who also have Greek roommates, focusing on the differences in fraternities and sororities

Given that COVID-19 is relatively recent, there is limited research discussing the pandemic and the impact of alcohol consumption or exposure of college students, more specifically the impact on fraternity or sorority members. Among the limited research, there are mixed results. Jackson and colleagues (2021) conducted two studies concerning COVID-19 and college alcohol consumption. In both studies COVID-19 was related to increases in consuming alcohol that were followed by decreases in quantity. McCreary et al., (2021) investigated the impact COVID-19 had on fraternity membership in terms of alcohol use, the limitation here was the lack of information surrounding sororities. This study attempted to fill that gap through research question 4 which included hypothesis 8, “COVID-19 will affect Greek member’s observed alcohol exposure.” Over half of the respondents suggest that observed alcohol behavior increased because of COVID-19. This could be attributed to university policy on COVID-19, which was following the CDC guidelines at the time (quarantine, mask mandates, social distancing, etc.).

The “special message” regarding COVID-19 that is found upon visiting the National Institution on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) website goes to show that the pandemic did impact alcohol use among college students:

In light of the current coronavirus pandemic, it is especially important this Fall and Spring for college students to take the necessary measures to protect their health and well-being, particularly if schools have resumed in-person or hybrid classes. Especially now, students and college administrators need to understand the risks associated with alcohol use.

## **Implications**

Findings from the current study serve to guide future research surrounding Greek affiliated organizations and the impact of alcohol prevalence and exposure. While the effects of living with other Greek roommates appear to be the strongest predictor of alcohol exposure in the current study, it appears that the effects of COVID-19 should also be taken into consideration in determining factors contributing to alcohol prevalence and exposure of fraternities and sororities.

Prior studies have suggested that there is a link between Greek organizations and drinking behaviors. As a result, alcohol education and prevention measures should be tailored to the audience. Universities are always working towards implementing effective policies and programming to reduce risk. The current research suggests when planning effective policy and programming focusing on alcohol education and risk reduction of fraternity and sorority members, living status and the impact of COVID-19 should be taken into consideration.

## **Limitations and Future Research**

This study does have important limitations that must be discussed. While some scales and measures in this study were used in previous research, the validity of some measures within the study can still be questioned. First and most notably, the low and limited response rate (n=107). With a small sample size, it is difficult to find significant relationships from the data. It is important to have a sufficient sample size to draw valid conclusions. With about 572 individuals occupying Greek life on the current campus, the sample size was overwhelming female and white. Due to the lack of diversity in many of the responses, inferences about specific hypotheses were not able to be met. Again, perhaps due to the low response rate, many variables showed no statistical significance, indicating that other variables would have been more effective predictors

of the dependent variables. When measuring alcohol exposure, the dependent variables, two questions were asked: How many days a month did an individual observe fraternity members consuming alcohol, and how many days a month did an individual observe sorority members consuming alcohol. In retrospect, it might have been better to ask this as one question: “How many days a month an individual may observe fraternity and sorority members consuming alcohol”

Unfortunately, there was a plethora of missing data. The missing data was consistently seven to nine responses for each question, although the missing data were not consistently the same seven to nine individuals. Therefore, the option to skip questions was a significant limitation to this study. It also appeared that the study may have been too long. The results indicated that as the respondents got further into the study, the response rates decreased. While the sample size was a notable limitation, future studies could consider a different methodological approach with a narrower focus to acquire more detailed information.

There were notable limitations when it came to analyzing the impact of COVID-19 on observed alcohol consumption. In retrospect, when analyzing COVID-19 the survey should have included specific semesters, such as Spring 2020 and Fall 2020. Had the specific semesters been included, there would have been a reference point to measure this data further. Furthermore, future studies should be specific when asking questions regarding COVID-19.

Ultimately a study on one campus cannot be generalized for all Greek organizations on other college campuses. Due to the low response rate, the current study cannot be generalizable to Greek organizations at East Tennessee State University. Additionally, there are inherent limitations to quantitative studies. Self-reported data contain several potential sources of bias. First, respondents may have selective memory where they may or may not remember past

experiences. Second, respondents may not remember the scope or timeline of events occurring. Next, the respondents could exaggerate events to be more or less significant than they were. Lastly, self-reported data must be taken at face value.

## **Conclusion**

The current study attempted to build upon previous literature that suggested the link between Greek organizations and increased alcohol prevalence on college campuses. Research has suggested that being a member of a fraternity or sorority increases the likelihood of experiencing the negative repercussions of alcohol consumption (Turrisi et al., 2006). Researchers contend that there is limited research on effective programming and policy when it comes to fraternity and sorority members and alcohol use (Biddex et al., 2014). However, the research suggests that effective programming and policy should be specific and direct to the intended audience to ensure effective results (Calnan & Davoren 2021; Helle et al., 2021). Nonetheless, college campuses, more specifically Greek organization members, are experiencing ongoing and increasing issues surrounding alcohol use. Although the results revealed that the demographic characteristics that were explored in this study show little to no effect on observed alcohol use of fraternities and sororities at East Tennessee State University. While the demographics that do contribute to fraternity and sorority alcohol use are uncertain, further examination of this phenomenon should be explored to fully understand what factors do contribute to alcohol use. There is a need for policy changes and educational programming to reduce the negative results of alcohol use in this high-risk population.

