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AOD Prevention in a Consensus Building Environment

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AOD Prevention in a Consensus Building Environment:
EDGE for New Members of Sigma Phi Epsilon

Absolute Priority # 1: Develop or Enhance, Implement, and Evaluate Campus- and/or

Community-Based Strategies to Prevent High-Risk Drinking Among College Students

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1. Need for Project (15 points)

A. The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. (10 points)
B. The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses. (5 points)

Need for Project

Specific Student Population.-- Members of fraternities and sororities are among the highest risk groups in college for harm related to alcohol both in terms of harming themselves and harming by-standers (Baer, Kivlihan, & Marlatt, 1995; Nelson, & Wechsler, H., 2001; Presley, Meilman, & Leichliter, 2002; Wechsler, Kuo, Lee, & Dowdall. 2000). Despite multiple attempts to manage, reduce, or eliminate the high risk use and abuse of alcohol among members of college fraternities, there is little evidence that prevention programming directed toward undergraduate fraternity members is effective (Toomey, Lenk, & Wagenaar, 2007; Walters, Bennett & Noto, 2000; Wechsler, Kuh, & Devenport, 1996). One of the most popular current environmental initiatives, alcohol-free housing, "appears to be a strategy that does not work" (Crosse, Ginexi, & Caudill, 2006, p. 477). Harm related to alcohol use in fraternal organizations mirrors overall harm to college students that range from annoying noise, to interpersonal violence, property damage and even alcohol related fatalities (Perkins, 2002; Hingson, Heeren, Zakocs, Kopstein, & Wechsler, 2002). Clearly, there is a

need for an alcohol risk reduction initiative that is at once palatable to the undergraduate members of fraternities and at the same time, effective in reducing risk by reducing consumption based on risk-reduction criteria. The current grant proposal is to carry out a comprehensive evaluation of a new member alcohol skills program that shows such promise (Eberly, 2009). In a pilot evaluation of an earlier EDGE program, Eberly found in a small, matched sample of 26 participants, a 10 % reduction in self-reported average weekly consumption from pre-test to post-test at a minimum of six months (October to April).

Severity of the Problem

Greek letter organizations are an identified population for prevention services, but campus professionals working within the fraternity "culture of entitlement" (Kimmel, 2008, p. 59) commonly find among members in these groups few clear program or policy options that have displayed evidence of effectiveness with at risk students (Walters, Bennett, & Noto, 2000). Campus administrators and professional fraternity advisors, as well as prevention specialists, are particularly in need of proactive preventive interventions that foster holistic student health and learning and are simultaneously palatable for students. A further challenge is to make prevention efforts have efficiency and integrity of delivery (Thombs, Dotterer, Olds, Sharp, & Raub, 2004) to young men in groups for whom alcohol abstinence is not supported by their sports-oriented peer culture (Capraro, 2000; Kimmel, 2008).

The most promising prevention program options to date are one-to-one or small group interactions that have limited economy of scale (Hunter & Mazurek, 2004; McNally & Palfai, 2003). Program formats such as brief screening and feedback of heavy drinking, and alcohol skills training have strong evidence of efficacy for heavy college drinkers, and specifically with Greek organization members (Caudill, Luckey, Crosse, Blane, Ginexi, &

Campbell, 2007), but are limited in their scale by resource intensity. Efforts that have a greater economy of scale such as social marketing and alcohol alternative events have far more mixed evaluation findings as to their impact (Wechsler, Nelson, Lee, Seibring, Lewis, & Keeling, 2003). Fraternity members are influenced by perceived drinking behavior among peers as well as perceived peer expectations of their drinking behavior among students (Trockel, Williams & Reiss, 2003), but the Hierarchical Linear Model regression analysis of self-reported alcohol consumption across 26 chapters (N = 379) in the author's study did not suggest "perception of peer approval" (p. 57) was a good predictor of drinking behavior. It may be that other, intervening variables such as men's perception of their masculinity in the eyes of their peers confounds the impact of social norms marketing among fraternity members (Capraro, 2000; Kimmel, 2008).

