

my sister
my responsibility



a program by zeta tau alpha
preventing and confronting hazing

Hazing Hurts: What You Probably Haven't Considered

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Learning Objectives:



1. To understand what hazing is and what might qualify an activity as hazing
2. To understand the detrimental impact hazing can have on a student's academic life, and their physical and mental well-being



Technical Requirements:

Flip chart (or chalkboard, dry-erase board, poster board, etc.)



Handouts:

What is Hazing? (in the Resources section)
Hazing Hurts: Hazing Spectrum Worksheet

Time Needed:

45 minutes

Group Size:

Group size can be determined by the chapter leadership depending on the size of the chapter. The entire chapter should participate if possible, either all at once or broken down into smaller, more manageable groups. It is advised that groups are chosen randomly, not by class year, in an effort to foster overall sisterhood.

Physical Setting:

The setting for this module is only limited by the size of the group. Be sure you have enough space for people to be comfortable.

Room Setup:

Everyone seated as comfortably as possible and in a U-shape to promote face to face discussion.

Preparation:

Planning for this module, the facilitators should recruit three other sisters to act as readers. These sisters should also be well-spoken and women the others respect. If they can be from various class years, that could help send the right messages across membership classes and help prepare younger members to be chapter leaders in the fight against hazing.

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.

INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

The facilitators should introduce themselves, welcome and thank everyone for attending the session.

Purpose (Facilitator 1)

The purpose of this session is to bring our sisterhood together in a safe, open-minded environment to discuss the negative impact hazing can, and often does, have on students.



Desired Outcomes (Facilitator 2)

The information we discuss today will give us a better understanding of what constitutes hazing and how it can disrupt, and even paralyze, a student's academic career, their life chances, or worse, kill them.

INFORMATION (25 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.

How Well Do We Know Our Sisters?

(Facilitator 1) In 1898, nine young women had a common goal to unite the members in lifelong friendship and to instill in them a spirit of mutual love and helpfulness. Each year, we bring new members into our fraternity with the intentions of carrying these values forward.

Our relationship is built through sisterhood and should have a strong foundation in trust. While some of our strongest and longest-lasting friendships will undoubtedly be formed with our sisters, we do not always know each other as well as we think.

(Facilitator 2) What we might not know is that today more than ever, students are coming to college campuses, like ours, having already been diagnosed with a mental health disorder, and more students will experience the onset of a disorder during their time in college. Statistically, we need to know that it is likely that some of us, some our sisters and new members, are among those who may struggle with a mental health disorder.

Hazing Defined and Discussed

(Reader 1) Our organization does not condone any form of hazing by any alumna, initiated member or new member. Such activities are not compatible with the ideals and traditions

In Preparation:

- This module will be best facilitated by two individuals who are well spoken and well-respected by the membership.
 - 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.

of the Fraternity and reflect negatively on the organization. Collegiate chapters are required to implement a new member program that reflects the true meaning and high standards of sisterhood that in no way demeans, embarrasses or endangers an initiated member or new member. Chapters that fail to uphold this policy will be placed on National Probation, which can lead to revocation of the chapter's charter.



- How do you define hazing?



Hazing has been defined by experts as: "...any activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses or endangers them regardless of a person's willingness to participate."

Note to the Facilitator:

- Distribute What is Hazing? handout.

It is important to know that hazing occurs whether someone agrees to participate or not, and the level of seriousness varies greatly. Most do not think of activities such as wearing a silly article of clothing in public as hazing, rather as a joke or prank. It is however, a form of hazing. Hazing takes many forms at various levels of severity.

Note to the Facilitator:



- Draw the spectrum on a flip chart. List examples under the appropriate category.

- Ask the participants to identify a few low, moderate and higher risk hazing practices based on their perceptions.

- After participants form small groups, distribute the Hazing Spectrum Worksheet. Give the groups 5 minutes to complete it.



The Hazing Spectrum

(Reader 2) On one end, which may be considered lower risk hazing, we may see activities such as the one described of wearing silly clothes in public, or doing favors for sisters to get a signature. On the opposite end of the spectrum, the activities may include high-risk behaviors such as forced alcohol consumption, simulated or real sexual acts, and severe mental distress which may entail name calling, degrading and abusive verbal attacks, or even ridicule around body image.



Many students may agree that higher risk behaviors qualify as hazing, but most do not realize that even the lower risk activities can be harmful, and are certainly a form of hazing.

We will now break into smaller groups, please count off to *(whatever # you decided upon, groups should be no larger than 10)*. You will now separate into your groups *(be sure to direct them to specific areas of the room)*.



(Facilitator 1) I will now provide your small group with a list of activities. Discuss with your small group and decide what category each activity may fall into on the hazing spectrum. Keep in mind that it is possible for them to fall in between categories, or to qualify for more than one category. You will share your thoughts with the larger group when you are done, so also be prepared to talk about why your group chose the category and how each activity may be physically or mentally harmful to the individual or to our sisterhood. Please work quickly as we have limited time.



Please stay in your small groups, but let's turn so we can talk as a large group. One person can be the spokesperson for your group.

