



A Conversation About Positive Membership Education

*Developed by Rick Barnes,
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Learning Objectives:



1. To understand hazing policy and how it applies to membership
2. To recognize the importance of positive member education programs within organizations
3. To personally commit to a hazing-free environment within one's organization

Technical Requirements:

None



Handouts:

What is Hazing? (in the Resources Section)
Personal Commitment Form

Time Needed:

45 minutes

Group Size:

Any group size is possible

Physical Setting:

Any facility where the group can sit comfortably facing the facilitator

Room Setup:

Classroom-style preferred, or everyone sitting on the floor

Preparation:

Look up the university and state hazing policies and add them to the What is Hazing? handout in the Resources section to create a handout that includes all three. Be sure to review these in advance to gain a clear understanding of each and any differences between them.

Resources:

State hazing laws may be obtained through www.StopHazing.org

INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

The facilitator(s) should introduce himself/herself, welcome and thank everyone for attending the session.

Desired Outcomes



Today we are here to get a better understanding of what hazing is and how it is defined by rules and policies of our organization, university and state. We will also discuss how hazing conflicts with the importance of positive member education.

In preparation:

- Look up the university and state hazing policies. Put them on the What is Hazing? handout for participants to keep.
- State hazing policies can be found on www.stophazing.org.
- Do not print/read the entire law – summarize it to create a more clear understanding.

NEW MEMBER EDUCATION (15 minutes)



Open the floor to discussion of what might be included in a productive new member education program.

- Why do we have a new member education program for our members?
- What do you think should be required of new members before they are initiated into our membership?
- At what point does something move from being a good part of new member education to being something that might be defined as hazing?

There are definite components to positive new member education. Remember, we decided that education as a new member sets you up for your Zeta Tau Alpha experience, so what should be included?

Brainstorm topics with the group. The following would be positive examples:

- Development of chapter unity and sisterhood
- Assistance with academics – study skills, time management and critical thinking
- Development of social skills – etiquette, social policy and responsibilities
- Knowledge of chapter and national history
- Knowledge of fraternity/sorority community
- Begin to discuss career goals – academic major, internships, etc.
- What are positive (non-hazing) activities that would touch on those topics?

Positive Member Education



Ask the group:

- Why do you think that education should occur throughout your time as a member?
- Why is such education so important?
- When should that education really begin?

Unfortunately, fraternities and sororities sometimes have a reputation for including hazing as a part of their education programs. While this is usually not true, it is very important that

members maintain an understanding of what hazing is, why it is against the rules, policies and laws, and why we need to always work to make sure it does not take place in our membership education programs.

POLICY DEFINITION (10 minutes)



While we should know and understand these policies and laws, we should also recognize that hazing simply violates the standards of membership in our organization. Yes, hazing is against the law and policy, but it is also against what we commit to be as sisters in ZTA.

Note to the Facilitator:

- Distribute What is Hazing? handout.
- Ask different participants to read the organization, university and state policies out loud.
- Explain differences in their language or terms. Summarize them or ask a participant to express them in her own words.

DISCUSSION (5-10 minutes)



I'd now like to have a little bit of open discussion. Does anyone have any special comments or questions that they would like to share on today's program?

PERSONAL COMMITMENT (10 minutes)



Note to the Facilitator:

- Distribute Personal Commitment Form handouts.
- Give participants five minutes to reflect on their commitments.
- If time allows, go around the room and give each participant an opportunity to share their personal commitment. Otherwise, ask for between five and 10 volunteers to share.



To close, I would like to ask each of you to make a personal commitment to stop or prevent hazing within the organization. Take several minutes to fill out the Personal Commitment Form. Reflect on a way that you can contribute to positive education of your sisters.

Thank you for participating and making these commitments. Our sisterhood can only grow stronger if you follow through with these great commitments.

A Conversation About Positive Membership Education: Personal Commitment Form

Name: _____

Date: _____

What is your personal commitment to stop or prevent hazing within the chapter?

What is your personal commitment to positively contribute to new member education?

A Conversation About Positive Membership Education: Personal Commitment Form

Name: _____

Date: _____

What is your personal commitment to stop or prevent hazing within the chapter?

What is your personal commitment to positively contribute to new member education?