Weaknesses in the Infrastructure

The culture of alcohol that is in turn embedded within the culture of entitlement has been sufficiently detrimental to the educational mission of institutions sheltering fraternity chapters that the Franklin Square Group of college presidents has issued a "Call for Values Congruence" as a last effort to reintegrate lived fraternity behaviors with espoused fraternity values (http://www.aascu.org/leadership/values_congruence/default.htm). A primary objective of values congruence is an initiative to combat alcohol abuse. Confronting alcohol abuse within the present culture of entitlement, however, has not been successful up to this time even within those fraternal organizations that have declared their chapter facilities to be "alcohol-free fraternity housing" (Crosse, et al., 2006, p. 479). The traditional infrastructure from which fraternities function must itself be questioned.

What is needed is a complete re-conceptualization of the function and form of the college fraternity (Eberly & Wallace, 2006). The Sigma Phi Epsilon Balanced Man Program (BMP) was launched in 1993 specifically to change fraternity culture (Anderson, Hamilton, Abdalla, 1995a; Anderson, Hamilton, & Abdalla, 1995b). The BMP replaces pledging and what Kimmel (2008) called a "culture of entitlement" by promoting a "culture of integrity" (p. 288). The Balanced Man culture of integrity accepts a new member as equal to other members the day a man joins, does not haze, and promotes a four-year program of personal development that replaces the former six to ten-week pledging programs that remain common practice in most fraternities. This current research effort seeks to operationalize alcohol skills training, which has shown efficacy among Greek students (Crosse, et al., 2007), in the context of a holistic organizational and policy development initiative (Kivlahan et al., 1990; Miller, Kimer, Kim, Weingardt, & Marlatt, 2001; Miller, Turner, & Marlatt, 2001) at the very start of a man's membership in a fraternal organization. The contribution the current project can make to alcohol risk reduction in college fraternities is to assess what the introduction of an alcohol-skills training program carried out with attention to implementation fidelity (DeJong, Schneider, Towvim, Murphy, Doerr, Simonsen, et al., 2006) in a holistic, male friendly environment at the outset of fraternity membership can contribute to risk reduction across time. The long range impact could ultimately reframe college fraternity infrastructure from a "culture of entitlement" to a "culture of integrity" (Kimmel, 2008, p. 288).

2. Significance (20 points)
A. The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement. (5 points) B. The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study. (10 points) C. The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies. (5 points)

Likelihood of System Change

Whether on grounds of academic achievement, public health, or legal issues, college fraternal organizations have a special challenge and opportunity in fulfilling their duty to care (Bickel & Lake, 1999; Powell & Wechsler, 2003; Wechsler, Molnar, Davenport, & Baer, 1999). The challenge exists in addressing students who are the most likely to experience harm associated with alcohol use (Wechsler, Dowdall, & Maenner, G., 1998). The opportunity exists in the ability to holistically target resources and programs toward students who are known to be in need, thus having great opportunity to prevent possible harm. Greek organization members have been shown to consume more heavily, more often than many of their college attending peers. Given that Greek organizations are strong social networks there is rich opportunity to utilize developmental education and policy change as a tool to combat potential harm from heavy consumption (Wechsler et al.,2000; Presley et al., 2002; Weisz & Wood, 2005). Greek organization members are also unique in that they can be served both by campus staff members where they have residence (horizontal access), or via the national organization of which their local chapter is a part (vertical access). The use of technology is a unique format allowing national Greek organizations access to their students throughout the United States (Walters, Miller, & Chiauzzi, 2005).

