

A Review, Examination and Recommendations for the University of Maryland National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) FY25

Submitted to the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs

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Executive Summary

Charge: Our charge was to offer recommendations that will assist University of Maryland in building a forward-thinking agenda which not only supports current students and the success of these organizations, but also fully acknowledges the country's historically racialized environment with emphasis on southern land-grant institutions in the early 20th century that led to the establishment of National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) organizations. Further, we were charged to consider what shifts and changes in policy could be made in the Department of Fraternity & Sorority Life (DFSL) culture and delivery of services that would effectively empower, uplift and invest in students in a way that ensures they and their organizations are centrally woven into the fabric of the University's Greek-Lettered Organization (GLO) Life community.

Recommendations: Please see Section VII. *Recommendation Summary* of the Report.

The Value of the Recommendations: NPHC organizations promote the growth and development of students while providing a sense of institutional belonging that creates supportive alumni, fosters civic engagement and generates community involvement.

We recognize that the process of reinvigorating the NPHC presence on campus cannot be achieved instantly. It is our hope the Division of Student Affairs (DSA) and DFSL will provide the infrastructure and financial support to ensure that NPHC organizations have a healthy and robust presence and sustainable future. By providing recommendations that can be implemented in phases, we provide a blueprint for success. If all the recommendations were to be implemented, an ideal NPHC experience would reflect:

- An equitable environment where NPHC's culture is respected for its distinct identity
- Consistent engagement with NPHC alumni and graduate chapter advisors
- Restoration and preservation of the unique NPHC traditions
- Honoring the NPHC history with a physical representation on the premises of the university

Conclusion: Our role was to gather and give voice to the opinions and insights of the focus group participants. These sentiments have been transformed into recommendations which we hope will serve as a roadmap for implementation by the DSA and DFSL. Most NPHC organizations at the UMD have achieved their 50th Anniversary milestone on campus with one organization (Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority,

Inc.) looking to attain this benchmark on April 3, 2026. The NPHC Task Force believes that if the recommendations outlined in this report are implemented that we will be able to celebrate the next 50 years at the University of Maryland.

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University of Maryland National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) FY25

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I. Introduction

The University of Maryland, College Park's (UMD or University) Department of Fraternity and Sorority Life (DFSL) is housed within the Division of Student Affairs (DSA). In spring 2022, Assistant Vice President (AVP) of Student Affairs James McShay, Ph.D. shared a vision for better understanding the long-standing concerns held by the UMD chapters of the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) (affectionately known as the Divine Nine or D9)¹ student and alumni communities vis-a-vis its relationship with DFSL. Also, sitting on the cusp of NPHC organizations' celebration of 50 years of service on the College Park campus, the occasion presented an ideal opportunity to reflect on the legacy and future of these organizations.

In the spring of 2024, Vice President of Student Affairs (VPSA) Dr. Patricia Perillo convened the NPHC Task Force (Task Force) to review, research and provide recommendations which would strengthen DFSL's ability to provide culturally-relevant and sustaining support to current students, graduate chapter advisors, and UMD NPHC alumni.

II. Charge

The Task Force was charged April 10, 2024 by Dr. James McShay, to investigate factors which have impeded a greater sense of belonging and success for students and alumni who are members of the fraternities and sororities affiliated with the NPHC at the University. Our charge was to offer recommendations that will assist UMD in building a forward-thinking agenda which not only supports current students and the success of these organizations, but also fully acknowledges the country's historically racialized environment with emphasis on southern land-grant institutions in the early 20th century that led to the establishment of NPHC organizations.² Further, we were charged to consider what shifts and changes in policy could be made in the DFSL culture and delivery of services that would effectively empower, uplift and invest in students in a

¹ The Divine Nine or D9 is the term of endearment for the nine historically Black Greek-Lettered Organizations officially known as the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC).

² Land-Grant universities were instituted with the passing of the first Morrill Act in 1862. This legislation allowed for the appropriation of land to U.S. states and territories for the establishment of collegiate institutions for the study of agriculture. See Dula, T. (2016). *Prospering Because That's It's History: Black Resilience and Honors Development in Higher Education: Morgan State University and the State of Maryland, 1867-1988* (Publication No. 10128606) [Doctoral; dissertation. University of Maryland]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. p. 8.

way that ensures they and their organizations are centrally woven into the fabric of the University's Greek-Lettered Organization (GLO) community.

III. Task Force Composition & Role

The Task Force was composed of campus staff, NPHC advisors, and a representative from the UMD Black Alumni Association. Several task force members are Terp alumni who joined their D9 organization on the College Park campus and all are members of a D9 organization, an attribute that both the Chair and AVP felt was critical for this work. Our role was to gather and give voice to the opinions and insights of the focus group participants. These sentiments have been transformed into recommendations which we hope will serve as a roadmap for implementation by the DSA and DFSL.

IV. Process

The Task Force understood it would be important to have a foundational understanding of the current state of Greek life on campus. Thus, an examination of existing UMD and DFSL reports and policies was undertaken. To get a richer understanding from a range of constituencies, several focus groups were held. Specifically, the following sessions were convened:

- **Current NPHC Members** (May 15, 2024; June 25, 2024)
- **NPHC Alumni** (June 11, 2024; June 12, 2024; June 18, 2024; June 20, 2024)
- **NPHC Chapter Advisors** (June 13, 2024)
- **UMD Student Support Units** (MICA, Nyumburu, Student Affairs DEI) (August 13, 2024)

Further, to better understand DFSL's internal operations, the Task Force hosted a robust discussion with DFSL staff on July 16 and 24, 2024:

- **Advising and Programming Staff** (July 16, 2024)
- **Housing Staff** (July 24, 2024)

Finally, to get a sense of national trends and common practices, input was received from selected Association of Fraternity & Sorority Advisors (AFA) Advisory Board Members, as well as other fraternity and sorority offices. Our research of these institutions included surveys, phone calls, and a review of their policies and websites.

Specific attention was given to programming, internal operations and honorific D9 monuments at Historically White Institutions (HWIs).

V. Context

The University was founded in 1856. We understand that the social GLO community on campus began in the early 1900s with the establishment of Gamma Pi Fraternity (now Sigma Nu) in 1913 and Sigma Delta (now Alpha Kappa) in 1920. It would take almost 100 years from the University's founding before the first Black undergraduate student would be admitted to the University in 1951 – following legal intervention rather than voluntary desegregation – and another 20 years before the first NPHC organization was chartered on the College Park campus. It is through the lens of this racial context that we examined the historical and contemporary experiences of Black student members of NPHC organizations. Most importantly, it is through our recommendations that we offer a path forward for a more inclusive and robust GLO experience that ensures the health and longevity of these culturally unique organizations.

A. Differing History and Composition Across Councils & Their Impact

The University is home to four councils, listed in order of inception:

- Interfraternity Council (IFC),
- Panhellenic Association (PHA),
- National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) and
- Multicultural Greek Council (MGC).

The organizations which make up the councils have markedly different histories, varying lengths of tenure, dissimilar resources and a wide range of membership numbers. Obviously, these differences play a significant role in the health of the organizations.

1. History & Tenure

The first UMD IFC organizations were founded in 1913 (Sigma Nu) and 1920 (Alpha Kappa). The first NPHC organization did not appear on campus until 1971 – 58 years after Sigma Nu and 20 years after the first Black undergraduate student was admitted.

The University's longtime refusal to admit Black students is reflected in the fact that its first undergraduate student wasn't admitted until 1951 – 95 years after its founding. In the mid-1950s, the climate for Black students was unwelcoming to say the least. Looking for safe spaces and a more meaningful mission, the IFC and PHA

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organizations were not an option. Not only was their focus merely social, they would not admit Black students. Fortunately, NPHC organizations were precisely founded for Black students, because the strong values they espoused were more closely aligned with their upbringing. As the decades passed, IFC and PHA organizations removed their racially restrictive barriers to membership. However, because of the stark differences in history, mission and values, NPHC organizations remain the optimal choice for the vast majority of Black students who choose to join a Black Greek-Lettered Organization (BGLO).

2. Resources

Due to their history, tenure and membership numbers, IFC and PHA organizations have significant resources – as compared to NPHC organizations – to support their organizations. Some organizations have several decades of alumni supporting the work of the chapter with both mentorship and financial support. Large membership numbers – which are bolstered annually – mean there is a consistently large revenue stream to support IFC and PHA operations, and an equally large number of supportive alumni graduating each year.

Hosting programs and membership intake are primary tasks that must be accomplished. To do so, adequate space is required. However, if an organization does not have exclusive use of a house, they must either reserve space elsewhere or not hold the program. NPHC organizations do not have exclusive access to a house, or any other space on campus that is conducive to these activities.^{3,4} Moreover, securing campus space is challenging given the limited inventory of no-cost spaces, eligibility restrictions around reservations and prohibitive fee structures to utilize other available on/off campus spaces. In sum, IFC and PHA organizations do not face the same hurdles related to organizational vitality. These challenges undermine the chance for successful NPHC organization operations of their chapters.

3. Membership

Data gathered by the Office of the Vice President of Students Affairs (OVPSA) proves instructive. For the 2023-24 academic year, the PHA had the largest membership with

³ NPHC organizations have access to the Agora House. The facility, dedicated in 2023, is shared between MGC and NPHC organizations. Together, for 2024-25, this single venue is intended to support 482 students, difficult to reserve with MGC's domination of the space and inadequate for most NPHC needs.

⁴ See University of Central Arkansas Greek Village. The two NPHC buildings are approx. 4,700 sq. ft. each with private chapter rooms for each organization and shared amenities to fit the meeting and social needs of the chapter members (<https://uca.edu/gogreek/greek-village/>).

2,884 active members and 638 new members on-boarding. The IFC ran a close second with 2,182 active members with 476 on-boarding. This is in sharp contrast with the NPHC which had 98 members with 25 on-boarding.⁵ The MGC which ranks third in size is still three times larger than NPHC with 279 active members and 80 on-boarding.

However, despite the significant difference in membership numbers, the administrative requirements (read: bureaucratic paperwork) are the same across all councils. It is clear that with more members, it is easier to allocate the necessary tasks to remain in good standing with DFSL. In sum, though the requirements are arguably *equal*, they are not *equitable* and thus, burdensome to D9 organizations that tend to maintain smaller chapter membership sizes. In addition, suspensions of NPHC chapters and other bureaucratic challenges on the part of DFSL have created barriers for NPHC organizations to receive support that would allow them to grow their membership and presence on campus. The challenges created by lower numbers are exacerbated by the fact that the administrative burdens hinder membership. It's a harsh cycle the NPHC organizations struggle to break.

Transformation Working Group Data

2023-2024 Council Statistics

| Council | Number of Chapters | Avg. Chapter Size | Active Members | On-Boarding (New) Members |
|----------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| PHA | 16 | 120 | 2884 | 638 |
| IFC | 20 | 68 | 2182 | 476 |
| MGC | 11 | 15 | 279 | 80 |
| NPHC | 6 | 8 | 98 | 25 |

⁵ Average chapter size by council FY24: PHA: 120; IFC: 68; MGC: 15; NPHC: 8.

VI. Findings & Recommendations ⁶

The Task Force was able to extract several themes and issues that presented themselves multiple times throughout our data collection. These include, but are not limited to,

- a. access to space;
- b. burdensome administrative requirements;
- c. a desire for consistent, proactive communication with DFSL;
- d. securing a dedicated full-time NPHC staff member; and
- e. recognizing the deficiencies of the Agora House.

The Task Force will address these themes and provide recommendations within the structure of the four-point *Charge* Dr. McShay provided.

A. Student Engagement and Staff Advising Support

1. Challenges with the Chapter Expectations Policy

“These expectations are strategically designed to be equitable and achievable for chapters of all sizes, without arbitrary numbers or deadlines, or excessive and redundant forms.” ⁷

Despite DFSL’s stated goals, the current policy requirements are burdensome, redundant, and inequitable for NPHC organizations. While the policies on a general level may be informed by industry-standard, NPHC organizations require a more nuanced approach and understanding in sync with the realities of their history, purpose, and makeup. Below, we’ve highlighted some of the most problematic requirements. A common theme is the requirement for topic-specific policy requirements.

⁶ These are the four areas Dr. McShay identified in his charge: Student engagement and staff advising support; Honoring NPHC history & legacy; Financial/Administrative support and physical space needs; and Campus Partners.

⁷ UMD DFSL. *2024 DFSL Chapter Expectations Policy*. Last updated 24 July 2024, p. 1.

Chapter Sizes and the Burden of the Requirements

DFSL's Guiding Philosophy is based on six tenets, listed on page 1 of the *Chapter Expectations* Policy document. Two of those tenets are "you have a choice/decision" and "have fun doing it."⁸ However, the programming requirements have not always yielded those results for NPHC organizations. Over the years, the required number of chairs and required programs are of particular note.

Specifically, DFSL requires five different council officers; four of which require a separate training for students to attend, typically in the summer.⁹ It goes without saying that NPHC organizations tend to be smaller because we value quality over quantity. In fact, the average size of a UMD IFC or PHA chapter was at least four and eight times larger than the average UMD NPHC chapter in the 2023-2024 academic year, respectively.¹⁰ This does not take into account those students who are representing their chapter on the NPHC executive board; serving on their own chapter executive board; and those active in additional extra-curriculars, not to mention work, internships, and/or academic research.

