

**ORIGINAL**

IN THE OHIO COURT OF CLAIMS

FILED  
COURT OF CLAIMS  
OF OHIO

WILLIAM RUSSELL  
Plaintiff

v.

CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY  
Defendant

and

STEVEN LISS  
Plaintiff

v.

CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY  
Defendant

Case Nos. 2013-00138 and 2013-00139  
2013-00139

2014 SEP 29 PM 3:17

Judge Patrick M. McGrath  
Magistrate Holly T. Shaver

**CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY'S  
MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT**

## I. OVERVIEW

Steven Liss and William Russell had worked together for years in Cleveland State University's Department of Student Life by the time Willie Banks came to town as their new boss, fresh from the University of Georgia and full of ideas. Mr. Liss and Mr. Russell had long settled into a working relationship born of convenience— Mr. Liss did not like being a manager and Mr. Russell did not like being managed. So Mr. Liss, the director of the Center for Student Involvement ("CSI"), tolerated and did what he could to appease Mr. Russell, his part-time Greek Life coordinator whose workplace mantra was "if it ain't broke, don't fix it." One of Dr. Banks's goals was "to create a more 'traditional' experience" for Cleveland State students as it transitioned from a commuter college into a major urban university. But

ON COMPUTER

CSI was the weak link in Student Life, Dr. Banks's management style was decidedly "hands off," and he had little patience for managers who could not lead or employees who could not follow. Mr. Liss and Mr. Russell were eventually laid off as one result of a department-wide restructuring that Dr. Banks and T.W. Cauthen, an outside consultant, recommended and Dean James Drnek instituted. Later, Mr. Liss was encouraged to apply for other positions, but he refused to interview for them because Cleveland State would not accept his pre-interview conditions. Mr. Russell was offered a different full-time position at Cleveland State, but he refused it because, among other things, he did not consider himself sufficiently skilled at Microsoft Word.

In this case, both men claim to be victims of age discrimination, though all they can muster in support of those claims is their contention that Dr. Banks used some terms that contained a version of the word "old," like "old school" and "old fashioned." They also both raise FMLA claims, apparently because they both think Cleveland State should have put Mr. Russell on unpaid FMLA leave—until he could have a surgical procedure—after the layoff and after he refused to accept another position. Though Mr. Russell's health never prevented him from doing his job, he also now claims that he had a disability—the details of which he has yet to explain—and that Cleveland State terminated him because of it. Finally, both men claim that Cleveland State breached their contracts. The Court lacks jurisdiction to hear Mr. Russell's contract claim because he was a union member; and Mr. Liss's contract claim—that Cleveland State should have put him into a new position for which he refused to interview—is as baseless as it sounds. Because neither Mr. Liss nor Mr. Russell can win any of their claims, Cleveland State asks for summary judgment under Rule 56(B).

## II. THE FACTS

No one will ever fully understand why Mr. Liss and Mr. Russell made so little effort to get along with Dr. Banks, but their own depositions—and the depositions their lawyer took of Dr. Banks, Steve Vartorella, Jill Courson and others<sup>1</sup>—demonstrate that it had nothing to do with age or disability discrimination, the FMLA or the nuances of contract law.

### A. MR. RUSSELL WOULD NOT ACCEPT DR. BANKS AS HIS BOSS.

This is how Mr. Russell described his relationship with Dr. Banks to Steve Vartorella, the Cleveland State human-resources consultant for Student Life: “He doesn’t like me because he’s not a white, heterosexual male with a nice house on a beach in Huron.” (Vartorella Dep. at 168-69) That phobia might explain the zeal with which he and Mr. Liss have examined Dr. Banks’s life as a gay African-American man, but it seems likely that Mr. Russell would have found fault with anyone who tried to manage him. Mr. Russell—who attended Cleveland State in the 1960s and was a fraternity member at the time—thinks of himself as the man who singlehandedly brought Greek life back after it had fallen out of favor: “I took a job where there was no Greek life and built it into something major.” (Russell Dep. at 117) Before Dr. Banks arrived on campus, “nobody second-guessed” him. *Id.* at 94. But Dr. Banks demanded changes “from how things were done in the past.” *Id.* at 103. Mr. Russell saw that change was inevitable: “[f]or the first time in my career, . . . I did have a sense that things were changing.” *Id.* at 105. And he did not like change at all.