Alternative to Existing Strategies

The current research effort seeks to use the national network of the nation's largest college fraternity (membership in excess of 14,000 undergraduates with chapters or colonies on 250 college campuses) as an implementation approach to reach students throughout the county with a coherent multi-pronged health and learning program focused on "living your best life" that replaces traditional organizational pledging and membership with a core staged educational and leadership program based on a culture of integrity for all new members (where pledging has been eliminated). If the current EDGE program can demonstrate efficacy in reducing alcohol consumption beyond that achieved by instituting a four-year program of personal development within the fraternity (Anderson, et al., 1995a; Anderson, et al., 1995b), positive membership outcomes and organizational success could strongly influence other college fraternities to follow suit. Evidence from an EDGE Pilot Evaluation (Eberly, 2009) suggests that it is possible that alcohol consumption can be reduced throughout the organization's undergraduate membership by up to 9.7%. Six months after the initial EDGE weekend studied in the pilot evaluation, 26 matched-pairs of pre-post participants self-reported that in terms of drinks per week, consumption had reduced from 27.88 to 25.28 drinks (a 9.7 % statistically significant reduction).

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3. Quality of the Project Design (30 points)

A. The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (10 points)
B. The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs. (5 points)
C. The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice. (10 points)
D. The extent to which the proposed project will establish linkages with other appropriate agencies and organizations providing services to the target population. (5 points)

Quality of the Project Design

EDGE Program Description.--Faced by challenges associated with alcohol abuse and affirming the developmental value of fraternal organizations, Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity has developed and implemented a series of program and policy changes. These changes challenged the traditional pledging process, replacing it with a four year continuous development program designed to impact an individual the day he joins through the day he graduates (Anderson, et al., 1995a; Anderson, et al, 1995b). Despite reduced alcohol abuse found among chapters adopting this new developmental model, continuing member abuse of alcohol, particularly among new members joining for less than six weeks, influenced the Fraternity to develop an initiative specifically focused on new members (Eberly, 2009).

Needs Assessment.--EDGE was created in 2002 in response to an internal review of chapter behavior and insurance payouts that identified the need to more directly and systematically address issues around student alcohol use and associated behavior. A National Substance Abuse Task Force of Sigma Phi Epsilon (SigEp) created EDGE as an overnight / 24 hour regional seminar experience with follow-up contacts to provide new members at the moment they joined the fraternity with the tools to develop healthy – physical and mental – life habits. Issues addressed included alcohol use, social acceptance, drug use, prioritization, goal setting, and best practices for balancing academic and social life (Eberly, 2009).

The health and development activities reinforced via EDGE are delivered by interactive presentations led by a fitness/wellness professional, small group discussions dealing with use of the CHOICES alcohol skills education program, values clarification, personal goal setting, and encouraging personal leadership (Sigma Phi Epsilon Educational

Foundation, 2008). Along with interactive discussions and reflective activities, attendees experience ropes courses, physical challenges, and activities based on camaraderie. The program involves a faculty of senior undergraduate leaders, trained alumni volunteers, and guest speakers on topics such as expectations for a healthy fraternity experience, motivation, and leadership. All EDGE events are held at handicapped-accessible rural retreat sites, such as YMCA Camps, away from campus distractions in an environment conducive to consensus building and commitment.

Goals and Objectives.--The student learning outcomes of the EDGE program include

1.   decreased alcohol consumption and problematic behavior of new members.

2.   increased individual health of new members in physical, mental and emotional realms.

3.   increased engagement and achievement in academic programs of study.

4.   increased leadership skills congruent with the core values of the Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity.

EDGE is conducted each year from September until May at as many as 28 regional sites across the United States. The program is introduced to new, first year members as the initial program within SigEp's five stage Leadership Continuum. The Leadership Continuum was developed in 2002 to help SigEp move closer to its mission, *Building Balanced Leaders for the World's Communities,* by providing regional, national, and international programming. The entire leadership continuum is focused on *arête*, Greek for "excellence in every part of life" (Minnis, 2007, p. 6). The five levels include (1) EDGE for new members within a semester of joining the fraternity, (2) The Carlson Leadership Academies for current and future chapter officer training programs, (3) The Grand Chapter Conclave, a biannual

legislative and educational meeting of more than 1,400 SigEps and friends every two years,

(4) the Ruck Leadership Institute, an annual summer four-day program for 160 of SigEp's

most respected undergraduate leaders focused on personal leadership and the Balanced Man

ideal held on the campus of The College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA., and (5)

the *Tragos Quest to Greece*, during which a cohort of sixteen undergraduates travel on an 11-

day visit to Greece with SigEp alumni mentors and a renowned professor of philosophy and

Greek antiquities to study the origins of western thought and civilization. Each year, the

entire Leadership Continuum reaches more than 4,000 undergraduate SigEps. In 2007-2008,

EDGE reached 2,884 new members (47.5% saturation) within a semester of joining the

Fraternity out of 6,062 total new members.