Diversity and Inclusion and Sexual Assault Prevention Chairs

From current students to alumni, there has been a long-standing question: why does NPHC need a diversity chair? As educators, we know that diversity expands beyond race and ethnicity; it's also physical and intellectual ability, sexual orientation, and more. Yet, for NPHC there is a disconnect. For the NPHC students and alumni we interviewed, Diversity and Inclusion programming still feels one-dimensional and limited to only exploring *racial* issues. We strongly believe that diversity is far more than race. However, NPHC students shared with us that they feel an undue pressure from DFSL – as well as IFC and PHA organizations — to educate their counterparts only on racial topics. It leans into feelings of tokenism. In fact, one current student from our Focus Group mentioned that, "it's interesting to require cultural organizations to do diversity programming." Another in the same Focus Group stated feeling "iffy" about the diversity and inclusion programming concept and that, ultimately, it "doesn't feel like anyone in the office takes the time to really look at what we do as NPHC."

The student continued to note that while there is some overlap between this DFSL requirement and their national initiatives, ultimately, managing both has become

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid. p.2.

¹⁰ UMD DFSL. *Greek Transformation Working Group Data*.

overwhelming and led to her chapter “not having time to do our own creative programming that we would want to because we’re so busy checking the box(es).”¹¹

In addition, the goal of the Sexual Assault Prevention (SAP) Chair position is one which could be better aligned with NPHC’s structure. With respect to the obligation, the NPHC recognizes that sexual assault is an important issue. However, laying the responsibility on a single student is not the ideal delivery method. To ensure a consistent, baseline understanding of the issues for the *entire* membership, a centrally-provided, annual program sponsored by DFSL (e.g. self-paced online training; keynote speaker; etc.) — for the entire membership to attend — would be more effective. In the end, eliminating the need for a SAP Chair which would be less burdensome on student leaders, leave a more comprehensive understanding of the topic and ensure a higher level of risk mitigation.

2. Recognition Status

The language pertaining to Recognition Status from the *Chapter Expectations* Policy is confusing, particularly for chapters seeking recognition. The administrative, chapter, and programming requirements are vague and open to different interpretations. For example, when a chapter demonstrates that they have made substantial progress complying with the extensive list of requirements, recognition can still be withheld. However, it is sometimes unclear as to the basis for this action. As a result, when the enforcement of the policies appear to be applied inequitably, chapters are left feeling abandoned and treated unfairly.

While there is an understanding that holistic review in this scenario is intended to consider a chapter’s growth from all angles, the vagueness in the *application* of this holistic assessment in comparison to the requirements outlined is a cause for concern for D9 organizations at UMD, who have felt that the hands of enforcement and punishment tend to come down inequitably – and thus, harshly – on them.

Perceived Penalties for Expansion Chapters

As discussed above and throughout our document, chapter size requirements continue to prove to be a challenge for students as it relates to the *Chapter Expectations Policy*. This sentiment has been expressed by both chartering alumni and current students. With the next largest council being more than three times the size of NPHC, there is little possibility that a catch-all set of policies and expectations is equitable.

¹¹ NPHC Student Focus Group. Collected May 2024.

Most notably, chapters are considered unrecognized for falling below the 5 member requirement.¹² Based solely on the numbers, the target audience for NPHC chapters is smaller, which would naturally result in smaller chapter sizes compared to their counterparts.

As noted by one respondent, historically, our organizations do not have the goal “...to get the biggest number of people. Our goal is to get the *right* people for all of our organizations...” An NPHC chapter could range from one to 30 members. With that understood, the potential for punishment of not meeting this threshold devalues a fundamental sentiment of the entire Council.

In one focus group, a student expressed concern and confusion about the status of her chapter following the graduation of more than half its members. But why the concern? Because regardless of the reason for a chapter’s reduction in size, she observed that while students of the NPHC embrace all chapters regardless of size, DFSL does not. That lack of appreciation for chapters regardless of size, diminishes trust between students and DFSL, as well the chapters and prospective members.

One NPHC chapter member shared that while their organization was officially unrecognized by DFSL, it was allowed to participate with NPHC activities, which actually proved confusing for both them and potential members. Some of the confusion was related to not understanding what their obligations were, if any, regarding the chapter expectations policies, because they were, after all, not recognized. They communicated with DFSL via email to gain clarification; yet DFSL was unresponsive. However, having been categorized as unrecognized (or only conditionally recognized) on DFSL’s website led to a reduction in the chapter’s credibility with potential members. The chapter feared that people would think they were not recognized because they violated a serious policy, such as participating in hazing when, in fact, their only “crime” was a reduction in chapter size because members graduated.

Consequently, as a direct result, students and their families were constantly emailing the chapter to clarify their status and if they were allowed to operate on the campus.¹³ The student continued: “Is it just because of the member requirement or did we really do something else? The status reduces our credibility.”

Per the *Recognition Application Guidelines*, in the expansion/activation process a chapter must:

¹² It was only as of 2024 that a chapter could be listed as conditionally recognized on the DFSL website.

¹³ *NPHC Student Focus Group*. Collected June 2024.

- Provide proof of five or more members;
- Have a minimum of three members on their [reactivation] intake class; and
- Achieve DFSL recognition within four semesters.¹⁴

Additionally, during this expansion period, chapters must still demonstrate that “they have hosted or attended programs that relate to the six areas of the 2024 DFSL Chapter Expectations Policy...” We also want to point out that because NPHC intake is focused upon organizational fit rather than expediency, those three members could very well consist of graduating seniors, which upon graduation, would not improve the chapter’s activation status.

If the expansion policy is going to require chapters to follow the full expectations of a recognized chapter, that is inequitable. Additionally, if the chapter cannot achieve recognition successfully within four semesters, they lose the ability to conduct intake for a year.¹⁵ Asking an expanding chapter to cease their efforts, instead of attempting to create “an individualized plan” is a punitive measure misaligned with assistance offered in the *Chapter Expectations Policy* and is counterproductive.

3. Scorecard with GPA Reporting

There is an industry trend where “scorecards” are maintained on the Greek-Lettered Organizations (GLO).¹⁶ These scorecards indicate organizational status (i.e active, probation, suspended), chapter size, among other metrics, including grades. However, with NPHC numbers so small (sometimes fewer than 7 members), the value of the GPA metric is lost and even skewed. Moreover, a DFSL staff member shared that he believed that grades tend to be important data for parents and students; however, while scholarship is critically important in the NPHC culture, a chapter’s GPA is not a determining factor for parents or their students in generating interest in membership. For example, NPHC organizations are proud of their “legacy” tradition which plays a dominant factor when making membership decisions. Legacy is when a relative, typically a parent, grandparent, aunt or uncle, is already a member of the identified organization. In fact, it can be not only the sole factor for joining, but also a case of family tension if a younger family member joins a different organization. It will **rarely** be the case that a chapter’s posted cumulative GPA, member size, or sanctions will

¹⁴ UMD DFSL. *Recognition Application Guidelines*. Last updated August 14, 2023. These guidelines appear to be for first-time Recognition and do not assist students in understanding the guidelines for reactivation, which is distinct. Therefore is inconsistent in its implementation as well as confusing.

¹⁵ UMD DFSL. Chapter Status Letter

¹⁶ One of the most comprehensive is hosted by Florida State University (<https://fsl.fsu.edu/fslscorecard>).

influence that decision making process. Therefore, this is yet another example of a DFSL policy and practice that does not align with NPHC culture. DFSL insists on the practice of scorecards, but has not convinced this Task Force that it is a necessary and productive exercise for NPHC organizations.

It is critical to note that not all universities have resorted to this practice, yet they are still able to recognize student achievement. For example, in our conversation with the University of Central Arkansas (UCA), we asked about their use of scorecards. They shared with us that after some attempt to utilize scorecards on several occasions they received pushback and found them unhelpful. It was their collective feeling that such information “should not be aired publicly.” Thus, they do not post organizational grades. However, they do bestow awards, but keep such metrics internal to the office.

This sentiment was also articulated by a student in one of our Focus Groups:

I may be biased because my chapter had the highest GPA, but I don't know why this needs to be online. Cause [sic] all the chapters don't have good grades. I disagree that the GPAs being public helps people choose who they want to align with. You should be striving to have good grades anyway. I don't necessarily have an issue with it being public, but I don't see the reason for it. Why does the world need to know that?

4. Support for NPHC Chapter Advisors

NPHC organizations have had Graduate Chapters for almost as long as their existence, which is a notable distinction of their structure. Similar to the undergraduate chapters that are on college campuses, graduate chapters function to serve larger local communities and/or metropolitan areas. Some also sponsor undergraduate chapters if they happen to be located near a four-year, Bachelor's degree granting college or university. As a chapter sponsor, which can likely be composed of alumni from that local institution, the graduate chapter provides dedicated chapter advisors to mentor the undergraduate members to the ways and proclivities of the organization's governance structure, rituals and protocols; provide support as the undergraduates carry out their activities; and serve as partner to and liaison of the graduate chapter to the institution's fraternity and sorority life staff. The graduate chapter and the advisors are critical to the nurturing of the undergraduate members as they introduce them to the national organization. Also, degree-holding individuals who do not join an NPHC organization as an undergraduate may do so at the graduate chapter level at any point in their life. Further, at the national level, most NPHC organizations even offer honorary membership to individuals who are accomplished in their given industry, have demonstrated outstanding service to the community, or who excel in a way that aligns

with the mission and values of the organization. This is all to say that membership in NPHC organizations is active at all levels and membership is a lifetime engagement well beyond the undergraduate years. With this in mind, the relationship of the graduate chapter to the undergraduate chapter cannot be underestimated. It is critical, then, for DFSL to not only acknowledge and respect this relationship, but to intentionally work in partnership with the graduate chapter advisors to ensure the success of the undergraduate chapter experience. Further, previous DFSL annual reports highlight the importance of chapter advisors and alumni; however, in practice, it was reported during a focus group that the then-DFSL director,

demanded [of one organization] as a sanction fulfillment that no campus alumni who held membership in the sponsoring graduate chapter could engage with the undergraduates, [and were told to create] a committee of advisors that must not include alumni.

Data collected from the focus groups with Chapter advisors heavily suggests that in order for DFSL to build community with the advisors and to develop positive working relationships, there must be a commitment to regular and consistent meetings — both in-person and virtual — with the advisors. We frequently heard, “contact is typically over email and transactional at best.” We were also told, “we would like more hands-on support;” and “a quarterly [meeting] would help; DFSL needs to be held accountable for engaging with us.”

Further, there were suggestions for DFSL to establish a mechanism or process to ensure that an NPHC Chapter Advisor Directory is current and made available to all advisors, not just an internal list for DFSL staff. They suggested an NPHC google drive be established, whereby advisors have access to update advisor contact information, especially as roles change with chapter elections. In short, the advisors suggest that a *partnering* community is the best way to mitigate concerns over trust and a better experience for NPHC students. Right now, they feel that they, “have to stay on top of DFSL [because] they are quick to jump out with punitive allegations [of] what you haven’t done, but not with [any] suggestions.” “We have had a very difficult relationship with DFSL...[we have to] build a relationship with them.”

The advisors were also able to point to recent (spring 2024) developments as evidence of the lack of communication and relationship between their group of advisors, DFSL, and the university. They noted that the two-week pause directive given only to the IFC and PHA councils had a negative ripple effect on the NPHC community when media outlets mistakenly broadcast that it applied to all councils.

Again, echoing the transactional nature of their communication,

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DFSL keep[s] us abreast of requirements, policies; and unfortunately, that is it. They should be providing [support]... [but] there are things that we don't know that might impact us. For example, when the White fraternities got suspended; if we had a standing relationship it would be easier to stay in touch. We need ongoing communication.

To this issue, others shared, “the lack of communication caused our Region to take disciplinary action against [our Chapter] so [there were] downstream implications. DFSL needs to understand that there are impacts.”

Another advisor commented,

[I] heard about [the suspension in the] Diamondback paper, then Facebook; news media outlets, undergrads. Advisors got calls from [our] state and regional directors and we had to walk [our membership intake process which was in progress] back. It was very poor communication that led to bad things on the back end. We are still trying to clean up the narrative.

I was actually very offended that NPHC was grouped into this situation. It was unfair. [We] got lots of phone calls that I had to explain. The university should have had very clear [Council] labeling.¹⁷ The other councils did not want to let us off the hook, wanting us to be suspended [as well]. So why should we want to co-sponsor activities with them?

This last comment referred to NPHC organizations feeling coerced by DFSL staff to program with IFC and PHA organizations in pursuit of a sense of inclusion. We heard general disagreement with these efforts as NPHC alumni recounted feeling as if they were positioned to “go down to frat row” and assimilate.

Responding in agreement about the spring 2024 IFC/PHA pause, another advisor said,

[My fraternity] was put on a cease-and-desist until we could show the Eastern Regional Director that we had nothing to do with it and were never put on the UMD pause.

Another participant shared,

¹⁷ In a March 4, 2024 *Maryland Today* media release which has since been corrected, the Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC)'s name was mistakenly used in referencing PHA, the Panhellenic Association. This error is indicative of the lack of awareness and concern afforded NPHC organizations.