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<sup>1</sup> Those depositions and others have already been filed. Mr. Liss and Mr. Russell deposed Dean Drnek—who is now at California State University—last Thursday. His deposition will be filed when it is transcribed.

The first change Dr. Banks made happened early in February of 2012, on what would have been Dr. Banks's first or second day at Cleveland State. Dr. Banks scrapped one of Mr. Russell's pet projects—a \$1700 attempt to recreate the magic of hardcover yearbooks. *Id.* at 81. That “frustrated” Mr. Russell because it meant that Dr. Banks “was not going to allow [him] to perform [his] job as [he] had done it for 12 years.” *Id.* at 111-12. Though universities all across the country had been adjusting their programs to accommodate the preferences of the “Millennials”—that elusive cohort of students who grew up with technology at their beck and call—Mr. Russell thought that “Greek Life [at Cleveland State] was going so well, the basic thought was if it ain't broke, don't fix it.” *Id.* at 23. He is fond of that phrase. “Because [Greek Life] was doing so well, [Dean Drnek and Dr. Banks] were reaping the benefits of an engaged group of students. . . . They were reaping all of the benefits. If it ain't broke, don't fix it.” *Id.* at 64. Mr. Russell took all of this very personally:

Well, as I said, if you work for \$6,600, travel 120 miles every day, put 12 years in of a 47-year CSU career and all of a sudden one person who's been there for four months comes in there and attacks you like this, I guarantee you would respond the same way.

*Id.* at 152. Mr. Russell's response to Dr. Banks's efforts to bring Student Life up to current standards was to refuse to assist him in any way.

**B. MR. LISS WOULD NOT TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MANAGING MR. RUSSELL.**

Dr. Banks came to Cleveland State with a goal of creating a “more ‘traditional’ experience for students,” which involved “creating more core curricular activities” and offering more of the kind of activities that “residential universities offer.” (Courson Dep. at 34-35) Dr. Banks's management style was “hands off.” *Id.* at 53. And he expected Mr. Liss to

act like a leader. To that end, Dr. Banks asked him to “start documenting the work of his staff and to make notes and to provide them with feedback.” (Banks Dep. at 235) But Mr. Liss resisted, telling Dr. Banks this: “I don’t know that old dogs can learn new tricks.” *Id.* Dr. Banks responded tersely: “I don’t know, Steve. Find out.” *Id.* In public, Mr. Liss expressed his agreement with Dr. Banks’s goals, but in private he did not manage Mr. Russell at all. As Mr. Russell put it, Mr. Liss never acted as a “boss” the way Dr. Banks did: “He was my supervisor and pretty much allowed me to . . . run Greek Life.” (Russell Dep. at 150)

**C. MR. LISS AND MR. RUSSELL WERE TERMINATED AS A RESULT OF A RESTRUCTURING DEAN DRNEK INSTITUTED. BOTH MEN LATER REFUSED TO ACCEPT OTHER POSITIONS AT CLEVELAND STATE.**

T.W. Cauthen, the consultant Cleveland State hired to look into Student Life, prepared a report in which he recommended a restructuring of Student Life because the distribution of “responsibilities of leadership and service programs among members of the Student Life team [was] not effective.” *See* Cauthen Report (Ex. 21-A to Dr. Banks Dep.) (appended) at 5. Dr. Banks in turn recommended that restructuring to Dean Drnek, who approved it. *See* Drnek Affidavit (appended). As a part of the restructuring, Dean Drnek also “made the decision to eliminate three positions with the Department of Student Life, which included the positions held by Steven Liss and William Russell.” *Id.* at ¶3.

After they were told of the decision, Mr. Russell met with Steve Vartorella, who told him that, as a union member, he had a right to “bump” into another position. (Vartorella Dep. at 96) But that position required a basic command of Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint. *Id.* Mr. Russell declined the job, telling Mr. Vartorella this: “I don’t have the skill set to do that.” *Id.* In addition, Mr. Russell indicated that he was “going to be retiring