The core EDGE Program components include the following (Sigma Phi Epsilon

Educational Foundation, 2008).

CHOICES and a Group Based BASICS – A special version of the CHOICES alcohol

skills training program with photos and illustrations based on Sigma Phi Epsilon will be

distributed to all new member participants, who then write their own responses to questions

dealing with alcohol / other drug use and its personal consequences to them in the booklet

(Marlatt & Parks, 2009). As *SigEp Choices About Alcohol* states, "The safest option is not to

drink. By law, it is your only option if you are under 21" (p. 2). Alcohol skills training is one

program that has shown efficacy with fraternity organizations in reducing risks related to

high risk consumption (Caudill, et al., 2007; D'Amico & Fromme, 2000; Kivlahan et al.,

1990). The session, led by an alumni volunteer and undergraduate leader, is not directed

toward making judgments on the participants' choices, but on creating open dialogue among

the new members on the relative costs / consequences of the choices that they may elect to

make. The emphasis on alcohol skills training, personal sharing, and recognition that many young men are confronting the same issues focuses the discussion on ensuring participants have the skills to maintain safety and make good alcohol choices. Students complete a pre-test based on the CHOICES program prior to the session, and a post-test is completed immediately after completion of the program.Using data gathered from the Alcohol Skills Training Program (ASTP) assessment new members of chapters receive feedback on their group alcohol use relative to the overall norm of their new member peers. The presentation of feedback uses a small group normative format mixed with motivational interviewing messages (Agostinelli, Brown, & Miller, 1995; Baer et al., 2001; Marlatt, Baer, Kivlihan, Dimeff, Larimer, Quigley, Somers, & Williams, 1998; Peeler, Far, Miller, & Brigham, 2000). In 2009 Change Companies, the developer of the CHOICES ASTP, will provide the Fraternity with a pre-post skills training report based on one used by the State of Washington Alcohol and Drug Information School (personal communication, Ryan Blanck, January 21, 2009).

Sound Mind / Sound Body – As a major draw to attend EDGE, a well known personal trainer spends up to three hours with the assembled group of new members educating them on healthy body skills / exercises that will benefit their life-long care of themselves on a physical basis that reflects the ideal of the balanced man. The new members learn about stretching and conditioning approaches that will benefit them athletically, and selected individuals will be asked to "volunteer" with the personal trainer so that specific conditioning issues can be demonstrated to the entire group. In this atmosphere affirming healthy masculinity, the wellness professional introduces the new members to the relationship occurring between a sound mind and a sound body, and sends some very specific messages

about alcohol, other drug, and tobacco use. The content is delivered in such a manner that the participants can bring the exercises back to their local chapter and practice on a daily basis in order to facilitate the adoption of healthy personal habits. As a part of the healthy mind / healthy body experience, the new members spend two hours on a supervised ropes course, a wall climbing exercise, or other similar physically challenging large motor / team building activities.

Values Clarification – Specific activities comprising the EDGE experience include a one-hour values clarification discussion / reflection (SigEp Values) co-facilitated by a current undergraduate leader and an experienced alumni volunteer. The life principles of Virtue, Diligence and Brotherly Love, with the pursuit of Sound Mind and Sound Body in a Balanced Life are introduced in a small group setting, and new members are challenged and encouraged to reflect on what these values mean in their personal lives. The objective of the session is to introduce new members to the *Oath of Obligation* they will take as a part of the fraternity initiation rites of passage contained in the Fraternity's Ritual Guide. Through this reflection activity, SigEp hopes to develop in its new members a strong allegiance to the larger, national organization – it is believed that an affinity to the local organization will naturally develop.