Yeah, that meeting was called before the news media announcement. A mandatory meeting; very strange; our students did go. The fact that they let the messaging go on was unfair. Many of us were trying to do intake. We had pausing, scrambling; it kept resetting our process [without DFSL flexibility on their deadlines]. It delayed a lot of stuff. What a little bit of money can do (referring to IFC and PHA's legal push back on the university).¹⁸

Another observation from the advisors who felt pulled into this situation was to ask, “tell me a time when IFC and PHA members had to attend a mandatory meeting because we got in trouble?” The members of the Task Force found this observation particularly reflective of the disparate treatment between the councils.

In summary, a false narrative claiming the suspension of “all” fraternities and sororities on campus was published and widely circulated by news media outlets. Despite the university's efforts to correct the misinformation once several alumni and graduate advisors reached out, it had already spread and been consumed. Although NPHC students were not involved in the incident, they were still required to attend a meeting under the threat of consequences, without being informed beforehand of the meeting's purpose. Some students even had to miss part of their chapter's 50th anniversary celebration to attend a meeting unrelated to them. The fallout from this event was extensive and long-lasting.

Historically – in stark contrast – when a suspension has affected an NPHC organization, other fraternity or sorority groups have not been penalized or involved. The negative impacts ranged from reputational damage, interference with membership intake processes, and backlash from IFC and PHA. This inconsistency again highlights a lack of fairness, equity, and visibility by lumping NPHC with PHA and IFC.

VI(A) Recommendations

DFSL should:

1. Review, revise and develop policies that are culturally-relevant and tailored to the legacy, goals, and challenges of NPHC organizations.
2. Eliminate all minimum chapter size requirements for NPHC organizations.

¹⁸ The Diamondback. "UMD Fraternities Restraining Order Against Alleged Hazing to Stand." *The Diamondback*, 13 Mar. 2024, <https://dbknews.com/2024/03/13/umd-fraternities-restraining-order/>.

Alonso, Johanna. "Inside the Legal Challenge Over Hazing at Univ. of Maryland." *Inside Higher Ed*, 19 Mar. 2024.

- a. Remove DFSL membership minimums related to recognition and reactivation.
 - b. Remove SORC minimums to access e-Calendar, book rooms, and earn formal recognition
 - c. Remove minimum to determine probation status
- 3. Create more awareness and intentionality around the treatment and language used to categorize organizations in relation to their recognition status.
 - a. For example, the nomenclature on the website of “Seeking Recognition” and “Probationary Recognition” are unclear and detrimental to organizational growth.
 - b. The language in, and implementation of, the DFSL *Recognition Application Guidelines* document is inconsistent and thus, confusing. Revise to be more explicit when using the term “recognition” as it relates to new organizations, and “reactivation” as it relates to returning organizations.
 - c. Include a glossary of terms for each policy.
- 4. Create more equitable reactivation policies across all councils.
 - a. The reactivation process for IFC and PHA organizations is generally easier than the process for NPHC organizations. This is often manifested in the time a chapter is sanctioned off-campus, and/or as it relates to minimum chapter size.
 - b. Maintain and share an updated directory of NPHC Advisors.
- 5. Host consistent DFSL meetings with NPHC Advisors on a bi-monthly basis.
- 6. Hire an experienced NPHC professional (1.0 FTE) to advise *only* NPHC organizations at a salary level to support job retention.
- 7. Develop a concrete plan to recruit and retain all nine NPHC organizations on campus.
 - a. Proactively support smaller organizations without negative impacts and stigma.

B. Honoring NPHC History & Legacy

As mentioned in our Context and History sections, NPHC has a history that is inextricably linked to the broader American story that encompasses African enslavement, Jim Crow, structural racism and access to American, including higher education, particularly southern land-grant institutions. Beginning with Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., there is a 119-year legacy that is worth recognizing and honoring. When Black people were not allowed to enroll at UMD, they were nonetheless certainly a part

of the campus first as enslaved people and then later as employees.¹⁹ NPHC organizations on this campus must be understood as service organizations first and as social entities second. Not to discount the latter, we understand that “social support is arguably the most important determinant of college success and satisfaction, particularly for Black students attending Historically White institutions.”²⁰ It is how many male students find their confidence on a college campus – especially at a HWI – and where both male and female students largely assume significant leadership roles.²¹ And yet, these organizations demand to be acknowledged for their service more than any other attribute.

One such example is with the 1972 charter line of UMD’s Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc., Epsilon Psi chapter. Twelve young men – whose orientation to the fraternity came by way of Huey P. Newton (Black Panthers Party) and Kwame Nkrumah (revolutionary activist and President of Ghana) – identified a need on campus to escort Black female students who were being harrassed by both white male students and other white men who were around the campus during the Vietnam War protests, thus embodying ‘service for humanity.’²²

They were harassing and attacking Black females so we started an escort service for [Black] young ladies. They would call on the pay phone. We used our own cars or escorted on foot. Then we did fundraisers and bought an old Volkswagen van. Then white female students saw what we were doing and they used our services. We didn’t discriminate; we escorted them as well. We did this in the evening and eventually during the day time also. We also escorted Shirley Chisholm when she was running for [U.S.] president and came on campus to speak because she was running as an Independent and did not qualify for security detail.²³ The Sigmas also escorted Sonia Sanchez and Leroy Jones...Back then, Nyumburu [Cultural Center] was a portable building sitting on the edge of campus which the white students would defame with racial slurs and the Sigmas would watch the building overnight and [white] folks would then

¹⁹“The 1856 Project.” *University of Maryland*. <https://1856project.umd.edu/>.

²⁰ Paton, Lori D., Lamont A. Flowers, and Brian K. Bridges. “Effects of Greek Affiliation on African American Students’ Engagement: Differences by College Racial Composition.” *College Student Affairs Journal*, vol. 29, no. 2, 2011, pp. 113-123.

²¹ Ibid.

²² The motto of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. is “Culture for Service and Service for Humanity.”

²³ Congresswoman Chisholm actually ran for the Democratic nomination for U.S. president.

call the National Guard – because they were around due to all the protests – and they would have us leave the premises, but we kept guarding it.

Eventually UMD started emulating what we were doing. In fact, Transportation Services [DOTS-Department of Transportation Services] acknowledged us last year [2023] when they celebrated 50 years of service, a year late because we started in fall 1972. They recognized the Sigmas for starting the UMD shuttle bus program.²⁴ There were 12 of us on line [membership intake class]. Only four of us are left. Only four of us were there to get that recognition.

Our data suggests that over the last 50 years of existence on the UMD campus, the NPHC experience has been mixed at best and in most recent years, this particular leadership opportunity has become less in demand as noted in decreased membership numbers due to either access (e.g. chapter suspensions driving them off campus for an inordinate amount of years), programming and access to funding, inconsistent staffing to provide guidance and mentoring, and visibility in the way of campus acknowledgement.

1. Suspensions

Over the years, there has been a real and perceived divergence in how allegations of hazing are investigated, resolved and sanctioned. Investigators of NPHC allegations generally initiate the discovery process with a predisposition toward guilt. There is a rigidity present when attempting to resolve matters. Finally, sanctions levied upon NPHC organizations are markedly harsher and have decades-long negative consequences. The totality of these differences directly created the high degree of mistrust and sense of othering that persists to this day.

A personal account gives richness to the deep hurt felt by many UMD alumni and staff. Although the Task Force is unable to corroborate these particular events regarding disparities in discipline, one staff member recalled examples that they felt evidenced the inequality in sanctions.

There was a disparity around how suspensions or incidents were handled. For example, when [a department] was contacted by NPHC-alleged-hazing victims, complaints were pursued to the fullest extent. Even though the NPHC pledge wanted to recant their story, [the department] continued

²⁴ “Quite a Ride”. Maryland Today. February 24, 2023. (<https://today.umd.edu/quite-a-ride>). The four were Phil Bass, Ben Gaither, Bobby Hall, and Melvin Moore.

with the investigation. However, a couple of years later, [the department] was notified of a potential hazing [incident] in an IFC organization by the parents of one of the pledges and [the department] followed up with the fraternity and spoke with members of the pledge class who said they were in the house for a week, had not slept, and were made to eat raw eggs and raw pork bacon. [It is my understanding that] the complaint was not further investigated by [the department] because alumni of the fraternity reached out to the pledges who were then allowed to recant their story.

Experiences such as these damage the health and vitality of NPHC organizations thereby, choking the legacy they have spent 50 plus years developing.

2. Respect Culture, Identity and Autonomy

There has been a long history of NPHC organizations' traditions and identity being poached and identity diluted among other minority organizations. This manifests itself in several ways. Specifically, we see this with the [a] historical NPHC blockshow, [b] the grouping together with non-NPHC minority entities for convenience and [c] forced participation in Greek Week.

The Block Show

The first NPHC Spring Block Show was held in spring 1986 on what was then-called "LaPlata Beach," a grassy area in front of the LaPlata residence hall.²⁵ It was organized by NPHC student leaders as a farewell congratulations to Black graduating seniors. The event consisted of music, a picnic where students grilled outside, and a step show, a smaller version of the traditional fall Homecoming step show. This event had become a tradition within the Black community that drew alumni back to campus as well as provide fellowship among current students. It is to the dismay of several alumni that the event appears to have become co-opted by the larger community with several non-NPHC groups participating. In fact, many alumni have protested the event in recent years by not attending, stating that, once again, DFSL has allowed what has been historically NPHC to be taken by other groups.

As one respondent put it, "Block Shows used to be in the middle of campus; now it is off campus/frat row—who made that decision?" Echoing agreement, one said, "this year the Block Show was held on frat row and it felt weird. The undergrads don't understand

²⁵Hansard, Kecia. "Upcoming Black Leaders Must Continue the Struggle." *The Eclipse*, 9 May 1988, p. 2. Bland, Jerry. "Rain Gives Way to Block Show." *The Eclipse*, 9 May 1988, p. 9

the fun some of us experienced on campus [with the traditional Block Show]. It didn't feel welcoming."

Furthermore, as a result of the lack of institutional funding, the current NPHC is now strongly encouraged to raise funds specifically by soliciting the IFC and PHA for monetary support. Given both the University's and DFSL's racialized history, coupled with the disparity between councils, this is not only embarrassing, but also puts NPHC in a degrading position vis-a-vis their white counterparts.

Grouping for Convenience: Latina Sorority

As the university's demographic constituency broadened, the campus grappled with how to include all students in the co-curricular experience. As a result, when new minority GLOs arrived on campus, there was a mandate that they had to belong to a council. In response to this growth, there was a presumption – without thought to NPHC culture and legacy – to organize them under the larger NPHC umbrella. For example, a Latina sorority (Lambda Theta Alpha) was placed with D9 organizations. PHA was not an option for the Latina sorority because of PHA's national membership requirements. However, at the time, because the UMD D9 chapters were not yet financial members of the NPHC, DFSL found it convenient to place the Latina sorority there. Even though UMD's D9 organizations are financial members of the NPHC and thus, have a campus chapter, the Latina sorority is included on a plaque near the Nyumburu Cultural Center that is dedicated to NPHC organizations...still to this day.

Greek Week

Another theme that came from the alumni focus groups was participation in Greek Week, a celebration relevant to IFC and PHA. In fact, a June 2017 DFSL External Review, submitted to the then-director recommended that DFSL "assess DFSL sponsored programs against whether it is beneficial or does it disenfranchise students more and create divisiveness within the fraternity/sorority community. (e.g. Greek Week)." ²⁶ Our data suggests that NPHC alumni recounted feeling forced to participate in Greek Week or face penalties. This is how one alum captured the sentiment,

I remember in '98 the [NPHC] got involved with Greek Week. The one role we got was that of jester; it was NOT good. It is the same stuff in a different language.

Another said,

²⁶ Lee Miranda, Monica, M.S.Ed., et al. *DFSL External Review*, 9 June 2017, pp. 15.

The AKAs declined to participate in Greek Week. Tensions increased with IFC and PHA. We got closer to MGC. We participated in the Greek Week, but were only asked to stroll. My organization declined, we wrote a letter and pulled out and never participated in Greek Week again.

There was an exchange among four focus group members which merits sharing:

Participant 1: *I was on campus 2005-09 and we had a requirement to participate in Greek Week and had to do programming across Councils in order to get credits for chapter of the year. Greek Week was different. You had to participate in at least 2-3 events. It wasn't a bad requirement, but it was eye-opening because they thought we were just like them. We were paired with Tri Delta one year. They were drinking beer at 8am. At the end of Greek Week, there was a showcase. We would step and in that sense, we were a spectacle, a minstrel show; we did not participate in the 'kegs and eggs' because we don't drink in our letters. And so Tri Delta members thought we were not going to participate with them.*

Participant 2: *I am appalled; we didn't have this in the mid-eighties. Who decided this policy? Were you asked to perform for the white organizations? That does not sound like a very inclusive way to do DEI.*

Participant 3: *PanHel [PHA] was floored that all we did was service.*

Participant 4: *Yeah, they are social and we are service first, then social.*

One current student said this about the diversity requirement,

It's interesting to require cultural organizations to do diversity programming...DFSL has program requirements and national organizations have requirements so it becomes a lot. And then we don't have time to do our own creative programming that we would want to do. We are restrained from doing those programs every year. We're so busy 'checking the box'.

Unique Identity and Autonomy

There have also been challenges as it relates to the structural and historical autonomy of NPHC organizations. Unlike the IFC and PHA GLOs, NPHC entities rely heavily upon support and guidance from graduate alumni. DFSL has undermined the existence and strength of this relationship. Alumni focus group members, in particular, shared several

experiences which they felt threatened the foundational support of the NPHC organization. Two are highlighted here.