very soon” and that he did not “want to bump somebody out of a job if [he would be] leaving in November.” *Id.* Mr. Liss was also encouraged to apply for other positions, though as a non-union member, he had no “bumping” rights. Mr. Vartorella “gave him three or four job postings” from Cleveland State’s “posting system.” *Id.* at 97. Mr. Vartorella also made recommendations for Mr. Liss to update his resume, and he suggested that Mr. Liss use Cleveland State’s Career Services department for assistance. *Id.* at 98. Mr. Liss applied for three different positions. (Liss Dep. at 243) He had telephone interviews for two of them. *Id.* at 91-92) And he “declined an interview” for the third: “I will not be able to accept your offer to interview.” (Vartorella Dep. at 115) By that time, Mr. Liss was already threatening litigation, and he refused to be interviewed unless the search committee’s chair acceded to his demand to give him special pre-interview assurances: “Given the discrimination against me that to date CSU has refused to resolve, I cannot go forward without assurances that it will be corrected.” *Id.* at 114.

### III. ARGUMENT

Mr. Liss and Mr. Russell claim that Cleveland State is liable under the FMLA for terminating Mr. Russell on schedule rather than granting him unpaid time off to arrange for a surgical procedure. Those claims are baseless as a matter of law because Dean Drnek made the decision to terminate him and he learned of Mr. Russell’s surgery only after Mr. Russell’s position had been eliminated. (Drnek Aff. at ¶4) Even if Dean Drnek had known of Mr. Russell’s upcoming surgery, though, the FMLA does not require employers to delay terminations that are already in progress. Mr. Russell’s disability claim is baseless for the

same reason, and his and Mr. Liss's age and contract claims are baseless for the reasons that follow.

**A. MR. LISS'S AND MR. RUSSELL'S AGE-DISCRIMINATION CLAIMS REST ON STRAY REMARKS FROM WHICH THERE CAN BE NO INFERENCE OF AGE DISCRIMINATION.**

Mr. Liss and Mr. Russell say they were offended by Dr. Banks's use of terms like "old school" and which Dr. Banks used in their normal—and non-discriminatory—sense. The two men's focus on those stray remarks is odd because both of them have made *explicitly discriminatory remarks*. Mr. Liss, for example, thinks that Mr. Russell is an "old dog" who cannot be taught "new tricks." (Banks Dep. at 235) And Mr. Russell joked about age *during breaks in the depositions he attended in this case*.

Q [Mr. Knutti]: So [Dr. Banks] used the terms old fashioned, old school [and] 21<sup>st</sup> Century. And was that all that you can recall?

A [Mr. Russell]: I don't remember saying old fashioned. Did I?

Q: I don't know. You said old school and 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Did he say old fashioned?

A: I don't remember specifically saying that word.

Q: Did he ever make any joke to you about your age?

A: I hardly ever talked to Willie Banks when it comes down to it.

Q: By the way, you make jokes about your age, right?

A: No.

Q: Well, you made one to me during the depositions up here in Cleveland. Do you remember that?

A: When?

Q: It went like this. There are three things that happen when you get older. Would you tell it for us, please?

A: The three sign of old age?

Q: Yes. That's it.

A: First, the loss of memory. And I can't remember the other two.

Q: See, I'm an outgoing guy. That's my way of breaking the ice.

(Russell Dep. at 173-74)

Mr. Liss's and Mr. Russell's discrimination claims are, in other words, disingenuous, but even if they were honestly offended by common and anodyne English phrases, they cannot win this case on the strength of the few stray remarks they cite. Stray remarks are not evidence of direct discrimination, and neither Mr. Liss nor Mr. Russell can establish indirect discrimination under the three-part, burden-shifting framework set forth in *McDonnell Douglas Corp. v Green*, 411 U.S. 792, 802 (1973). See also *Williams v City of Akron*, 107 Ohio St. 3d 203; *Bucher v Sibly Cline, Inc.*, 137 Ohio App.3d 230, 239 (2000). Cleveland State has explained that they were terminated as a part of a restructuring of their department, not because of their age. That means that they can win their discrimination claims only by proving that Cleveland State's reason is "pretextual," which requires them to prove "both that the reason was false" and that "discrimination was the real reason." *St. Mary's Honor Ctr. v Hicks*, 509 U.S. at 502, 51 (1993). And they have nothing in the way of proof.