Leadership Continuum – The hour session on the SigEp Leadership Continuum introduces the five elements of the leadership continuum mentioned above using a power point and a video. An early introduction to the possibilities for involvement, leadership training, and cultural enrichment is designed to broaden the horizons of new members for the educational services offered by the Fraternity as a complement to their on-campus academic education. The goal is to make students aware of the range of developmental / educational

experiences offered through the Fraternity such that new members are motivated to go beyond mere membership to leadership.

The Leadership Challenge – In the leadership challenge session, new members reflect on their prior leadership experiences and explore what their own leadership style might be in a given situation. The men take the Kouzes and Posner (2005) Student Leadership Practices Inventory and discuss their results in terms of where their leadership strengths are best applied.

Personal Strategic Planning – The hour session on life direction is also led by an experienced alumni volunteer and an undergraduate leader. The session's focus is on developing the basics of a step-by-step plan to arrive at major life goals, such as graduate school, a profession, or other goals selected by the new member participants (Personal Strategic Map). Students specify their personal goals, are led through an exercise designed to assist them in identifying the specific steps toward those goals, include setting alcohol consumption limits, and leave with a clearer understanding of what is anticipated for them to achieve their own goals. While identifying their goals the participants will name the steps needed to obtain their goal(s) as well as outlining the corresponding obstacles associated with each step. Specific mention is made of common obstacles to attaining goals with particular emphasis on setting expectations for self-efficacy related to the role of alcohol use in university life (Bandura, 1997). During the Strategic Planning session, new members complete a personal plan for achieving their goals that is used as a part of the EDGE follow-up procedure (Tying it together Follow-up Form). Participants are asked in this session to track their personal alcohol use and related spending for a two week period following EDGE.

Participant Evaluation.--Following the intensive regional EDGE workshop all participants complete a reflective evaluation of the 24 hour / two day experience. They are asked to specify their reactions to each program session, to the physical training and the ropes courses or similar activities, and the benefit to them of the overall EDGE experience. New members are then contacted six times within the first six months after EDGE to promote personal behavior change (Anderson, 1995b). Two days after the program, participants are contacted by the Director of Health and Wellness. In 30 days, they are contacted by one of the small group facilitators or their own Chapter Counselor (faculty / alumni advisor) by telephone. In 60 days participants receive a telephone audio message from their EDGE program's keynote speaker/wellness professional. In ninety days, participants are mailed a copy of their personal strategic plan and asked to report whether they have kept on course toward their stated goals. In 180 days the Chairperson of the National Leadership Committee, or his liaison, sends an email message to reinforce the earlier communications. EDGE faculty members participate in an evaluation session among the staff prior to leaving the site, and complete their own written assessment of the experience for use by the program planning staff to adjust future EDGE programming to increase implementation fidelity (Thombs, et al., 2004).

All follow up communications include messages associated with core desired student learning outcomes. These messages reinforce program goals associated with alcohol risk reduction, leadership development, personal health and well-being, and increased academic engagement and achievement. The intention of the follow-up messages is to reinforce ideas first introduced at the EDGE program.

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4. Quality of Project Personnel (10 points)

A. The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. (3 points)
B. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, or key personnel. (7 points)

Quality of the Project Personnel

Eastern Illinois University provides equality of opportunity in education and employment for all students and employees. Discrimination based upon race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or any other basis of discrimination precluded by federal and state statues, is strictly prohibited (http://www.eiu.edu/~auditing/IGP/policy174.html). Sigma Phi Epsilon is the "first national fraternity to receive a grant from the federal Department of Education to enhance member development programs" and the "first national fraternity to partner with the White House's Office of National Drug Control Policy" (http://www.sigep.org/about/facts_first.asp). Article I of the 2007 Sigma Phi Epsilon Bylaws state that "Eligibility for membership shall not, in any way, be affected or determined by race, color, religion, age, physical disability, ethnic background, sexual orientation, creed, or national origin" (http://www.sigep.org/documents/grand-chapter-bylaws-2007.pdf).