- Was it difficult at times to categorize some of the activities? Why or why not?
- What did you have listed as **lower risk** hazing examples, why, and what kind of harm may the examples cause?
- What did you have listed as **moderate risk** hazing examples, why, and what kind of harm may the examples cause?
- What did you have listed as **higher risk** hazing examples, why, and what kind of harm may the examples cause?

Individual's Tolerance to Stress

(Reader 3) Each individual deals with stress in his or her own way. Likewise, each person has a limit to the amount of stress he or she can cope with before having some form of mental breakdown. For some, the breakdown can be a good cry, some display avoidance behaviors, and for others, it can be catastrophic.

If the person has a pre-existing mental health disorder they have been managing, it may send them into a relapse that requires serious professional intervention to recover from. For others, it may trigger a memory of a traumatic life experience, or the stress overload could trigger the onset of a mental health disorder the person could have a predisposition to. What we may not have considered before is just how hazing, a very stressful experience, can turn a person's life up-side-down. Please consider the following:

(Readers 1, 2 and 3 will take turns reading the following bullet points to the women.)

- 1 out of every 5 young people suffers from some form of diagnosable mental illness.
- An estimated 5 million young females suffer from eating disorders each year and eating disorders are the deadliest mental illness claiming more lives than any other illness.
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death in college students.
- 44% of American college students report feeling symptoms of depression.
- 15-20% of college women experience sexual assault and some studies find the number to be even higher – close to 1 in 4! It is likely that someone you know has or will experience sexual assault.
- 48% of high school students who belong to a student group reported being hazed.



- *(Facilitator 1)* What do you make of these statistics?
- Is there anything that surprises you?

Note to the Facilitator:

- Depending on the number of groups, they may not all have time to share all of their examples. Use your judgement in order to stay on schedule and possibly only ask one or two groups for feedback.
- For each question, ask a specific small group. When they finish, ask other groups if they had anything different on their list, or if they want to add any comments.

Note to the Facilitator:

- The purpose of these questions is to ensure the audience has grasped the content and has a clear understanding of hazing and its levels of severity.

ALTERNATIVE METHODS (10 minutes)

(Facilitator 2) Because we do not know the “baggage” people carry with them when they come to us, and we have no way to tell a person’s tolerance to stress, we must strive to prevent hazing from being a part of our fraternity experience and negatively impacting our members lives.

We need to find ways to make the new member education experience meaningful, memorable, special and hazing-free. Because we as college students have a desire to experience a rite of passage, or “earn our way in,” we do need to consider how we can make our process challenging, positive and built on a true foundation of trust. The most significant element in any relationship is trust. We must ensure that we are behaving in ways that are consistent with our values, and develop a sisterhood that, without doubt, can count on each other in good times and bad.



- What are the values expressed in our *Creed*?

(Facilitator 1) Friendship, love and helpfulness are three of the main values expressed in our *Creed*, and their importance should be instilled in those that join our sisterhood. Let’s discuss some ideas for an activity or two that would give new members an opportunity to understand the meaning for each of the values. This activity is to be new, not something we already do or have done, and to relate specifically to one of the values from our *Creed*: Respect for oneself and others, Love, Friendship and Service.



Get back together with your small group and take a few minutes to develop a basic concept or two for activities that would teach each of these values. Be sure to remember, these are to be new, not something we have done. Go into this with no preconceived constraints. If we had all of the resources in the world, what would the best activity be? One person in each group should take notes so they might be gathered at the end of our session today and possibly used in our new member education program.

(Facilitator 2) New member education is the period of time we have to help new sisters understand what we are about, and what they are committing to. Hazing tears away at the fundamental idea of sisterhood and friendship. In a matter of minutes, we have brainstormed several excellent examples of hazing-free activities that would instill a real sense of our fraternal values and what it means to be a member of Zeta Tau Alpha. We need to commit to a hazing-free experience and challenge ourselves to be creative and resourceful in our member education efforts.

- By show of hands, who here is committed to keeping hazing out of our chapter?

Note to the Facilitator:

- Give the small groups five minutes to brainstorm.
- Ask a group, different than one you may have called on previously, to share ideas. Limit the detail at this point. Do not allow others to pass judgment or negatively comment.
- Continue to ask a couple of other groups to share their ideas as time permits.
- This is your chance to tie the elements of the module to developing activities that live out ZTA values.
- Collect each group’s set of ideas.

CLOSING (5 minutes)

In closing, we hope you have a better understanding of what hazing is and the negative outcomes it can pose for students. If you have lingering questions, want further information about hazing, or need to talk about something happening in the chapter or on campus, contact our new member advisor, general advisor or Province President, or call International Office at 317-872-0540.

If you are uncomfortable speaking to a ZTA about the activity, you may call the Greek Anti-Hazing Hotline at 1-888-NOT-HAZE (888-668-4293.)

Alumnae, members and new members have a responsibility to not participate in any form of hazing by either allowing themselves to be hazed or permitting it to happen to another Zeta Tau Alpha.

If you are interested in learning more, there are a number of resources available. Feel free to come talk to one of us to see the resources list we have available (*located in the Resources section, pages 3-5*).

Likewise, if any of you would like to discuss this further, the facilitators will stay and be available for you to talk with us. Thank you for your participation!