An alum of one of the NPHC fraternities shared,

We [the graduate chapter] are advisors [chapter advisors] for Howard [University], GW (George Washington), UMD, and American [University]. The only school we have issues with is UMD. [The then-director] asked us for a copy of our rituals. Not understanding that we have a different approach to our organizations, [there] continues to be issues. Telling us to continue to conform to the white organizations.

Another alum shared,

As a condition of a sanction fulfillment to return to campus after a suspension, [the then-director] ordered that no College Park alumni sorors could engage with our undergraduates. In fact, he ordered that we establish a committee of advisors, none of which could be sorors who graduated from UMD. It is these very sorors who would be the most invested because it is the home chapter where they joined. [The then-director's] directive flew directly in the face of valuing the role of the graduate chapter and graduate soror. He disrespected our unique structure as an organization and disrespected us as alumni of this institution. Keep in mind that we complied and still were not allowed to return. He just kept upping the ante and moving the goal post. There is no way you could have worked with NPHC organizations for 20 plus years and not understand the importance of our graduate chapters and the role alumni play, unless you didn't want to. In my opinion, what he did was not out of ignorance of who we are, but hateful disregard.

Since the 1970s, with the chartering of Divine 9 organizations at UMD and across the nation at HWIs, the importance of graduate chapters has grown. In some respects, it is impossible to fully understand *undergraduate* chapters without understanding the role *graduate* chapters play in support of these organizations. In many respects, there is a symbiotic relationship. Even though an undergraduate chapter may be few in number – or a chapter of one, even – they *always* have support from the sponsoring graduate chapter, the state and regional levels, alumni, and other area undergraduate chapters. To be clear, a chapter of one undergraduate member could be backed by 50 other members, alumni notwithstanding.

It should be understood that because engagement in NPHC organizations runs long beyond the undergraduate years in graduate chapters, members are often inducted as seniors even as they are on their way out the door to graduation. The undergraduate membership is merely a launch into the life-long membership experience. Again, DFSL should respect *any* chapter size as the chapter is more powerful than just the absolute number that are present on campus.

For example, the Task Force heard about the devaluation that DFSL gives to NPHC organizations as it relates to recruitment and chapter size. NPHC organizations might have an intake class of 25, or a class of one. As respondents noted,

our goal is never to get the biggest number of people. Our goal is to get the ‘right’ people for all of our organizations...they [DFSL] have a perception that all of UMD are candidates for our organization and that is not true; our pool is much smaller [than IFC or PHA].

Overall, the culture, identity and autonomy of NPHC organizations have faced hurdles. Despite these challenges, members and this Task Force are hopeful that giving voice to these concerns results in meaningful change.

Physical Visibility

University campuses are home to a dynamic population. At the undergraduate level, a new cohort arrives each year as one departs. Though the student body changes, institutions have the opportunity to commemorate and signify what is important to them through their buildings, artwork and other structures. However, the converse is also true. When that opportunity is ignored, it signifies what is unworthy and unimportant.

We acknowledge that UMD is beginning to commemorate the contributions and impact of diverse representation.²⁷ In fact, there has been a flurry of such activity in the last decade; several residence halls and buildings have been named and/or renamed to address this oversight over the course of the university’s almost 170 years of existence. Despite this progress, UMD remains neglectful of its appropriate recognition of NPHC groups.

Our benchmarking has revealed that several other institutions have endeavored to specifically honor its NPHC organizations in a highly visible and meaningful way. As

²⁷ Examples include Clarence Mitchell Building ([built in 1958; renamed in 1988](#); Maryland Stadium ([Fall 2015](#)); Parren Mitchell Hall ([Fall 2015](#)); Frederick Douglass statue ([Fall 2015](#)); Jones-Hill House ([June 2021](#)); Heritage Community including Pyon-Chen Hall, Johnson-Whittle Hall, and Yahentamitsi Dining Hall ([August 2022](#)); Thurgood Marshall Hall ([Fall 2022](#)), rooms within The Stamp (Tubman, Banneker, Jimenez, Pyon Su, Marshall).

stated elsewhere, these institutions include UNC Chapel Hill (UNC), Northwestern University (NU), Wake Forest University (WFU), Florida State University (FSU) and the University of Central Arkansas (UCA).²⁸ The contributions and impact of NPHC organizations are memorialized in a highly visible space with monuments/structures commensurate with their significance.

The Task Force had the opportunity to speak with Student Affairs and Greek Life leadership at the University of Central Arkansas (UCA). Their journey toward creating a unified [residential and social complex](#) occupied several years, but allowed their Greek councils' (i.e. IFC, PHA, NPHC) needs to be addressed in a manner appropriate and equitable for them. The process was comprehensive, intentional and inclusive.²⁹

Notably, after researching peer institutions, the UCA Student Government Association and Board of Trustees agreed to construct a series of new buildings which served as the gateway to the campus. Phase One was building 6 sorority houses. Phase Two was building 4 fraternity houses. Over the course of 12 years, UCA was able to equitably support and honor their social Greek-lettered community which composed 10% of their undergraduate population.

In describing this journey, UCA was keen to adjust their approach to align with the actual needs of NPHC organizations. The NPHC structures are not residential houses because neither the students nor the representing NPHC national leadership wanted housing. According to UCA assistant vice president, Wendy Holbrook, when UCA reached out to the national NPHC leadership, they requested meeting, programming, and storage space. Consequently, when UCA planned their Greek Village, they gave each council not only what they *needed*, but what they *wanted*. Each NPHC organization has a "chapter room" designed custom to their organizational colors where each member pays a parlor fee that goes toward the maintenance of the building.³⁰

As UMD's NPHC organizations reach and surpass 50 years on the campus, the current plaques which are insignificant – in both placement and scale — as well as inaccurate (due to the inclusion of a non-NPHC organization), should be removed and replaced with a more landmark monument which recognizes NPHC organizations more appropriately.

²⁸ Quite purposefully, we only cite only HWI institutions to remain in alignment with UMD as a HWI.

²⁹ University of Central Arkansas. "Greek Village." *Go Greek UCA*. <https://uca.edu/gogreek/greek-village/>.

³⁰ University of Central Arkansas. "Community Center and NPHC Chapter Rooms." *Go Greek UCA*. <https://uca.edu/gogreek/community-center-and-nphc-chapter-rooms/>.

In our Focus Groups, we gathered additional sentiments from DFSL staff and alumni. With regard to UMD efforts on designated space at UMD, we learned,

DFSL staff focus group: Students have had conversations around plots and monuments (not plots because we don't want to appropriate from the HBCUs). Divisional [DSA] priorities are in terms of money. University of Central Arkansas has a NPHC plaza and individual programming spaces and storage space. Their frat[ernities] and sororities each have a common space. There was a moment when DFSL staff—some on this call—were advocating for monuments and it got push back from upper administration/DFSL leadership, some of whom are still with us, others who are not.

Likewise, one alumni who was on campus in the late 1980's said,

They petitioned the administration to place NPHC shields/plaques around the wall of Roy Rogers which was then the 'Black student hang out.' The plaques did go up around 1988 or 1989 before all the Union renovations.

Staff Training

We met with DFSL staff who represented both Advising & Programming and Housing. The DFSL 2017 Report recommendations include, "Conduct cultural competency training for staff and students to bridge gaps in the relationship between underrepresented students and organizations with the fraternity/sorority community and the greater campus community."³¹ Staff shared that while their exposure to NPHC organizations was largely minimal prior to UMD, it was incumbent upon them to learn on their own most of what they currently know about NPHC organizations.

For example, one shared that there is staff training in August, but,

I did my own self reading and research. I also attended different sessions/presentations on NPHC at professional conferences. There is nothing explicit at UMD. At my former institution, my supervisor purchased books for me to read. The staff have observed that NPHC and MGC get lumped together as culturally-based groups which stems from "lack of education."

In an attempt to understand their current perception of how NPHC organizations are different, we generally heard themes around history and legacy. That these

³¹ Lee Miranda, Monica, M.S.Ed., et al. *DFSL External Review*, 9 June 2017, pp. 15.

organizations were steeped in service as the core of their identities did not come up; however, this is some of what was offered:

All communities have vastly different needs based upon history and findings. e.g., how did Councils come into being due to a climate of exclusion? NPHC still has that [challenge] [they] need to have a [place] on an HWI . [They have a] deep connection between groups within the Council.

NPHC is drastically different. NPHC is steeped in history, has been around longer [than MGC], and has more support than other cultural groups.

I think smaller chapter sizes is one of the ways that NPHC differs from other councils (particularly IFC & PHA) which impacts our students [in areas] such as chapter operations, SORC recognition, ability to obtain & maintain a residential facility, [and the] visibility on campus to attract new members.

Yes. The purpose of the organization and how they are structured. The values around sister/brotherhood; they don't get as many resources as IFC and PHA (no houses; budgets– [IFC and PHA] have more members, so more ability to have more positions [committees] around fund[raising]. We have great alumni involvement but not around financing). Structurally– eboards 5-6 vs 8-10 with IFC/PHA. NPHC is volunteer; other council boards may get paid. NPHC has different advising support. NPHC has advisors from DFSL, nationally, and graduate chapters.

IFC and PHA advisors get their own [separate] calls with staff but NPHC and MGC groups may be on the same call [together].

We then wanted their impressions about two other items that emerged as salient themes with the other focus groups. We inquired about their thinking around (1) the Agora and (2) chapter size.

Everyone wanted their own house. NPHC and MGC did not want to be lumped together. Students said they wanted (students did not want to live on the Row, just wanted storage and programming space). MGC groups are using the space more. Location is not central for NPHC groups so they don't use it as much.

We have lowered our [chapter size minimum] compared to SORC so we are supporting our chapters a little bit better. They do impact the NPHC chapters. For some it means they are not fully recognized and are penalized. Penalty if you are below the number for 2-3 years. If below 5 [members], different chapter expectations. Major penalty comes from SORC. DFSL is working with SORC.

Solo initiations do occur in culturally-based organizations, and some national organizations and institutions are reassessing the practice. Having solo initiates or single-member chapters puts a lot of pressure on students to maintain their chapter operations while balancing other responsibilities, which could negatively impact their experiences -- especially for those who do not have stable support or resources from their national/alumni or institution.

Another area that came up without prompting was the staff's apparent observation of what alumni have referred to as "lumping." We were actually surprised to hear that the staff also felt strongly about NPHC's marginalization.

The cease and desist was a huge challenge; lumping councils together. Failure to name that NPHC and MGC were not under the cease and desist. We are [on our own] consciously trying to de-lump [in our daily work with students].

Some small challenges are working on language that refers to NPHC and MGC.

The Agora is a challenge, as it also represents on our part institutional lumping. There are [geographic] barriers for students going all the way to Fraternity Row.

VI(B) Recommendations

1. Revise and clarify DFSL website as it pertains to NPHC organizations to make sure it is accurate and current.
 - a. For example, the nomenclature on the website of "Seeking Recognition" and "Probationary Recognition" is unclear and detrimental to organizational growth.
 - b. Honor NPHC on the DFSL website with a thoughtful narrative of the history of NPHC.

- i. The content should highlight the establishment of these organizations in a context of exclusion with regard to enrollment to most land-grant universities such as UMD. The NPHC distinction, including mention of its graduate chapter and alumni engagement, should be incorporated.³² We recommend DSA/DFSL consult Northwestern University (NU) for best practices.³³ Of all the institutions we surveyed, this came the closest to honoring the NPHC legacy by going beyond the rote, “social organization for Black students,” to really attempting to situate the origins within a national historical context.
 - ii. Add a designated NPHC section to the DFSL history page (again, see Northwestern University) which links to each of the national organization websites.
2. Protect NPHC campus history and culture by restoring the Spring Block Show back to an SGA/UMD-funded and NPHC-exclusive production that honors Black graduating seniors.
3. Engage alumni across generations (1971-present) who can advise DFSL staff on the traditions of the UMD NPHC community so traditions are not lost.
4. Restore and institutionalize SGA/UMD funding and support towards the UMD Homecoming Step Show as an NPHC-exclusive production.
5. Provide robust and routine training regarding NPHC history to new DFSL staff upon hire, including the Housing staff as well as the Advising & Programming staff.
6. Erect more visible, centrally-located statuary/monuments recognizing the D9 in a space exclusively dedicated to just NPHC.³⁴
 - a. Though symbolic, monuments make a statement. The size, location, upkeep and accuracy reflect whether people even see them, and their importance/centrality to the campus culture.³⁵
 - b. The current gravemarker-like plaques – which contain incorrect information related to a Latina sorority – are inadequate in scale and meaning.

³²Northwestern University. "Alumni Involvement." <https://www.northwestern.edu/fsl/current-members/alumni-involvement.html>.

³³ Northwestern University. "National Pan-Hellenic Council." <https://www.northwestern.edu/fsl/councils/national-pan-hellenic-council/>.

³⁴ See Wake Forest University, UNC Chapel Hill, Northwestern University, and Florida State University.

³⁵ Consider the plaque honoring President Slaughter as the first Black President at UMD. Does anyone know where it is? It is dilapidated and unseen.