Principal Investigator, Dr. Charles G. Eberly, has more than 40 years' experience in higher education and student affairs. His major line of research is the American College Fraternity, with more than 40 articles and presentations to his credit. He holds the Robert F. Schafer Award from the Association of Fraternity Advisors for his contributions to the field of higher education. He also holds Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity's highest alumni award, The Order of the Golden Heart. Of the more than 275,000 men who have joined SigEp over the

past 108 years, only 145 members have been so recognized. Dr. Eberly was recognized as the person who first suggested the concept of the Balanced Man Program to the Fraternity. Eastern Illinois University also awards the Dr. Charles G. and Mrs. Sharon Eberly Essence of Greek Values Award each spring to alumni, undergraduates, and faculty members whose actions demonstrate the highest ethical standards in the face of personal and professional challenges. Dr. Eberly's (2009) pilot evaluation of an EDGE weekend sponsored by the Illinois Higher Education Center for Alcohol, Other Drugs and Violence Prevention shows preliminary evidence of EDGE program efficacy.

Dr. Andrew Wall, Assistant Professor of Higher Education, University of Rochester, has a strong record of grants and research in AOD issues. His dissertation on the effects of AlcoholEdu as a means of risk reduction was among the first to demonstrate the efficacy of on-line alcohol education programs (2005). Dr. Wall has received more than $850,000 in grants, most specifically for AOD research. He is a consultant on the staff of Richard Keeling and Associates, and is a co-author with Dr. Keeling, Dr. Richard Underhile, and Dr. Gwendolyn Dungy of the recent book, *Evaluation Reconsidered*. Dr. Wall is also a member of Sigma Phi Epsilon.

Ivan Blount, EIU Graduate Assistant, is a former student body president at Purdue University-South Bend, and in his first year of graduate study in college student affairs. He is involved in several projects as Dr. Eberly's GA that involve Sigma Phi Epsilon including the creation of a DVD on small group facilitation that can be used to train EDGE facilitators. As an African-American, Ivan will provide a fresh perspective on the fraternity and its programs. His interpersonal skills are outstanding, particularly his ability to read body language and respond in a respectful yet direct manner to those who disagree with his

positions. Mr. Blount will assist Dr. Eberly in small group facilitation, data management and other research activities.

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5. Quality of the Project Evaluation (25 points)

A. The extent of which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project. (10 points)
B. The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible. (10 points)
C. The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. (5 points)

Quality of the Project Evaluation

The proposed program evaluation of EDGE is intended to inquire into the quality and impact of the program. As such this is both a process and outcome evaluation. The purpose or use of information generated is to inform program improvement and judge the EDGE model's worth across time, specifically, reduction in alcohol consumption six months post-EDGE and one-year post-EDGE. A mixed method design has been selected to respond to the political context of the evaluation where different stakeholders have differing information needs and agendas from the evaluation (Teddie & Tashakkori, 2003). The response to method concerns has been to be respectful of both qualitative and quantitative methodological procedures with analysis first focused within method to adhere to methodology tradition (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). This project is primarily a quantitative one, with supportive qualitative elements (Creswell, Clark, Gutmann & Hanson, 2003; Morse, 2003) to increase awareness of program implementation processes, and sensitivity to issues of masculinity and male identity in the context of the college experience (Caparao, 2000; Kimmel, 2008). A desired outcome of this program evaluation is to give greater voice

to current new member student input into overall program development and implementation to make future EDGE programming more impactful on future new members.

As noted in Table A each method in this study was intentionally connected to evaluation questions. A survey of alcohol behavior and attitudes, student engagement and academic achievement will be administered at 3 time points in the project in the program year, with first year EDGE participants surveyed a fourth time at the end of the second year. The survey items examine prevalence of alcohol use, perception of peer alcohol use, negative consequences from alcohol use, student engagement in their fraternity, leadership activities, individual health and academic engagement. The survey data collection method will be administered to the entire 2009-10 new member participants in EDGE (2007-08: N = 2884). Data will be collected at the opening session of the EDGE weekend, six months post-EDGE, and one year post-EDGE (Table B).

