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With our ever declining economy, the annual rise in tuition at universities and the constant misconceptions and stereotypes of Greek Life, one has to wonder, are students still going greek? According to Kristin S. Fouts, a director for the Fraternity and Sorority Coalition Assessment Project (FSCAP), time constraints, stereotypes and financial obligations are just a few of the reasons that deter students from joining a Greek organization.

In fact, the entire purpose of the FSCAP is to be invited onto a college campus, conduct a thorough assessment of the health of the fraternity and sorority community on the campus, and to provide the college administrators with tools and vision for improving their Greek Life.

While Fouts describes Greek participant's numbers as declining, the National Pan-Hellenic Conference says otherwise.

The NPC's mission statement says they are "the premier advocacy and support organization for the advancement of the sorority experience." Each sorority must register with the National Panhellenic Conference, and if anyone wants to open a new sorority chapter, it will require the advancement and endorsement of the NPC.

According to the NPC's annual report for 2011, the number of sorority chapters that have been opened nationwide has risen from about 2,900 in 2001 to over 3,000 in 2011. As far as new membership in the NPC is concerned, the rates have risen from about 15,500 to over 20,000 members in 2011.

Which direction are the numbers going at Radford University? So far the numbers are going up. "There were more girls in spring 2012 than spring 2011" says Robert Marias, Assistant Director of Greek Life at Radford University. Marias has been the Assistant Director of Greek Life at Radford University for just one year.

Shannon Kell, President of the Phi Sigma Sigma sorority and Vice President of the Panhellenic

Council here at Radford University, agrees that membership is rising on our campus. "Greek Life is growing and we're actually looking to expand. More and more people are coming out and I think our image is getting better, as far as I'm concerned," said Kell.

While the number of girls registering for rush at Radford University are going up, the

numbers for girls being matched with, or accepted into, a sorority have not always been high. Spring rush is the formal rush for sororities at Radford University. According to the Panhellenic Council here at RU in 2009, there were 194 girls registered. In spring 2010, there were 203 girls. In spring 2011 there were 212 registered and in spring 2012 there were 234 girls.

During those same years, 128 girls were matched with a sorority in spring 2009. In spring of 2010 there were 99 placed, 102 girls in spring 2011, and in spring of 2012 there were 128 girls placed in a sorority.

Brian Kincaid, a member of the Kappa Delta Rho fraternity and President of the Inter-fraternity Council at Radford, speaks about fraternity numbers and how they are growing as well.

"Normally a good fall recruitment number for us is around 30 to 50. This fall we had over 80 males as extended bids which is about three times the norm for fall. The numbers were a lot higher than normal so we're very impressed," said Kincaid. There are less sororities than fraternities at Radford University, but many more girls rush sororities.

So many more in fact, that Marias, had to place a two tier cap of 63 girls for each sorority this fall semester and a cap of 80 for spring 2012 recruitment. The spring cap will now be at 85 and that was decided after the spring 2012 recruitment. He wanted to even the playing field for the sororities and so all of the membership was made fair, said Kincaid.

While this may make it even, Jillian Ruppert, a senior and member of the Alpha Sigma Alpha sorority says that the cap of 63 is disheartening. "He just wants everyone to be even so come spring rush, everyone's at the same level. But I think the way he is approaching it is making it less desirable because if certain sororities could not take girls in the fall, the people coming out for rush may feel discouraged," explained Ruppert.

Kell expresses this same concern. "A lot of girls will go through recruitment and they'll think that a sorority didn't like them or something like that, but really it's that the sorority only has a few spots open. I guess it gets competitive to try and fit all of those girls in," said Kell. Since the cap for fall 2012 was at 63 girls, four sororities were already past the cap. Alpha Sigma, Alpha, Delta Zeta, Sigma Kappa, and Zeta Tau Alpha were all above 63 members. Alpha Sigma Tau, Sigma Sigma Sigma, and Phi Sigma Sigma were all allowed to take girls in this recruitment because they were under 63 members, but Marias allowed the four sororities that were past the cap to take a max of five girls since this was Radford University's first time doing a two tier capacity.

Kell reiterates this thought by saying, "Common misconceptions are that you pay for your friends. People need to know that the dues that you pay to be in an organization, they go to your national organization and your local organization."

All sororities and fraternities have dues. They will pay a national due to their organization,

and also a chapter due that goes directly to their chapter here at Radford University. The chapter dues vary between organizations.

Even though some students at Radford University might want to join a fraternity, they are not always able to. "I don't have the time to commit to a fraternity" said sophomore Aaron Hardy. He goes on to say that he would like to join a fraternity for the bonding, but also says that he would not want to pay the price to be a member of fraternity.