- c. Appropriate models include, but are not limited to, those at UNC Chapel Hill, Wake Forest University, Florida State University and Northwestern University. See links below representing monuments.
 - i. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. "National Pan-Hellenic Council Legacy Plaza Honors Founders." *UNC Discover*. <https://www.unc.edu/discover/national-pan-hellenic-council-legacy-plaza-honors-founders/>.
 - ii. Wake Forest University. "Pan-Hellenic Garden Dedicated." *Wake Forest News*, 1 Oct. 2010. <https://news.wfu.edu/2010/10/01/pan-hellenic-garden-dedicated/>.
 - iii. Syracuse University. "NPHC Legacy Now Set in Stone in Orange Grove." *Syracuse University News*, 7 Nov. 2016. <https://news.syr.edu/blog/2016/11/07/nphc-legacy-now-set-in-stone-in-orange-grove-60793/>.
 - iv. White, T. "UMKC Divine Nine Garden." *The Community Voice*, 15 Sept. 2023. <https://www.communityvoiceks.com/2023/09/15/umkc-divine-nine-garden/>.
 - v. University of Pittsburgh. "Monument Unveiled for Divine Nine." *University Times*. University of Pittsburgh. <https://www.utimes.pitt.edu/news/monument-unveiled-divine>.
 - vi. Samsel, S. "TU to Honor Nine Historically Black Greek Organizations with a Walkway." *The Towerlight*. <https://thetowerlight.com/tu-to-honor-nine-historically-black-greek-organizations-with-a-walkway/>.
 - vii. Georgia Institute of Technology. "Divine Nine." <https://greek.gatech.edu/divinenine>.
 - viii. Kurdak, Suzann, Anna Prentiss, and Jenny Ralph. "Florida State University Honors Divine Nine with New NPHC Park on Campus." *Watch The Yard*, <https://www.watchtheyard.com/colleges/florida-state-university-honors-divine-nine-with-new-nphc-park-on-campus/>.
7. Establish a new NPHC dedicated space *not* located on Fraternity Row. The location should be accessible and relevant for current students and alumni NPHC members. The venue should have sufficient programming space that accommodates at least 50 people, meeting spaces; as well as ample, secure

storage (i.e. 5'x5') for each of the nine organizations. See links below representing buildings.

- a. University of Central Arkansas. "Community Center and NPHC Chapter Rooms." *Go Greek UCA*. <https://uca.edu/gogreek/community-center-and-nphc-chapter-rooms/>.
 - b. Virginia Tech. "NPHC House on Oak Lane." <https://fsl.vt.edu/organizations/councils/NPHC.html>
 - c. Vanderbilt University. "Vanderbilt Celebrates Grand Opening of New National Pan-Hellenic Council House." *Vanderbilt News*, 21 Oct. 2019. <https://news.vanderbilt.edu/2019/10/21/vanderbilt-celebrates-grand-opening-of-new-national-pan-hellenic-council-house/>.
8. Honor existing NPHC traditions by recognizing their independence. For example, NPHC organizations have been forced to assimilate with IFC/PHA organizations for Greek Week. Given the differing histories and priorities across the four councils, attempting to blend them is deemed as disrespectful.

C. Financial/Administrative Support & Physical Space Needs

A significant challenge to growth is the lack of consistent funding which is magnified by the inability to secure space. Space is an evergreen challenge. For example, an alum from the early 1980's shared one solution:

During my time, we had student office space in the Union and didn't have to pay for programming space because the university knew we didn't have houses.

However, this opportunity does not currently exist.

Another challenge is the inability to generate revenue and receive UMD charitable contributions.³⁶ This leaves the organizations under-resourced.

Historically, the way chapters made a large portion of their annual revenue was through parties and/or stepshows. There would be one NPHC event a year and proceeds split proportionately by membership size among organizations. Then individual events were held where proceeds went only to that organization. Calendar dates were negotiated in August and planned for the year. (The BSU also had dates for one event each semester.) However, the current inability to secure space serves as a barrier to this funding model.

³⁶ We have been told that the University is unwilling to receive earmarked charitable contributions on behalf of NPHC organizations.

In our meetings with campus partners, we learned that there is a complicated context to the funding barriers with NPHC. For example, one staff member shared,

Nyumburu works with Black and other minority groups [and are] still trying to get an idea of what ... goals are with respect to D9. Over the years, D9 organizations have come to us for funding, but now [we] cannot directly provide funding for D9 organizations. Nyumburu was self-supported for many years, relying upon student fees. Now, we are under a state-funded line, so we don't apply for funding and the fees that students pay do not support Nyumburu. Thus, Nyumburu does not have funding autonomy. Once Nyumburu moved under the office of ODI, student groups now have to apply for funding using a proposal process. The applications are reviewed by a group, the Leadership Council, and then either approved or rejected. And when the students apply, a member of the ODI has to sponsor them. Also, the amount of money that Nyumburu can give out has decreased. [The Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion] was made aware that D9 organizations cannot get funding from SGA and that this [the new application process] presented a Catch-22 situation for their programming.

1. Physical Space Challenges

Background: NPHC has long advocated for a space of their own for programming, meeting, storing, and ...for some ... living. The UMCP 1995 Report, *Greek Life: A Foundation for the Future*, touts its commitment to Greek Life as evidenced by its investment in constructing houses back in the 1950's, a period prior to campus racial desegregation and the first NPHC charter.³⁷ These houses formed what became known as Fraternity Row on Baltimore Avenue and the Graham Cracker on Knox Road, as well as facilities on Princeton, College, and Yale Avenues. Generally speaking, NPHC organizations have not had the privilege of residing in one of these university-owned and/or leased properties. According to a few NPHC alumni we met with, one reported that in the mid-late 1980s, "there were mild discussions with administration, but nothing materialized. They had us looking in the area of the farm houses on North Campus."

From another,

We actually asked for the agriculture houses, but people were concerned about the optics – i.e. housing Black students in chicken coops. One of the

³⁷ UMD VPSA. "Greek Life: A Foundation for the Future". 25 April 1995.

fraternities wasn't on board because their graduate chapter was planning to get them something bigger and separately.

In the late 1990s, the university was in possession of a vacant house which was in poor condition. It was eventually offered to NPHC groups. Despite the condition, Iota Phi Theta Fraternity leased the house. However, the house was later condemned in 2006.

In the mid 2000s, NPHC alumni recalled discussions with Student Affairs staff regarding dedicated programming and residential space. However, that did not come to fruition. Instead, in later years, the decision would be made to offer NPHC a shared space with MGC, the other historically, non-white Greek lettered council.

Because NPHC students continued to be interested in an independent space, and since House #4 on Fraternity Row had become available, Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. Patricia Perillo attempted to address MGC's and NPHC's desire for space. Initially, DSA envisioned House #4 to be a good residential space for NPHC; however, the current students were not interested in a *living* space, especially on Frat Row given its racialized history. According to one DFSL staff member,

DFSL wanted housing/programming space for all councils. Dr. Michael Goodman—a former DFSL staff member—advocated for NPHC groups to have a house because they needed programming space. In my role... I wanted to assist with some type of space. House #4 became available and [advocates] spoke with Dr. Perillo to dedicate the space to address NPHC's perceived needs. The events of 2020 [Black Lives Matter, George Floyd] primed the pump to push. Everyone wanted their own house...and NPHC and MGC did not want to be lumped together.³⁸ Students did not want to live on the Row, just wanted storage and programming space. [Currently], MGC groups are using the space more. Location is not central for NPHC groups so they don't use it as much.

Despite these sentiments, in 2023, the Agora was dedicated and opened for official use for both NPHC and MGC groups, eliminating the possibility of significant space usage for NPHC.

2. Discussion on the Agora House

In 2023, the University held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Agora. What was House #4 Frat Row became a non-residential space for NPHC and MGC organizations. The

³⁸ DFSL Focus Group (Housing). Collected July 2024.

bittersweet reality of its opening sent disappointment throughout, at least, the NPHC community. Seen as somewhat of a consolation prize or “White Elephant Gift,” NPHC alumni felt that they had waited years for the university to provide a space only to offer something too small and too far off campus while having to share it with groups with whom they had nothing in common. “We’ve been here since the early 70’s and we have to share it with another Council?,” said one alum.

But what about students? What do they make of the Agora accommodations? This is what they told us:

It’s far, so I don’t go [to the Agora] often. When I was an Interest, there was an event there. We may use it once or twice a year.

We use the space for official chapter meetings. Also used it this past semester for Block Show attendees for folks to use the restrooms.

I don’t have access yet. I’ve studied in there maybe once or twice upstairs.

We cannot book rooms on our own in Agora because of our chapter size.

I think you do have to reserve it, but I am not too sure.

Sometimes we have informationals over there. Not a lot of interactions with the space; 1-2 small events.

The Agora, which in Greek means ‘a place to gather,’ is not serving its purpose of gathering NPHC groups. They are outnumbered by the MGC groups, and it is in a location that does not resonate culturally or emotionally with NPHC students or alumni. Again, NPHC feels invisible. In fact, on the DFSL website, there is a video of students speaking about the Agora. However, no video from an NPHC organization is posted, despite there being footage available featuring NPHC students.³⁹

The Agora signifies for many in the NPHC community the University ignoring its requests and lumping the non-white Greek-lettered groups together. One alum who is also a charter member of their organization said this about the Agora ribbon cutting,

I did get a chance to meet [the then-DFSL director] at the Agora house ribbon cutting ceremony. [My organization] was not represented [on the wall of organizational shields]. I was told by [the then-DFSL director] that it was because we currently had less than five members. It [Agora] went from being a house for NPHC and now it is a house for 25 different

³⁹ UMD DFSL. “Agora.” <https://fsl.umd.edu/resources-policies/agora>. Screenshot provided as well.

organizations....[the then-director] said, 'we should just be happy for this house.' His attitude was that we should be happy with this nugget.

It is critical to note, the above-referenced organization had less than five members because they graduated the prior semester, a natural outcome of academic success.

The Agora is an insufficient response to the needs of NPHC students. Other HWIs, not even as large as UMD, have made significant investments in beautifully dedicated NPHC facility spaces that not only afford students a space to gather, but also have a “home” of their own that validates their dignity and acknowledges the legacy of these organizations, while messaging their value to the campus community.⁴⁰ These facilities are also accompanied by impressive monuments; these symbols create enthusiasm which emit a sense of belonging and conveys the thought that “this community means something to us.” This type of campus recognition also speaks to prospective students and their families about the climate for Black campus culture and can influence enrollment decisions, especially for potential NPHC legacy students. To many, the Agora represents a gut punch that does little to build the visibility, pride or respectability of NPHC organizations. We refer the reader back to the list in Section VI(B)-Recommendations.

The initial issue with the Agora would be its location. Physically, it is not close to the center of campus, notably being nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile away from the Nyumburu Cultural Center and the NPHC plaques, areas of historical and continued cultural significance for the NPHC’s target group of students.⁴¹

Beyond the geographic barrier of the location for students, there is a cultural barrier as well. The location has a harmful history and legacy of anti-Black racism associated with Fraternity Row.⁴² As mentioned previously, BGLOs were founded out of necessity following their exclusion from historically White fraternities and sororities.⁴³ The UMD NPHC charters are no exemption from that history. The connections that UMD NPHC members have with Fraternity Row are overwhelmingly rooted in shared experiences of racism that often go overlooked. UMD’s history is similar to many HWIs in the south where “the most segregated area on many campuses is fraternity row.”⁴⁴ Several years

⁴⁰ UCA. "Community Center and NPHC Chapter Rooms." *Go Greek UCA*.
<https://uca.edu/gogreek/community-center-and-nphc-chapter-rooms/>.

⁴¹ Google Maps

⁴² Perry, A. "Why 'The Cotton Picker's' Minstrel Review Is Part of Higher Ed History." *The Hechinger Report*. March 17, 2015. <https://hechingerreport.org/why-the-cotton-pickers-minstrel-review-is-part-of-higher-ed-history/>.

⁴³ See Section V. *Context*

⁴⁴ Perry, A. "'The Cotton Picker's' Minstrel Review" *The Hechinger Report*.

after the *Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka Kansas* ruling and the enrollment of the first Black undergraduates in the 1950s, UMD IFC and PHA GLO members can be found celebrating campus traditions in blackface, minstrel acts, and Confederate Army costumes. These deep-rooted vestiges of exclusion continue to loom heavily on the collective spirit and consciousness of NPHC alumni and current students.⁴⁵

The grouping of NPHC and MGC in the same house represents an institutional ‘lumping’ of marginalized organizations that underscores the lack of understanding and disregard for their distinct histories.

This sentiment doesn’t go unnoticed by faculty/staff, NPHC alumni and current students.

*No one from NPHC wants to really share a space.*⁴⁶

*The Agora house is very out of the way, off campus. It doesn’t feel like it is for us. It is very generic. The whole D9 is not even up there [represented by their shield on the wall of the largest room on the main floor].*⁴⁷

The lack of organizational shield representation is of particular offense. The Agora’s display does not fully represent all **nine** NPHC organizations. Whether the entity has an active UMD chapter is not relevant to the concept that the D9 is a distinct entity. The D9 consists of *nine* organizations which should *all* be represented. Anything short of that erases their history and reinforces the sense of invisibility that has been placed upon these groups.

Thinking of the space itself, the 7,736 square foot space does not support 20+ chapters.⁴⁸ The largest room in the building is the Community Room. Of the remaining 13 rooms, six rooms have occupancies of only six to seven contingent upon the room setup being in “conference style” or “lounge set up”.⁴⁹ Taken in conjunction with the current 5-member chapter minimum, only one to two additional members of a chapter fit in the room. Despite the limited space of the rooms, the *Agora Chapter Guide* encourages the following usage options:

*“...executive board meetings, study space, hanging out”*⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ NPHC Student Focus Group. Collected May 2024.