**B. MR. LISS AND MR. RUSSELL CANNOT WIN THEIR CONTRACT CLAIMS.**

Mr. Liss can never win his contract claim—that Cleveland State was obligated to place him into a position for which he refused to be interviewed. And Mr. Russell cannot

win his contract claim because he was a union member and his contract was a public collective bargaining agreement, which means that that claim can be resolved only through the binding grievance and arbitration process established in his collective-bargaining agreement. *See e.g. Gudín v Western Reserve Psychiatric Hospital*, 10th Dist. No. 00AP-912 (June 14, 2001).

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Because Mr. Liss and Mr. Russell cannot prevail on any of their claims as a matter of law, Cleveland State urges the Court to grant this motion and enter judgment in its favor on all of their claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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**COUNSEL FOR DEFENDANT,  
CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY**

## CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

On September 29, 2014, I sent a copy of this document via electronic mail to Plaintiff's Counsel: Mark Griffin ([mgriffin@tpgfirm.com](mailto:mgriffin@tpgfirm.com)) and Sara Verespej ([SVerespej@tpgfirm.com](mailto:SVerespej@tpgfirm.com)).



RANDALL W. KNUTTI (0022388)  
Principal Assistant Attorney General

STATE OF CALIFORNIA        }  
  }  
  }        ss  
COUNTY OF KERN            }

James Drnek, Ph.D., after first being cautioned and sworn, states as follows:

1. I have personal knowledge of and I am competent to testify to the facts contained in this Affidavit.
2. I have reviewed the pleadings and am familiar with Court of Claims Case No. 2013-00138, *William Russell v. Cleveland State University*.
3. I have reviewed the pleadings and am familiar with Court of Claims Case No. 2013-00139, *Steven Liss v. Cleveland State University*.
2. I am employed as the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs at the California State University, Bakersfield, and I have held that position since the Fall Semester of 2013. Prior to that, I served as the Dean of Students and Vice Provost for Student Affairs at CSU for approximately five years beginning in early 2008. My duties and responsibilities as the Dean of Students and Vice Provost for Student Affairs at CSU included overseeing the Division of Student Affairs in all respects, including but not limited to, managing the staff that provide student learning and development opportunities in the following areas: Judicial Affairs, Residence Life, Student Health, Counseling Services, Disability Services, Veteran Student Support, Student Recreation, Crisis Management, and Department of Student Life. I was also responsible for the learning and development of students outside the classroom, assuring integration with the academic life of the institution and encouraging student personal growth and development.
3. During my tenure at CSU, I tried to create a greater sense of community on campus as it became a more residential University. To achieve that goal, I met with students, officials and consultants to determine what aspects of student life were lacking. In the Fall Semester of 2010, a new student center as well as a new residence hall with 1,100 dorm rooms opened. Thereafter, in the Fall Semester of 2012, the Department of Student Life was restructured. As part of that restructuring, I made the decision to eliminate three positions within the Department of Student Life, which included the positions held by Steven Liss and William Russell.
4. Mr. Liss's and Mr. Russell's ages were not considered when I made decisions related to the restructuring of the Department of Student Life. I did not discriminate against Mr. Liss or Mr. Russell because of their ages or any other protected characteristic. Additionally, I never considered Mr. Russell's health condition or need to take

FMLA leave when making these decisions. In fact, I was unaware that he was going to be taking extended leave until after his position had been eliminated.

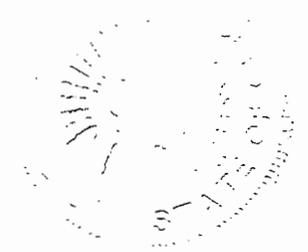
Further, Affiant sayeth naught.

  
JAMES DRNEK, Ed.D.

Sworn to and subscribed in my presence this 25<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2014.

  
Notary Public  
*No expirat*

EMILY MARIE SIMMONS, Attorney At Law  
NOTARY PUBLIC - STATE OF OHIO  
My commission has no expiration date  
Sec. 147.03 R.C.



Department of Student Life  
Leadership Consultant Report



Submitted by:  
T.W. Cauthen III, Ph.D.  
June 15, 2012



Introduction/Statement of the Problem

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Due to budget constraints, the Coordinator of Service and Leadership position has not been filled since 2007. Since that time, the previous Associate Dean of Students assumed responsibilities for Service and Leadership and upon her departure in 2011; the responsibilities were divided to various members of the Student Life team.