Another set of new members will be assessed in the program evaluation's second year to check confirmability of first year data, and to determine if frequency of alcohol related behaviors across incoming groups is stable. As a more stringent test of the stability of alcohol skills training in a positive masculine environment, first year EDGE participants will be re-surveyed in April of the second year, two years after their EDGE weekend retreats.

A: Evaluation Questions and Methods					
	Longitudinal Survey	Observation	Interview	Focus Group	Document Review
How is the EDGE program implemented?		X	X	X	X
How is EDGE experienced by student members?	X	X	X	X	X
What impact does EDGE have on student alcohol use?	X	X	X	X	X
What impact does EDGE have on student academic and psychosocial development?	X	X	X	X	

B: Survey Administration			
Survey	October 2009	April 2010	October 2010
Pre-Survey		X	X
Post-Survey	X	X	X
Follow-up Survey	X	X	X

Interviews will be conducted with a minimum of sixteen people who were selected to represent important stakeholder groups that include program staff, program partners, campus AOD observers and fraternity / sorority advisors, and fraternity administration. Interviews will be semi-structured following an interview guide, with the interview guide shifting to respond to emerging themes as described in initial interviews.

Focus group data collection will include attending six EDGE programs in varying geographical regions of the country and conducting a focus group with program participants at the end of each program. To add context to the study and focus group data gathering program evaluators will observe each EDGE entirely. Post-EDGE, the PI will hold two focus groups with eight-10 students participating in each. The focus groups will gather impressions, knowledge and beliefs about the experience of new members with EDGE. The focus groups will sample intentionally to find those who have had a positive experience (confirmation) and those who have not had a great experience (dis-confirmation). In addition, the PI and his non-affiliated Graduate Assistant will carry out site visits to selected campus chapters of the fraternity where focus groups will be held specifically encouraging upper class members to give voice to their prior-year experiences with EDGE.

The review of existing documents will include gathering documents from the program and data that are currently gathered by EDGE staff members at the Richmond, Virginia, Headquarters of the Fraternity. These documents include the CHOICES pre-post report modeled after the State of Washington Alcohol and Drug Information School (Ryan Blanck, personal communication, January 21, 2009). Analysis of materials will seek to synthesize documented program messages with student and staff reported messages. Process indicators gathered by staff will help to inform the experience of students with the program and the process of EDGE implementation.

Analysis of data related to each method will be conducted first within method (Onwuegbuzaie & Teddie, 2003). Survey results will be analyzed descriptively and then inferentially, with keen attention to pre, post and follow-up survey differences by both individuals and at the chapter level. Interviews will be coded for themes, as will focus group and document reviews. Analysis of data within category will be done to first attend to method concerns and secondly provide the basis for data reduction that is needed to facilitate mixed data analysis (Onwuegbuzaie & Teddie, 2003; Caracelli & Greene, 1993). Once reduced data will be placed into a data base by method, then data will be sorted by evaluation question (i.e. data elements that were seen to respond to question 1 were labeled "1"). Data reduction will occur in a manner that creates brief themes of findings. The data reduction process will be facilitated by transforming quantitative results into narrative to allow for thematic analysis with qualitative data elements (Onwuegbuzaie & Teddie, 2003).

Once the coding by question and data transformation into themes has been completed, then mixing of results between methods will be employed (Caracelli & Greene, 1993). Mixing of results by method will look for emerging themes according to findings for each evaluation question. When an area of convergence or divergence is identified, then the

analysis will return to interview notes, documents, or survey findings to further explain or add detail to emerging findings. An interpretive mental framework through the emergence of themes primarily will drive mixed data analysis across methods.

In order to confirm the integrity of the original evaluation data, and as a follow-up to initial quantitative national findings with regard to any change in new member alcohol use, a second year of EDGE new member retreats will be evaluated for confirmation / disconfirmation of first year results. In addition, second year members of the fraternity will be re-surveyed to determine their alcohol beliefs and attitudes, including rates of consumption, compared to their first year member responses. Second year data will be compared to first year data across and within regions of the country to account for perceived regional differences within the organization.