⁴⁷ NPHC Alumni Focus Group. Collected June 2024.

⁴⁸ UMD DFSL. *The Agora Chapter Guide*, Last updated August 12, 2024.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

“...chapter meetings, executive board meetings, study nights”

Thus, the suggested options are not congruent with the space limitations.

Further, the Agora was intended to help alleviate some of the burden of booking rooms. The current official booking process is through the Stamp eCalendar log-in.⁵¹ To reiterate: if a chapter is [a] in the process of seeking recognition within DFSL or [b] does not meet the 5-member minimum, the chapter will not have an authorized login to access the eCalendar platform.

The workaround to this challenge is to contact the Agora’s resident director to make a reservation. This glaring inefficiency impacts the UMD NPHC as they plan their programming. Chapters without login access don’t have the luxury of viewing a list of available rooms in real time; therefore, those chapters must resort to generating an uninformed shortlist of potential dates until they can verify availability. This imposes bureaucratic hurdles for the students.

The UMD NPHC is competing not only amongst themselves, but also with MGC for programming dates and times for a small availability of suitable rooms within the Agora. When you consider the barriers faced by the UMD NPHC in securing programming space overall, the Agora is insufficient.

In sum, the Agora has become another instance of attempting to address the needs of NPHC organizations without actually asking them what they want or need. In sum, creating the space seems like more of an accomplishment for the University rather than something responsive to the needs of the students.

3. Amplified Sound Policy: Disparate Impact

This academic year, the NPHC is facing challenges due to the enforcement of the [Stamp Student Union \(Stamp\) Amplified Sound Policy](#). While we understand that this policy has existed for some time, its enforcement 2024-2025 school year has created specific conflicts with the traditional scheduling of NPHC New Member Presentations, which typically occur on weekdays (Monday–Thursday) in the Nyumburu Amphitheater to align with Black UMD's high weekday event attendance. Students were forced to shift their New Member Presentations from weekdays to weekends, which impacts both attendance and booking availability.

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 6

Specifically, in spring 2025, two NPHC organizations faced difficulty booking space on the weekends (to comply with the Amplified Sound Policy) due to Maryland Day and other student organization activities, including MGC new member shows.

The Amplified Sound Policy currently allows amplified sound only on Fridays from 5:00 PM–10:00 PM, Saturdays from 10:00 AM–10:00 PM, and Sundays from 12:00 PM–8:00 PM. This poses a scheduling challenge given the [DFSL New Member Presentation Policy](#), which states that presentations must be scheduled no later than 8:30 PM and start by 9:00 PM. Because there are more organizations needing to book Presentations than there are windows of available time, the opportunities are limited. Additionally, the DFSL policy requires attendance by both the Chapter Advisor and DFSL staff. This imposes a burden on staff personal weekend schedules which results in concerns of work-life balance.

If presentations are limited to weekends, this raises several concerns:

- a. **Impact on Staff and Advisor Schedules:** Weekend events could require blocking off 7–8 weekend nights per semester, significantly affecting DFSL staff and Chapter Advisors already managing a full workweek. This also raises concerns about religious observances and personal commitments.
- b. **Purpose of the Amphitheater:** It is unclear why the Nyumburu Amphitheater cannot be permitted to accommodate weekday use for these events, given its design and central purpose. Use of the Stamp's facilities incur costs, and academic buildings are not designed for these new member shows at UMD.
- c. **Equity Across Housing Types:** The University-Owned Houses for IFC and PHA groups do not appear to be subject to the same quiet hours or amplified sound restrictions. Amplified sound from these houses has occurred without conflict, raising questions about policy consistency and equity.
- d. **University Police Presence:** New Member Presentations typically host more than 100 attendees. There are concerns around a new requirement for a police presence at large events. While DFSL staff have provided crowd control at large-scale council events, this additional layer could unintentionally perpetuate a policing atmosphere for Black students and organizations. This would undermine progress made toward an inclusive and supportive campus environment for these communities.⁵²

⁵² UMD Stamp Student Union, Event and Guest Services. "Policies and Procedures: Security." Last updated 1 April 2025. https://stamp.umd.edu/events/event_guest_services/policies_procedures#security

VI(C) Recommendations

1. Support NPHC organizations by allowing them to generate profit with their fundraising initiatives, e.g. parties, by underwriting the costs of the space and for UMPD officers.
2. Remove the 5-member minimum to book rooms on the eCalendar platform.
3. Create dedicated spaces for NPHC activities that allow outside food and/or caterers outside of Dining Services.
4. Establish a University-level mechanism to allow supporters to make charitable donations directly to specific chapters or the NPHC as a whole.
5. Grant NPHC organizations the option of using space in The Stamp *gratis* for New Member Presentation and/or grant a waiver from the Amplified Sound Policy so the Nyumburu Amphitheater can be used for New Member Presentations on weekdays.

D. Campus Partners

The Task Force had the opportunity to speak with campus partners, departments and individuals who work closely with the NPHC student population. Most of the participants have worked on campus well over a decade, and possess a broad understanding of the changes that have occurred as it relates to the experiences of NPHC student members. We touched on some issues already addressed in this document and learned about new ones. We value their time and perspective, and, therefore, share their thoughts here.

1. Funding

The Task Force concluded that funding for these groups has markedly decreased. Due to the exclusive nature of GLOs, funding from the Student Government Association (SGA) for individual organizations was understood not to be a funding stream, a circumstance that has been largely accepted. Therefore, student leaders have relied on sponsorship from campus departments and innovative fundraising efforts. For some chapters, there has been support from alumni, but not at the NPHC level. It should also be noted that in the past, even though the individual organizations did not receive SGA funding, the NPHC umbrella organization did. In our benchmarking research, we found that Northwestern University, Wake Forest University, Vanderbilt University, University

of Tennessee Knoxville, University of Central Arkansas, and UNC Charlotte all provide SGA funding to their NPHC organizations.

Assistant Vice President Wendy Holbrook from the University of Central Arkansas emphasized the importance of supporting all student organizations, when she said, “All groups and the Council receive funding from SGA.”

One of our focus group participants whose unit often financially supported D9 organizations noted that NPHC student programming has waned over the years from when they first began working at UMD and that this was largely due to funding; “there is no greater barrier [to programming success] to students than getting funding.”

Another campus partner noted how, over the years, students often relied on their department for funding; however, that funding has recently decreased to such a minimal amount, that students no longer bother to ask. This sentiment is more deeply described below:

Students now have to apply for funding via a proposal and the application is reviewed by a group (staff) that either approve or reject. It should be noted that most of the staff on this review panel do not work directly with these groups and that although a Vice President was made aware that NPHC organizations do not receive SGA funding and this application model would drastically reduce their funding ability to program and the “catch 22” that students would find themselves in, the process moved forward. Further, when the students apply, a member of the [VP’s staff] has to sponsor them or they can not receive a review. The money the department is able to give to student groups—not just NPHC groups—has drastically decreased. This actually impacts the larger Black student social community, not just NPHC.

Also, related to funding, another focus group participant shared,

[the then-DFSL director was] given advice over the years that they haven’t followed. He had a graduate student come in and basically ruined the long-standing UMD [NPHC] Fall Homecoming Step Show which used to be very successful. I have kept [my] distance because the leadership within the DFSL has refrained from advice from several groups. The office never took the time to understand the differences among PHA, IFC, and NPHC. The office wanted to use the white sororities and fraternities as the template.

2. Recognition and Reinstatement

The Task Force has identified a disconnect regarding *recognition* and *reinstatement*. Moreover, there have been inconsistencies in the directives NPHC organizations have received from DFSL.

To highlight this point, another participant said,

DFSL is one portion of this question, but my response is much broader in that it encompasses Student Affairs. The issue with the Ques, [they] had direct issues with the previous director of DFSL and that has lingered over since they have been reinstated... Chi Delta has decided to continue on as part of the graduate chapter. Chi Delta had satisfied the conditions of the suspension, but it had not been spelled out what rights they do and don't have on campus.

Similarly, members of other organizations mentioned that they were suspended well beyond satisfying conditions. Two organizations were told by the then-DFSL director that unless they shared their secret ceremonial rituals, they would never be allowed back on campus. The impression was that leadership knew the mandate could and would not be complied with, thus posing a permanent barrier to re-entry. The Task Force concluded that the mandate was unconscionable and something to which the organizations could not agree.

3. Access to Space/The Agora

Place and space also came up during our meeting with campus partners. Because we heard passionate comments from alumni, we wanted to know if the staff were hearing anything about the Agora directly from NPHC student leaders.

I have heard [from students] that NPHC groups do not use it [the Agora], just the multicultural groups [MGC organizations], because of the sheer size of them in comparison to NPHC. They knew going into it that MGC groups would dominate the space and NPHC groups would just maintain the status quo.

Another chimed in with, “the space is out of the way.”

Another campus partner observed that when Agora,

first opened I was unable to attend [the ribbon cutting ceremony] and was told by a staff member that it was off the beaten path. I did speak with [the then-director] about it and his comment was ludicrous—students should be happy they have a house; you oughta be grateful for what we give you.

The general agreement was that Agora is,

out of the way and too small to do any programming and that across other campuses there has been a practice of forcing black students into the white framework, UMD is no different.

4. The Homecoming Step Show

The NPHC Homecoming Step Show is another area of lost financial and programming support. The Homecoming Step Show brought Black alumni back in masses to campus, NPHC and non-NPHC alumni alike. Although campus partners offered insight on this topic, we also found this meaningful and relevant quote from an alum to amplify what we heard from campus partners:

The first fall step show was in Cole Field House in fall 1986. It became known as the ‘Greatest Show on Earth’ on the east coast and it was unheard of that we managed to have it held in Lefty Driesell’s [the men’s basketball coach] house. No way should we have gotten to do that, but we did it. We were in Prinkert Gym first and then Ritchie Coliseum, then we did the impossible by getting Lefty Driesell’s house. Ritchie was always oversold and standing room only. We charged \$5 when we were in Ritchie; \$20 for Cole. We brought in acts like Queen Latifah [to perform alongside the step show]. We got E.U. (Experience Unlimited Band), but it [the concert] got canceled by [the University President]. We were called to his [the University President’s] office to have a conversation about safety concerns because of the [band’s] reputation of a violent followership, even though the event had been approved by UMPD. He [the University President] received calls from a few local university presidents and they scared him into believing that we needed more security than they could pull together at the last minute. UMPD and Facilities actually felt confident that they could have handled it. The police offered to limit the event to UMD students. We were all trying to come up with workable solutions without canceling the performance. But [the University President] had already made up his mind and said he would be the bad guy and cancel it himself. We already sold tickets and advertised E.U. [Though the step show occurred, the E.U. performance was canceled.]

Although there were several step shows to follow, it was the case that fewer NPHC groups were performing in the Homecoming Step Show. What seems to have put an eventual end to the Homecoming Step Show was financial in nature. It “was ... ruined in one swoop when the NPHC’s graduate assistant advisor – with the support of the

then-DFSL director – decided to significantly reduce ticket prices to less than \$5 per ticket in an effort to generate even more attendance. “The DFSL director was advised that the ticket costs were not viable for an event that costs \$35,000 and the NPHC lost money. This proved to be a bad decision because at that discounted price, costs could not be recouped leaving the NPHC in a deficit.” That was the end of the Greatest Show on Earth.

In contrast, other institutions have found a way to support large NPHC events. The University of Central Arkansas’ Farris Center, a 6,000-seat multi-purpose arena, is home to their [NPHC Homecoming step show](#). With SGA funding and ticket fees of \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door, students, alumni and the community are able to enjoy this cultural tradition that the UMD community can now only reminisce about. Its assistant vice president, Wendy Holbrook shared, “SGA helps pay for the step show and every registered university student gets a free ticket to attend.”

VI(D) Recommendations

1. Provide SGA funding to the NPHC umbrella organization.
2. Provide a consistent funding stream to NPHC organizations out of Student Affairs
3. Work with NPHC to underwrite and bring back the tradition of the NPHC Homecoming Step Show, if this is something current NPHC members would want.
4. Protect NPHC cultural traditions, such as the spring Block Show and the Homecoming Step Show.
5. Provide close supervision by the DSA suite over DFSL decision making.
6. Establish accountability checks on DFSL and the Office of Student Conduct’s (OSC) reinstatement conditions and sanctions along with a reasonable time-line for return.
7. Refrain from suspending NPHC organizations’ active status when there are no allegations confirmed following criminal investigations.
8. Expediently resolve administrative (internal) investigations.

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VII. Recommendation Summary

1. Review, revise and develop policies that are culturally-relevant and tailored to the legacy, goals, and challenges of NPHC organizations.
2. Eliminate all minimum chapter size requirements for NPHC organizations.
 - a. Remove DFSL membership minimum related to recognition and reactivation.
 - b. Remove SORC minimum to access e-Calendar, book rooms, and earn formal recognition
 - c. Remove minimum to determine probation status
3. Create more awareness and intentionality around the treatment and language used to categorize organizations in relation to their recognition status.
 - a. For example, the nomenclature on the website of “Seeking Recognition” and “Probationary Recognition” are unclear and detrimental to organizational growth.
 - b. The language in, and implementation of, the DFSL Recognition Application Guidelines document is inconsistent and thus, confusing. Revise to be more explicit when using the term “recognition” as it relates to new organizations, and “reactivation” as it relates to returning organizations.
 - c. Include a glossary of terms for each policy.
4. Create more equitable reactivation policies across all councils.
 - a. The reactivation process for IFC and PHA organizations is generally easier than the process for NPHC organizations. This is often manifested in the time a chapter is sanctioned off-campus, and/or as it relates to minimum chapter size.
 - b. Maintain and share an updated directory of NPHC Advisors.
5. Host consistent DFSL meetings with NPHC Advisors on a bi-monthly basis.
6. Dedicate a Coordinator (1.0 FTE) to advise only NPHC organizations.