By all accounts, the service components (Viking Expeditions Make a Difference day, and Do-Gooder day) have continued to thrive. The GA associated with this program has done a good job of continuing the work and engaging students in service opportunities.

Unfortunately, the leadership side has struggled to maintain focus and purpose. In my opinion, the team approach to leadership did not work and caused more confusion and frustration for all parties involved. Additionally, the software we are currently using to conduct assessments of students is outdated and may not be the best way to conduct leadership assessments. I also believe that our current approach to leadership is not relevant with CSU's student body (leadership certification) and misses the mark in connecting the dots of service and leadership.

At the present time, activities connected to the Leadership component of the office have been suspended due to low participation numbers from students, the lack of time from current staff members to fully devote time and energy to leadership programs, and the lack of resources needed for a successful leadership program, including personnel and operating expenses.

The activities that are not currently being offered include:

- iLead student leadership conference
  - Leadership Assessments
  - Leadership Development Plans
  - Leadership Certification
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### Scope of Work

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Based on conversations with current staff members who were charged with implementing Leadership programs on campus, a number of questions and issues have arisen that require a leadership consultant to address. This visit will help define the role of leadership within the context of CSU and Student Life.

The leadership consultant will be tasked with answering the following questions:

1. Based on our current leadership model/theory, how can Student Life best structure our programs to integrate theory into practice? More specifically, how should leadership programs intersect with the work of the Center for Student Involvement (student organizations, Viking Expeditions, and Greek Life)?
  - a. Recommendations for restructuring and staffing
    - i. Center for Student Involvement
    - ii. Center for Leadership & Service
  - b. Program recommendations
    - i. Student organizations
    - ii. Greek life
    - iii. Programming Board
    - iv. General fee/GFAC groups
    - v. Training programs
    - vi. Org Sync
2. What are other select Urban 13 institutions offering in terms of leadership & service and student involvement for their students?

### Process/Methods

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The consultant engaged in a series of semi-structured qualitative interviews over the course of two days in order to learn more about the current state of affairs at CSU. Additionally, prior to campus engagement, the consultant conducted a document analysis of materials presented by the host institution in order to learn more about the current climate and base-line programmatic offerings.

The following documents were analyzed:

1. Division of Student Affairs Organizational Chart
2. Center for Student Involvement Organizational Chart
3. Center for Student Involvement Job Descriptions
4. 2008-2009 Annual Report
5. 2009-2010 Annual Report for the Center for Student Involvement
6. Student organizations comparisons with Urban 13+ institutions
7. SOP Manual for the Center for Leadership & Service
8. CSU's Leadership Certification Program Report
9. CSU Peer Institutions, Past & Present

The schedule of interviews were as follows:

Time	May 29, 2012	May 30, 2012
9am	Jim Drnek- Dean of Students	Bill Russell, Coordinator, Greek Life
10am	Dan Lenhart- Student Media (CSI)	Bob Bergman- Manager, Student Center
11am	Jillian Keller- Coor. Women's Center	Jim Drnek, Dean of Students – Early lunch and initial wrapup
Noon	Lunch- WB	
1pm	Steve Liss- Director, Center for Student Involvement (CSI)	Mary Myers- Conference Call
2pm	Lisa Fellows, GA for Service	Jamie Johnston, Coordinator, Student Activities
3pm	Casey Hagan, GA for Leadership	Wrap up with WB
4pm		Head to Airport
5pm	Andrea Bruno, GA for CSI	

## Findings

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The following findings are presented after reviewing departmental annual reports, organizational charts, position descriptions, benchmarking studies, and extensive interviews with departmental staff. The following recommendations are situated within the following contextual considerations:

- The members of the CSU team are best equipped to consider the following observations, recommendations, and tactics given the culture of CSU and its student body. The consultant's visit included no conversations with students; as such, it is important to consider the student needs and culture when making decisions based on these findings.
- Decisions regarding this scope of work cannot be made in a vacuum and without consideration for other university and division decisions that may influence and/or affect the Department of Student Life. These recommendations are provided with consideration of the broadest scope and context in order to share insights that reflect a dynamic organization while minimizing the potential that additional changes might be needed in order to accommodate those external influences. It should be noted that the consultant had no knowledge of external influences that may affect the recommendations prior to submitting this report.