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## APPENDIX: Thesis Survey

### The Influence Fraternity And Sorority Characteristics on Alcohol Exposure: Who is at Risk?

The first section will ask about demographic characteristics.

1. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Which of the following best describes your gender?
  - a. Female
  - b. Male
  - c. Other
  - d. Prefer not to say
3. Which of the following best describes your race?
  - a. Black or African American
  - b. White or Caucasian
  - c. Asian or Asian American
  - d. American India or Alaskan Native
  - e. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
  - f. Other
4. What is your current employment status?
  - a. Not employed
  - b. Employed part time (20 hours a week or more)
  - c. Employed full time (21 hours a week or more)
5. How many semesters (Fall or Spring) have you been a member of your Greek organization? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How many hours per week do you spend doing chapter related task or obligations?
  - a. Less than 1 hour
  - b. 1-3 hours
  - c. 3.1-6 hours
  - d. 6.1.-8 hours
  - e. More than 8 hours
7. Do you currently hold a leadership role (executive board) within your Greek organization?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
8. How many hours per week do you spend on your leadership position within your chapter?
  - a. Less than 1 hour
  - b. 1-3 hours
  - c. 3.1-6 hours
  - d. 6.1.-8 hours
  - e. More than 8 hours

The next section will ask about characteristics specific to the fraternity or sorority member and the Greek organization.

9. How would you classify your organization?
  - a. Academic
  - b. Religious
10. Social Which national council does the chapter you are affiliated with fall under?
  - a. National Panhellenic council (NPC)
  - b. National Pan-Hellenic (NPHC)
  - c. Inter-fraternity council (IFC)
11. Where do you officially reside during the current semester while at college?
  - a. Campus residence hall or dorm
  - b. Fraternity or sorority living
  - c. Off campus apartment or house with roommates
  - d. Off campus apartment or house with parents/family
  - e. Other:\_\_\_\_\_
12. Are your roommates' members of a Greek organization?
  - f. Yes
    - i. If yes, are they members of the same Greek organization as you?
      1. Yes
      2. no
  - g. No

**The next section will ask about alcohol observations and perceptions within fraternities and sororities.**

13. How many times a month do you attend a fraternity or sorority party?
  - a. Every day
  - b. A few times a week
  - c. About once a week
  - d. A few times a month
  - e. Once a month
  - f. Less than once a month
14. How many days a month do you observe members of sorority members consuming alcohol?
  - a. Every day
  - b. A few times a week
  - c. About once a week
  - d. A few times a month
  - e. Once a month
  - f. Less than once a month
15. How many days a month do you observe members of fraternity members consuming alcohol?
  - a. Every day
  - b. A few times a week
  - c. About once a week

- d. A few times a month
  - e. Once a month
  - f. Less than once a month
16. How many days per month do you usually observe a sorority member binge drinking?  
 NIAAA defines binge drinking as a pattern of drinking alcohol that brings blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to 0.08 percent - or 0.08 grams of alcohol per deciliter - or higher. For a typical adult, this pattern corresponds to 4 or more drinks (female), in about 2 hours.
- a. \_\_\_\_\_
17. How many days per month do you usually observe a fraternity member binge drinking?  
 NIAAA defines binge drinking as a pattern of drinking alcohol that brings blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to 0.08 percent - or 0.08 grams of alcohol per deciliter - or higher. For a typical adult, this pattern corresponds to consuming 5 or more drinks (male), in about 2 hours.
- a. \_\_\_\_\_
18. Where do you perceive the heaviest drinking among fraternities and sororities to occur?
- a. On campus housing (residence hall or dorm)
  - b. Off campus apartments or house
  - c. Fraternity parties
  - d. Sorority parties
  - e. At local bars
  - f. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
19. Which of the following best describes your current academic standing?
- a. Freshman
  - b. Sophomore
  - c. Junior
  - d. Senior

Contingency questions: If the answer to previous question is Junior or Senior.

**The next section will ask about alcohol observations and perceptions within fraternities and sororities during COVID-19.**

20. Did it appear that members of a fraternity or sorority drank more often because of COVID-19?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
21. Did it appear that members of a fraternity or sorority consumed more alcohol (binge drinking) because of COVID-19?  
 NIAAA defines binge drinking as a pattern of drinking alcohol that brings blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to 0.08 percent - or 0.08 grams of alcohol per deciliter - or higher. For a typical adult, this pattern corresponds to consuming 5 or more drinks (male), or 4 or more drinks (female), in about 2 hours.
- c. Yes
  - d. No



22. During COVID-19, Where do you perceive the heaviest drinking among fraternities and sororities to occur?
- a. On campus housing (residence hall or dorm)
  - b. Off campus apartments or house
  - c. Fraternity parties
  - d. Sorority parties
  - e. At local bars
  - f. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
23. During COVID-19, where did you perceive the heaviest drinking among fraternities and sororities to occur?
- a. On Campus housing (residence hall or dorm)
  - b. Off campus apartments or houses
  - c. Greek affiliated fraternity events
  - d. Greek affiliated sorority events
  - e. At local bars
  - f. Other (please specify)
  - g. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
24. Since the resumption of normal activities has your observation of alcohol use among fraternity or sorority members:
- a. Increased
  - b. Decreased
  - c. N/A

East Tennessee State University offers a variety of resources related to alcohol use. Find policies and laws related to alcohol use and how to get help below:

<https://www.etsu.edu/students/counseling/aod/aodresources.php>

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