7. Develop a concrete plan to recruit and retain all nine NPHC organizations on campus.
 - a. Proactively support smaller organizations without negative impacts and stigma
8. Revise and clarify DFSL website as it pertains to NPHC organizations to make sure it is accurate and current.
 - a. For example, the nomenclature on the website of “Seeking Recognition” and “Probationary Recognition” is unclear and detrimental to organizational growth.
 - b. Honor NPHC on the DFSL website with a thoughtful narrative of the history of NPHC.
 - i. The content should highlight the establishment of these organizations in a context of exclusion with regard to enrollment to most land-grant universities such as UMD. The NPHC distinction, including mention of its graduate chapter and alumni engagement, should be incorporated.⁵³ We recommend DSA/DFSL consult Northwestern University (NU) for best practices. Of all the institutions we surveyed, this came the closest to honoring the NPHC legacy by going beyond the rote, “social organization for Black students,” to really attempting to situate the origins within a national historical context.
 - ii. Add a designated NPHC section to the DFSL history page (again, see Northwestern University) which links to each of the national organization websites.
9. Protect NPHC campus history and culture by restoring the Spring Block Show back to an SGA/UMD-funded and NPHC-exclusive production that honors Black graduating seniors.
10. Engage alumni across generations (1971-present) who can advise DFSL staff on the traditions of the UMD NPHC community so traditions are not lost.

⁵³ Northwestern University. "Alumni Involvement." <https://www.northwestern.edu/fsl/current-members/alumni-involvement.html>.

11. Restore and institutionalize SGA/UMD funding and support towards the UMD Homecoming Step Show as an NPHC-exclusive production.
12. Provide robust and routine training regarding NPHC history to new DFSL staff upon hire, including the Housing staff as well as the Advising & Programming staff.
13. Erect more visible, centrally-located statuary/monuments recognizing the D9 in a space exclusively dedicated to just NPHC.⁵⁴
 - a. Though symbolic, monuments make a statement. The size, location, upkeep and accuracy reflect whether people even see them, and their importance/centrality to the campus culture.⁵⁵
 - b. The current gravemarker-like plaques – which contain incorrect information related to a Latina sorority – are inadequate in scale and meaning.
 - c. Appropriate models include those at UNC Chapel Hill, Wake Forest University, Florida State University and Northwestern University. See links to other schools' NPHC monuments:
 - i. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. "National Pan-Hellenic Council Legacy Plaza Honors Founders." *UNC Discover*. <https://www.unc.edu/discover/national-pan-hellenic-council-legacy-plaza-honors-founders/>.
 - ii. Wake Forest University. "Pan-Hellenic Garden Dedicated." *Wake Forest News*, 1 Oct. 2010. <https://news.wfu.edu/2010/10/01/pan-hellenic-garden-dedicated/>.
 - iii. University of Central Arkansas. "Community Center and NPHC Chapter Rooms." *Go Greek UCA*. <https://uca.edu/gogreek/community-center-and-nphc-chapter-rooms/>.

⁵⁴ See Wake Forest University, UNC Chapel Hill, Northwestern University, Florida State University.

⁵⁵ Consider the plaque honoring President Slaughter as the first Black President at UMD. Does anyone know where it is? It is dilapidated and unseen.

- iv. Syracuse University. "NPHC Legacy Now Set in Stone in Orange Grove." *Syracuse University News*, 7 Nov. 2016. <https://news.syr.edu/blog/2016/11/07/nphc-legacy-now-set-in-stone-in-orange-grove-60793/>.
- v. White, T. "UMKC Divine Nine Garden." *The Community Voice*, 15 Sept. 2023. <https://www.communityvoiceks.com/2023/09/15/umkc-divine-nine-garden/>.
- vi. University of Pittsburgh. "Monument Unveiled for Divine Nine." *University Times*. University of Pittsburgh. <https://www.utimes.pitt.edu/news/monument-unveiled-divine>.
- vii. Samsel, S. "TU to Honor Nine Historically Black Greek Organizations with a Walkway." *The Towerlight*. <https://thetowerlight.com/tu-to-honor-nine-historically-black-greek-organizations-with-a-walkway/>.
- viii. Vanderbilt University. "Vanderbilt Celebrates Grand Opening of New National Pan-Hellenic Council House." *Vanderbilt News*, 21 Oct. 2019. <https://news.vanderbilt.edu/2019/10/21/vanderbilt-celebrates-grand-opening-of-new-national-pan-hellenic-council-house/>.
- ix. Kurdak, Suzann, Anna Prentiss, and Jenny Ralph. "Florida State University Honors Divine Nine with New NPHC Park on Campus." *Watch The Yard*, <https://www.watchtheyard.com/colleges/florida-state-university-honors-divine-nine-with-new-nphc-park-on-campus/>.

14. Establish a new NPHC dedicated space *not* located on Fraternity Row. The location should be accessible and relevant for current students and alumni NPHC members. The venue should have sufficient programming space that accommodates at least 50 people, meeting spaces; as well as ample, secure storage (i.e. 5'x5') for each of the nine organizations. See:

- a. University of Central Arkansas. "Community Center and NPHC Chapter Rooms." *Go Greek UCA*. <https://uca.edu/gogreek/community-center-and-nphc-chapter-rooms/>.
- b. Virginia Tech. NPHC House on Oak Lane. <https://fsl.vt.edu/organizations/councils/NPHC.html>

- c. Vanderbilt University. "Vanderbilt Celebrates Grand Opening of New National Pan-Hellenic Council House." *Vanderbilt News*, 21 Oct. 2019. <https://news.vanderbilt.edu/2019/10/21/vanderbilt-celebrates-grand-opening-of-new-national-pan-hellenic-council-house/>.
15. Honor existing NPHC traditions by recognizing their independence. For example, NPHC organizations have been forced to assimilate with IFC/PHA organizations for Greek Week. Given the differing histories and priorities across the four councils, attempting to blend them is deemed as disrespectful.
 16. Support NPHC organizations by allowing them to generate income through fundraising and underwrite the costs of the space and UMPD officers.
 17. Remove the 5-member minimum to book rooms on the eCalendar platform
 18. Create dedicated spaces for NPHC activities that permit food.
 19. Establish a University-level mechanism to allow supporters to make charitable donations directly to specific chapters or the NPHC as a whole.
 20. Grant NPHC organizations the option of using space in The Stamp *gratis* for New Member Presentation and/or grant a waiver from the Amplified Sound Policy so the Nyumburu Amphitheater can be used for New Member Presentations on weekdays.
 21. Provide SGA funding to the NPHC umbrella organization.
 22. Provide a consistent funding stream to NPHC organizations out of Student Affairs
 23. Work with NPHC to underwrite and bring back the tradition of the NPHC Homecoming Step Show, if this is something current NPHC members would want.
 24. Protect NPHC cultural traditions, such as the spring Block Show and the Homecoming Step Show.
 25. Provide close supervision by the DSA suite over DFSL decision making.
 26. Establish accountability checks on DFSL and the Office of Student Conduct's (OSC) reinstatement conditions and sanctions along with a reasonable time-line for return.
 27. Refrain from suspending NPHC organizations' active status when there are no allegations confirmed following criminal investigations.

28. Expediently resolve administrative (internal) investigations.

VIII. Conclusion

Like all entities, it is critical to audit one's operations. A review of DFSL was conducted in 2017. The *June 9, 2017 External Review* outlined several concerns that we continue to see in this current *Review*. While we appreciate that the current leadership has invested resources in this reflective process, it is, however, with a pregnant pause that we carefully watch for tangible outcomes of our recommendations. Reviews are only effective when action is taken on those recommendations. It is our sincere hope that in another seven years, a different task force does not need to revisit the same concerns outlined above.

It would appear that due to staff turnover and a general lack of follow-through, previous DFSL reports and assessments have not been adopted by the entire DFSL staff and utilized as action-steps or blueprints for change within DFSL. It is useful to consistently evaluate and reflect on the organizational operations and staff patterns, roles and responsibilities, but there seems to be a failure to take action on recommendations and observations.

The new Director of DFSL has a major task in front of him. However, the timing of this NPHC Task Force Report can be an invaluable resource to help him navigate the landscape of fraternity and sorority life at the University of Maryland. An overarching recommendation is for DFSL to reach out to NPHC alumni and solicit their support to help grow the chapters and lead the organizations toward a healthy future. We can only wonder if the NPHC alumni and advisor community had been consulted during some of NPHC's more challenging moments—e.g., fewer groups on campus to fill the Spring Block Show—there may have been outcomes that would not have only preserved our traditions, but also would have nurtured stronger alumni relationships and NPHC organizations.

IX. Appendix

1. Charge to the University of Maryland NPHC Task Force (April 10, 2024)
2. List of Task Force Members with Titles and Affiliations
3. Focus Group Communications
4. List of NPHC Organizations (Founding and UMD Charter Dates)
5. Benchmarking Surveys (Programming & Monuments)

Appendix 1 – Charge to UMD NPHC Task Force

Charge to the University of Maryland NPHC Task Force

From Dr. James McShay, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs

April 10, 2024

The UMD NPHC Task Force is charged with recommending what actions should be taken to strengthen programs, resources, and partnerships necessary to promote a greater sense of belonging, thriving, success and support for students who are members of fraternities and sororities affiliated with the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) at the University of Maryland. This charge comes from the recognition that the Department of Fraternity and Sorority Life (DFSL) does not presently have a formal set of coordinated initiatives and strategies designed to leverage academic, co-curricular, or community-based resources to meet the holistic needs of NPHC students as well as to help advance the mission of their organizations. Ultimately, the aim is to build a forward-thinking institutional agenda that acknowledges the racial history of exclusion that led to the establishment of NPHC. And, furthermore to ensure that UMD students who belong to its affiliated chapters feel empowered, uplifted, invested in, and part of the fabric of the University.

To fulfill this charge, the Task Force should:

1. Consider other fraternity and sorority life departments that offer high-impact culturally relevant programs and services for Black students at peer HWIs and at institutions that are known for “best practices” in this area.
2. Consult with NPHC-affiliated UMD campus partners, local/regional community partners, alumni, campus advisors, faculty and staff, NPHC headquarters, as well as campus-based student services units and other organizations including but not limited to the Department of African American Studies, Nyumburu Cultural Center, and the UMD Black Alumni Association. Consult about their current outreach efforts, programs, and initiatives available to Black students and how they could be leveraged to advance the goals of Black fraternities and sororities.
3. Provide recommendations for actions that will develop a more robust infrastructure for student and staff driven programs and resources managed by DFSL at the University of Maryland that are designed to offer ongoing support and advocacy for Black fraternity and sororities. The recommendations should be organized around the following overlapping priority areas: Student Engagement and Advising Support; Honoring NPHC History & Legacy at UMD; Financial/Administrative Support & Physical Space Needs; and Academic, Co-curricular and Community-based Partnerships.
4. Consider conducting focus groups with African American students on campus regarding their perception of NPHC and inquiring why they are or not interested in becoming part of this community.
5. Consider conducting focus groups with current NPHC students to learn more about their experiences.

The NPHC Task Force is asked to provide recommendations by December 20, 2024 to Dr. James McShay. The recommendations developed by this group will be shared with the campus community during the beginning of the 2025 spring semester.

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Appendix 2 – List of Task Force Members

Task Force Members

Traci LM Dula, Ph.D., B.A. '89; Ph.D.'16
Associate Director, Honors College
Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.

Laura Anderson Wright, Esq.
Sr. Associate General Counsel, Office of General Counsel
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Cassie A. Duah, B.S. '05, MS, MBA
University of Maryland Black Alumni Association
Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.

Brandon Dula, ABD
Assistant Director, MICA
Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.

April N. Hamilton
Chapter Advisor
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

Amina Lampkin, B.A. '21
Coordinator, Undergraduate Studies
Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.

Andre Nottingham, M.S.
Assistant Director, Nyumburu Cultural Center
Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.

Appendix 3 – Focus Groups Communications

Advisor Email

Dear UMD NPHC Advisors,

Hello. We hope this note finds you well. We wanted to make you aware that a group has been charged by the Division of Student Affairs (DSA) to assess and offer recommendations for best practices regarding the NPHC member student experience. It is the UMD NPHC Task Force.

The DSA has conducted several audits and reports on the UMD Greek Life experience, seeking to improve practices and its capacity to serve this unique student community. However, **this is the first time it has focused specifically on the unique needs of the Divine 9 (D9) member organizations.** Given that many of the chapters have recently celebrated 50 years of service to the UMD community, we are pleased to participate in these efforts which we hope will elevate the presence of D9 organizations and its student members.