## Observations

After a review of the offerings at CSU, the following observations are clear:

- Distributing the responsibilities of leadership and service programs among members of the Student Life team is not effective. Programs have suffered because Student Life staff members have not been able to maintain the quality of programs given their other full-time responsibilities. Tasks associated with the leadership and service programs inevitably fell to the responsibility of graduate students who may or may not have had the most appropriate level of expertise necessary to develop and implement quality programs.
- There exists an opportunity to create a more broad-based, shared philosophy, understanding, and definition of leadership throughout the Department of Student Life. In particular, the areas currently reporting to the Associate Dean of Students should lead the charge in establishing this shared philosophy and consider how it may be infused into their daily work with students through programs, initiatives, and services.
- Service is a powerful vehicle through which to teach leadership. The service initiatives seem to be widely popular and engage students in meaningful experiences. These programs (e.g., Viking Expedition, Make a Difference Day, Do-Gooder Day) are providing an entry point for student engagement and should be continued. However, staff should consider intentional ways in which these experiences are meeting learning

outcomes related to leadership and civic engagement through pre- and post-service reflection activities.

- There is a clear divide of communication and programming efforts between the Center for Student Involvement and other areas within the Department of Student Life. The culture is characterized by a lack of collaboration, communication, collegiality, and shared vision.
- The competency of leadership within the Center for Student Involvement is questionable. The professional staff in this area (Director of the Center for Student Involvement, Coordinator of Student Organizations, and Coordinator of Greek Life) do not have the skill set needed to provide adequate oversight and direction to the programs and services housed within the Center. This inadequate leadership and professional skill is preventing the CSI from meeting baseline expectations, standards, and best practice, much less equipping the area to provide excellent and cutting-edge opportunities for the students of CSU.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the stated observations, the following are recommendations for consideration:

- *Leadership Programming*
    - Discontinue leadership programs as they currently exist.
    - Consider how leadership is infused throughout areas within Student Life, and in particular, areas affiliated with student involvement, student activities and events, fraternity and sorority life, and student organizations. Develop a conceptual framework that honors this infusion and identifies disciplines of thought (i.e., leadership, civic engagement, social justice, identity development, change models, learning theory) that reflect the mission, vision, and values of the Division of Student Life. This conceptual framework should drive sequential curriculum/program development and teaching methods that are tied to learning outcomes.
    - Conduct a needs assessment and/or focus groups to understand more fully the needs of CSU students as it relates to leadership development. Discussions with staff would indicate that students are more interested in the “nuts and bolts” of leadership and in developing a toolbox of leadership skills. This skill-based leadership development would indicate less connection with the theoretical approach of leadership development. Conducting focus groups/needs assessment will produce accurate, assessment data driven decisions regarding the most effective development of leadership programs that are meeting the needs of CSU students. This, however, does not mean that the way in which leadership is conceptualized and taught is not driven by a theoretical
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framework. Instead, it informs the teaching methods and experiential opportunities through which students achieve those learning and development outcomes.

- *Service Programming*
    - The service experiences offered seem to be working effectively. Continue these kinds of experiences; students are interested in participating in and connect with these experiences. They serve as a conduit for building student involvement capacity.
    - Service experiences are a powerful way to teach leadership. Consider how these experiences are intentional and utilize them to teach leadership concepts to the students who are involved.
    - Deepen the learning associated with these civic engagement experiences by developing pre- and post-trip learning activities and reflection. You may also consider programming and educational experiences around the social issues and community needs that the service directly addresses.
  - *Student Organizations*
    - Fully implement OrgSync as a student organization management and communication tool. The implementation of this software solution should have happened months ago. The fact that the software still has not been fully implemented, even after a year and a half of acquiring the license, speaks to the lack of leadership provided from CSI staff. Implementing this technology should assist with streamlining processes that are quite inefficient and take up entirely too much staff time presently.
    - Modify the way in which student organization accounts are managed. The coordinator for student organizations should not be managing student accounts. This task should be centralized or managed by a business professional/accountant. At the very least, processes associated with student organization account management (e.g., account balance/status report inquiry) should be examined and changed to create more efficient use of time regarding business practice (e.g., printing status reports for each student organization every month and placing them in student organization mailboxes as opposed to meeting with students to provide an account balance/status update, or utilizing OrgSync to provide this financial information in a real-time, up-to-date fashion).
    - Review and update, on a regular basis, student organization policies and procedures. Ensure, through educational programming, that student organizations are aware of and knowledgeable about processes, policies, and procedures that are expected of students and student organizations.
    - Provide educational programming that benefits student organizations. Currently, educational programming does not exist
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for student organizations. This is an untapped opportunity to provide leadership learning experiences for student organizations and their leaders (e.g., how to run a meeting, membership recruitment, budget management, event planning, etc.).