Establishing Linkages with Other Agencies

Dissemination of Results.--A key goal of this program evaluation is to develop materials and evaluation results that inform actions for improvement in fraternities and sororities based in U.S. institutions of higher education up to and including a change in their form and function (operating infrastructure). Results will be disseminated first in publications that describe the program and facilitate replication of the use of alcohol skills training along with brief assessment and feedback in the context of new fraternity member orientation programs that can be adopted by other fraternal organizations. Results of the evaluation will help to inform how the use of brief alcohol interventions among college students, which have shown evidence of efficacy among high risk students can be adopted in a male-friendly environment into the organizational structure of the 21st century fraternity (Capraro, 2000; Caudill, et al., 2007; Eberly & Wallace, 2006; Hunter & Mazurek, 2004; Kimmel, 2008; McNally & Palfai, 2003). Dissemination will target multiple audiences. (1) Results will be

disseminated among past and present members of the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity. (2) Results will be disseminated to national organizations responsible for advising and governing fraternity and sorority organizations, such as the North American Interfraternity Conference and the National Panhellenic Conference. (3) Evaluation findings will be shared and peer reviewed for publication by national professional organizations related to higher education and student affairs, and substance abuse prevention.

First, three articles related to the EDGE project will be included in the *Sigma Phi Epsilon Journal*. The first article will describe the project while it is being implemented, the second article will outline student experiences with the program and the third article will describe quantitative and qualitative evaluation findings of the project. Secondly, members of the Fraternity will receive a presentation at the Sigma Phi Epsilon national convention, Conclave, in August 2009 on the initial project, and a follow-up summative report at its 2011 Conclave. Third, the national organization will report to its boards on the project with an aim toward organizational improvement. Undergraduate members will receive updates regarding the responses of their new members to the EDGE experience via email from the PI on a periodical basis.

College and university student affairs professionals, including fraternity / sorority advising professionals and campus AOD professionals, will receive information and updates through presentations at the Association of Fraternity Advisors annual conference, the annual conferences of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators and the American College Personnel Association. Other college and university professionals will receive information via articles submitted to refereed professional journals. A final outlet opportunity for dissemination of results is through the Fraternity Executives Association.

Clearly, the goals of this model program evaluation are consistent with the Values Congruence project supported by the Franklin Square President's Group to refocus college fraternities on their ritual values

(http://www.naspa.org/communities/kc/page.cfm?kcpageID=84&kcid=6). Sigma Phi Epsilon is currently the only one of 73 national fraternities who are members of the North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC) to hold a new member program focusing on values clarification including a syndemic alcohol / other drug use prevention component ("Live your best life") drawing upon concepts from public health prevention approaches (Silverman, Underhile, & Keeling, 2008). If results of the EDGE program evaluation are in the direction anticipated based on a pilot evaluation (Eberly, 2009), other members of the NIC can be expected to develop their own new member expectations programs to deliver similar values clarification and environmental prevention messages in a male-friendly environment.

The potential for major impact on the organizational activity of the American College Fraternity is strong. Should this program be a major success, the new member recruitment advantage that EDGE offers to Sigma Phi Epsilon will mean that other organizations will be challenged to create similar programs to stay competitive. A similar outcome has already occurred among college fraternities with regard to another Sigma Phi Epsilon initiative, the Balanced Man Program (BMP), first introduced in 1989, the success of which was evaluated via a FIPSE Grant through George Mason University (Anderson, et al., 1995a; Anderson, et al., 1995b). The Balanced Man Program is a four year personal development program based on student development theory that by-passes pledge programs and brings men in as full, voting members in a culture of integrity immediately upon joining the organization. As a

result of the BMP's success, other major national fraternities have created their own versions

of a four year program of development (Sigma Alpha Epsilon, *The True Gentleman*

(http://www.truegentlemaninitiative.net/); Beta Theta Pi, *Men of Principle*

(http://www.betathetapi.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=62&Itemid=89)

; Lambda Chi Alpha, *True Brother Initiative*

(http://www.lambdachi.org/truebrother.aspx?id=526)) that unabashedly borrow from BMP

programming materials. The potential for EDGE to be similarly adapted as a new member

induction program by other fraternities has precedent.

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