In order to better understand the context of the current student experience, we think it will be helpful to also meet with the folks who work closely with them as well as with the Greek life staff—You, the Advisors! The only way we can advocate and put forth meaningful recommendations that will continue to impact students is to get your input. Your insights will inform our understanding of the impact the Department of Fraternity & Sorority Life (DFSL) policies and practices have had on the overall engagement of the NPHC community (both the students and the advisors) that assists students in navigating both campus and national organization expectations. Your role is critical and we want to acknowledge that.

The Advisor focus groups will take place on **Thursdays, June 13 or June 20, 7-8:30 pm.** (By the way, we are also meeting with your undergraduates, so please encourage them to participate on their designated dates).

Any Advisor interested in sharing their experience should [complete this google form](#). You are generally a small group and we want to hear from as many advisors as possible. The data from the focus groups will be held in confidence; we will only report on themes. To be clear, no identifying information will be shared in our report.

As a matter of trust and transparency, the Task Force is composed of faculty, staff, alumni, and advisors who are all members of a D9 organization, some of whom also joined their organization here at UMD. We hope you will be able to lend your voice and share your experiences. If you have questions, you may reach out to me directly at tdula@umd.edu.

Sincerely and in Greekdom,

Dr. Traci LM Dula
UMD NPHC Task Force Chair
Associate Director, Honors College

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Alumni Email

Dear NPHC Terp Alumni,

Hello. We hope this note finds you well. We wanted to make you aware that a group has been charged by the Division of Student Affairs (DSA) to assess and offer recommendations for best practices regarding the NPHC member student experience. It is the UMD NPHC Task Force.

The DSA has conducted several audits and reports on the UMD Greek Life experience, seeking to improve practices and its capacity to serve this unique student community. However, **this is the first time it has focused specifically on the unique needs of the Divine 9 (D9) member organizations.** Given that many of the chapters have recently celebrated 50 years of service to the UMD community, we are pleased to participate in these efforts which we hope will elevate the presence of D9 organizations and its student members.

In order to better understand the context of the current student experience, we think it will be helpful to also meet with alumni from across the decades—even charter members—in order to capture a wide net of understanding of NPHC Greek life over time and tradition. The only way we can advocate and put forth meaningful recommendations that will continue to impact today's and future students is to get *your* input. Your insights will inform our understanding of the impact the Department of Fraternity & Sorority Life (DFSL) policies and practices have had on the overall engagement of the NPHC community, again, over time.

The Alumni focus groups will take place on **Wednesday, June 12 or Tuesday, June 18, 7-8:30 pm.** (By the way, we are also meeting with the undergraduates so please encourage your undergraduate members to read their emails and plan to participate on the dates designated for undergraduates).

Any D9 member interested in sharing their experience should [complete this google form](#). We want to hear from as many alumni as possible and we would particularly like to hear from those who served in leadership capacities and may have had significant engagement with the Greek life staff and policies. **The data from the focus groups will be held in confidence; we will only report on themes. To be clear, no identifying information will be shared in our report.**

As a matter of trust and transparency, the Task Force is composed of faculty, staff, alumni, and advisors who are all members of a D9 organization, some of whom joined their organization here at UMD. We hope you will be able to lend your voice and share your experiences. If you have questions, you may reach out to me directly at tdula@umd.edu.

Sincerely and in Greekdom,

Dr. Traci LM Dula
UMD NPHC Task Force Chair
Associate Director, Honors College

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Campus Partners Email

Dear Campus Partners,

We hope this note finds you well. The UMD NPHC Task Force has been charged by VP Perillo to assess and offer recommendations for best practices regarding the NPHC member student experience.

The Division of Student Affairs (DSA) has conducted several audits and reports on the UMD Greek Life experience, seeking to improve practices and its capacity to serve this unique student community. However, **this is the first time it has focused specifically on the unique needs of the Divine 9 (D9) member organizations**. Given that many of the chapters have recently celebrated 50 years of service to the UMD community, we are pleased to participate in these efforts that we hope will elevate the presence of D9 organizations and its student members.

In order to better understand the context of the current student experience, we think it will be helpful to also meet with campus colleagues who either work with DFSL and/or D9 student leaders. The only way we can advocate and put forth meaningful recommendations that will continue to impact students (and staff) is to get your input. Your insights as a campus partner will inform our understanding of how DFSL policies and practices have impacted the overall engagement of the NPHC community.

We have identified August 12 or 13 for a virtual focus group. **Please complete [this google form](#) by Monday, August 5. The data from the focus groups will be held in confidence; we will only report on themes. To be clear, no identifying information will be shared in our report.**

As a matter of trust and transparency, the Task Force is composed of faculty, staff, alumni, and advisors who are all members of a D9 organization, some of whom joined their organization here at UMD. We hope you will be able to lend your voice and share your experiences. If you have questions, you may reach out to me directly at tdula@umd.edu.

Sincerely,

Dr. Traci LM Dula
UMD NPHC Task Force Chair
Associate Director
Honors College

DFSL Staff Email

Dear DFSL Colleagues,

We hope this note finds you well. The UMD NPHC Task Force has been charged by VP Perillo to assess and offer recommendations for best practices regarding the NPHC member student experience.

The Division of Student Affairs (DSA) has conducted several audits and reports on the UMD Greek Life experience, seeking to improve practices and its capacity to serve this unique student community. However, **this is the first time it has focused specifically on the unique needs of the Divine 9 (D9) member organizations**. Given that many of the chapters have recently celebrated 50 years of service to the UMD community, we are pleased to participate in these efforts that we hope will elevate the presence of D9 organizations and its student members.

In order to better understand the context of the current student experience, we think it will be helpful to also meet with the folks who work closely with many of the D9 student leaders! The only way we can advocate and put forth meaningful recommendations that will continue to impact students (and staff) is to get your input. Your insights will inform our understanding of how you understand your role in working with these student groups as well as how DFSL policies and practices have impacted the overall engagement of the NPHC community.

Ideally, we would like to meet with the Advising & Programming and Housing staff separately; however, if the specific dates don't fit your calendar, please join us when you can. The date(s) for the Programming staff is **July 16 or 17**. The date(s) for the Housing staff is **July 24 or 25**. These dates are based upon our understanding of your availability. The focus groups will take place **Noon-1 pm** virtually on the above dates.

Please [complete this google form](#). We want to hear from as many staff as possible. The data from the focus groups will be held in confidence; we will only report on themes. To be clear, no identifying information will be shared in our report.

As a matter of trust and transparency, the Task Force is composed of faculty, staff, alumni, and advisors who are all members of a D9 organization, some of whom joined their organization here at UMD. We hope you will be able to lend your voice and share your experiences. If you have questions, you may reach out to me directly at tdula@umd.edu.

Sincerely,

Dr. Traci LM Dula
UMD NPHC Task Force Chair
Associate Director
Honors College

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Student Email

Dear NPHC Executive Board and Chapter Presidents:

With the semester at a close and exams complete, we are reaching out hoping to find time to connect (virtually). To the recent graduates, congratulations and yes, we do want to hear from *you* even though you are now technically a *Terp Alum*.

As a reminder, the Division of Student Affairs (“DSA”) has charged a committee to assess and offer recommendations for best practices regarding the NPHC member student experience. It is the UMD NPHC Task Force.

The DSA has conducted several audits and reports on the UMD Greek Life experience, seeking to improve practices and its capacity to serve this unique student community. However, this is the first time it has focused specifically on the unique needs of the Divine 9 (D9) member organizations. Given that many of the chapters have recently celebrated 50 years of service to the UMD community, we are pleased to participate in these efforts which we hope will elevate the presence of D9 organizations and its student members.

In order to better understand the student experience, we need to hear from you. The only way we can advocate and put forth meaningful recommendations is to get input from current students who represent the D9 organizations. Your insights will provide us with a deeper understanding of the impact the Department of Fraternity & Sorority Life (DFSL) policies and practices have on the overall engagement of your community.

The dates for the focus groups are **Tuesday, June 11 or 25, 7-8:30pm** via Zoom. We encourage you to join us even if you are not available for the full time period.

Any D9 member interested in sharing their experience should [complete this google form](#). We want to hear from as many members as possible and we would particularly like to hear from those who serve in leadership capacities and have had significant engagement with DFSL. The data from the focus groups will be held in confidence; we will only report on themes. To be clear, no identifying information will be shared in our report.

As a matter of trust and transparency, the Task Force is composed of faculty, staff, alumni, and advisors who are all members of a D9 organization, some of whom joined their organization here at UMD. We hope you will be able to lend your voice and share your experiences. If you have questions, you may reach out to me directly at tdula@umd.edu.

Sincerely and in Greekdom,

Dr. Traci LM Dula
UMD NPHC Task Force Chair
Associate Director
Honors College

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Appendix 4 – List of NPHC Organizations



NPHC Founding & UMD Charter Dates

| <u>Organization</u> | <u>Founding Date</u> | <u>UMD Charter Date</u> |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. | December 4, 1906 | April 27, 1974 |
| Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. | January 15, 1908 | March 2, 1974 |
| Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. | January 5, 1911 | September 21, 1974 |
| Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. | November 17, 1911 | March 3, 1973 |
| Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. | January 13, 1913 | January 26, 1974 |
| Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. | January 9, 1914 | January 25, 1972 |
| Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. | January 16, 1920 | October 14, 1973 |
| Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. | November 12, 1922 | April 3, 1976 |
| Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc. | September 19, 1963 | August 13, 1971 ⁵⁶ |

⁵⁶ At the time of its charter at UMD, Iota Phi Theta Fraternity was not a member of the National Pan-Hellenic Council; it joined the NPHC in 1997. Consequently, Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. is commonly known as the first NPHC fraternity to be chartered at UMD.

Appendix 5 – Benchmarking Surveys

Programming Email

Greetings Fraternity & Sorority Life Leader:

We hope you are doing well during this busy time of year.

The University of Maryland, College Park is conducting a review of its operations as they relate to Divine 9 (D9) organizations. We've been asked to offer recommendations to the Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs regarding the NPHC member student experience. Consequently, the University has organized an NPHC Task Force to review best practices. Your institution was identified as having best practices for working with NPHC organizations and from which our UMD colleagues might benchmark some of its operations.

To this end, the Task Force would be interested in gathering your thoughts to better understand your vision, operations, and philosophical approach. We've created a Google form to collect this information with the hope you'd be willing to participate: <https://forms.gle/SF9MFJM5G9o4nVr4A>

We recognize this is a busy time of year, but if you could give us a few minutes of your time, we'd like to collect responses **by Friday, September 20, 2024**.

Many thanks in advance and please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or other thoughts to share.

Laura Anderson Wright, Esq.
UMD NPHC Task Force Member
landerso@umd.edu
301-405-4938 Direct

April N. Hamilton
UMD NPHC Task Force Member

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Programming Survey Questions

*The Task Force would be interested in gathering your thoughts to better understand your vision, operations, and philosophical approach. We've created a Google form to collect this information with the hope you'd be willing to participate. We recognize this is a busy time of year, but if you could give us a few minutes of your time, we'd like to collect responses **by Friday, September 20, 2024.***

1. First and Last Name
2. Institution
3. How many Greek organizations do you have (IFC, PHA, MGC, NPHC)?
4. What do your numbers look like (e.g. number of organizations, number of members)?
5. Among NPHC organizations, what has the trend in membership numbers been? Based on your reply to the previous answer, any insights as to why?
6. What challenges have NPHC organizations faced on your campus?
7. Based on your response to the previous question, what strategies have you employed to address them?
8. Do NPHC organizations have to follow the same administrative requirements as PHA or IFC organizations? If yes, then what are those differences?
9. Are NPHC organizations eligible for funding from the Student Government at your institution?
10. Does your office provide funding or other in-kind support for them?
11. How is your office structured to support all the councils?
12. How many total staff does your office have?
13. If there is leadership coaching for the organizations, please describe.
14. If there was one thing you wish you could do for NPHC organizations, what would it be?

Monuments Email

Greetings Fraternity & Sorority Life Leader:

We hope you are doing well during this busy time of year.

The University of Maryland, College Park is conducting a review of its operations as they relate to Divine 9 (D9) organizations. We've been asked to offer recommendations to the Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs regarding the NPHC member student experience. Consequently, the University has organized an NPHC Task Force to review best practices. Your institution was identified as having a meaningful and significant monument honoring Divine 9 organizations.

Consequently, the Task Force would be interested in gathering your thoughts to better understand how these monuments came to be, the funding behind them and the fabricators used. We've created a Google form to collect this information with the hope you'd be willing to participate.

<https://forms.gle/AkYV3vFPK1kCCUmu7>

We recognize this is a busy time of year, but if you could give us a few minutes of your time, we'd like to collect responses **by Friday, September 20, 2024.**

Many thanks in advance and please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or other thoughts to share.

Laura Anderson Wright, Esq.
UMD NPHC Task Force Member
landerso@umd.edu
301-405-4938 Direct

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Monuments Survey Questions

*The Task Force would be interested in gathering your thoughts to better understand how your impactful monument came to be. We've created a Google form to collect this information with the hope you'd be willing to participate. We recognize this is a busy time of year, but if you could give us a few minutes of your time, we'd like to collect responses **by Friday, September 20, 2024.***

1. First and Last Name
2. Institution
3. How did the monument come to be (e.g. catalyst, who paid)?
4. Who was at the table in the conversation to create such a monument? At the time of fabrication?
5. Recommended builders or fabricators?
6. Advice to those looking to do something similar? Lessons learned?
7. Are all nine organizations represented regardless of whether they have a presence on campus?
8. Other comments...And if it's easier to talk live, let us know. We'd be happy to have a call with you.