- Advance programmatic offerings and student organization support through the use of technology. In addition to the full implementation of OrgSync, consider how technology solutions such as webinars or podcasts might be an effective way to deliver student organization training and education, while also addressing issues of accessibility.
- *Greek Life*
  - Develop, implement, and promulgate policies and procedures associated with risk management and chapter management throughout the fraternity and sorority community. These procedures should be based on the current practices of national organizations such as NIC, NPC, NPHC, and multicultural governing bodies (i.e., NALFO, etc.).
  - Establish higher levels of recognition and oversight by the university for fraternities and sororities. This should be above and beyond the process for student organization registration. The university should establish criteria it will use to determine whether or not social Greek letter organizations are recognized. Revisit and revise the established relationship agreement. Established criteria, expectations, rights, privileges, and responsibilities should be reflected in the agreement. The agreement should be revisited and revised (if necessary) on an annual basis.
  - Examine the adopted philosophy of support for local social Greek letter chapters. Review the history, oversight, and level of support for local chapters. If these criteria are lacking, consider pushing, with earnest, their affiliation with a national organization. Hold organizations with appropriate history, oversight, and support to continue as local chapters to the same standards created for organizations affiliated with national groups. Create protocol for working with new local organizations that form so that they may be tracked to affiliate with national organizations. CSU may also benefit from creating a philosophy and standard for expansion within the sorority/fraternity community.
  - Greek alumni, while an important aspect of fraternity and sorority life, should not be the main focus of the person in the role of supporting Greek Life. ~~Maintaining the relationship with Greek alumni should be important, but could be managed through stronger collaborations with the Alumni Association.~~
  - Greek Life at CSU deserves a more intentional review than this visit provides. There seems to be an unrealistic self-appraisal of the community when interviewing staff responsible for this area. This

raises great concern, particularly as it relates to university exposure to risk. The first step to addressing this is to hire someone with the appropriate credentials to support this aspect of student life. This person should have at minimum a master's degree in student affair administration or related field and experience with fraternity and sorority affairs. The person in this role should be well versed in student development theory and on current trends, standards, and best practices in fraternity and sorority communities on college campuses.

- *Student Activities/Programming*
  - Establishing CAB as the programming body for campus reduces overlap and establishes clear roles and responsibilities. This decision is a smart one and should be maintained.
  - Continue the use of an expanded committee structure that supports higher levels of student involvement in campus programming.
  - The campus should be commended for the high level of innovative programming taking place. Continuing this creative programming will only increase the number of students engaging in campus life.
  - Programming efforts only stand to expand and serve more students through the combined efforts and budget consolidation of CAB and the student center programs. This decision provides greater opportunity for relevant and innovative student programs. Continue moving forward with this decision.

### **Tactic**

Given the observations and recommendations provided above, the following tactic may serve as a catalyst for the change needed in order to move the Department of Student Life forward around concepts of student engagement, leadership, and civic engagement.

The recommendations above might suggest a sweeping change within a major area of the Department of Student Life. In order to achieve this goal, you should consider the organizational structure that might support the kind of systemic change you wish you create.

The proposed structure provides a context from which to build a shared understanding of leadership, service, and student engagement. It will ultimately provide the flexibility needed for the dynamic nature of student life and will provide the intentional focus on student engagement that aligns with the university's mission and purpose. It also presents an opportunity to create a more equitable organizational chart and to capitalize on the assets and strengths of a few members of the current team.

The new organization focuses on an overarching goal of student engagement and an ability to create a shared focus and learning orientation regarding student leadership development. The Associate Dean should provide leadership for an all-encompassing student engagement portfolio. This portfolio should include three vectors of student engagement based on the current reporting structure of the associate dean. Should further restructuring take place, this organizational model provides for a dynamic structure that would support additional areas under the framework of student engagement.

Vector 1: Student Organizations

Vector 2: Student Activities

Vector 3: Student Engagement

*Vector 1: Student Organizations*

This vector would house staff associated with student organizations and would oversee the staff and programs affiliated with the roles and functions of student organizations, policies and procedures, budget, and educational programming.

*Vector 2: Student Activities*

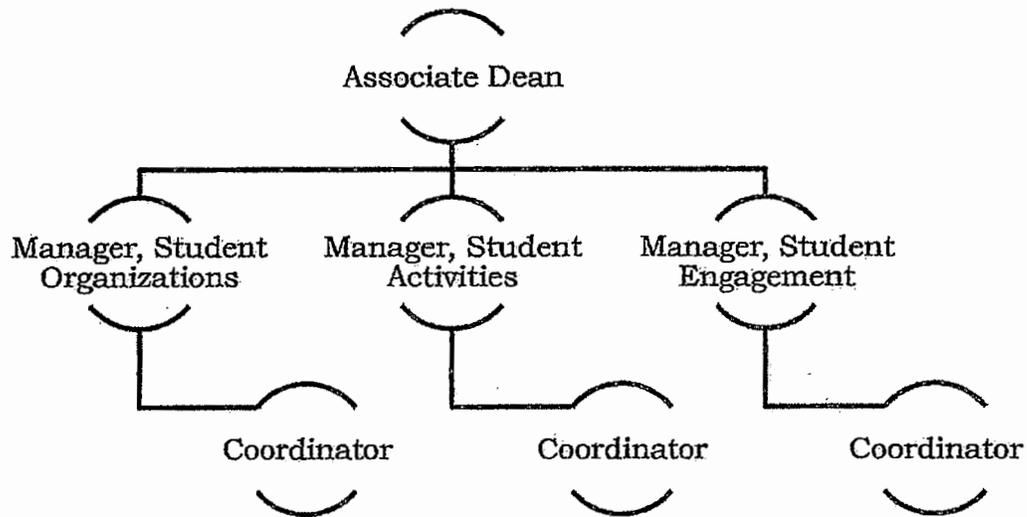
This vector would house staff associated with student activities and would oversee the staff and programs affiliated with the roles and functions of student activities, campus programming, and campus events.

*Vector 3: Student Engagement*

This vector would house staff associated with student engagement and would oversee the staff and programs affiliated with the roles and functions of events and programs that are affiliated with student leadership development (long-term commitment and engagement), civic engagement and community service programs, and fraternity and sorority affairs.

These vectors should be created by re-purposing existing positions in a way that might provide equity and stability to the organization chart. Consider these tactics:

- Re-classify the Director of Student Involvement to a manager position.
- Re-classify the Coordinator of Student Activities to a manager position.
- Re-purpose the Manager of the Student Center position to one that aligns more closely with the roles and functions desired by the Department of Student Life.
- Re-direct the salary savings from the reclassification of the director position to transition the part-time Greek Life Coordinator position to a full-time coordinator position.
- Create a supervision structure that provides more equity and support for each of the three vectors (e.g., each of the managers supervise a coordinator position and appropriate levels of part-time/graduate assistant employees).



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### Benchmarking

The following links represent the best of the Urban 13 regarding student involvement, leadership development, civic engagement, student activities and organizations, and fraternity and sorority life. Each provides insight into organizational structure, programmatic offerings, and staff support.

#### **University of Houston**

- Center for Student Involvement
    - Provides support for general student organizations and fee-funded groups.
  - Center for Fraternity and Sorority Life
    - Provides support for social Greek letter organizations
    - Oversees leadership development and community engagement programs.
    - The leadership development framework and stated outcomes is strong and would serve as a great resource.
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**Temple University**

- Division of Student Affairs
  - Student Activities, Student Leadership, and Student Media are individual units within the Division of Student Affairs at Temple.
- Office of Leadership Development
  - Provides a great framework for leadership development/leader certification program – Diamond Leaders & Student Leadership Challenge

**Indiana University Purdue University, Indianapolis**

- Office of Student Involvement
  - IUPUI utilizes an Office of Student Involvement to support leadership programs, civic engagement, fraternity and sorority life, student activities, and student organizations.

**University of Memphis**

- Student Leadership and Involvement
    - University of Memphis utilizes Student Leadership and Involvement to support leadership development, student organizations, student activities, Greek life, and service programs.
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