

A CONVERSATION ABOUT POSITIVE MEMBERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Preventing and Confronting Hazing; My Sister, My Responsibility®

Developed by Rick Barnes, National speaker and consultant on fraternity and sorority issues

TIME | 30 minutes

Objectives:

- Understand hazing policy and how it applies to membership.
- Recognize the importance of positive member experience programs within organizations.
- Personally commit to a hazing-free environment within ZTA and other organizations.

Group size:

- Any group size is suitable for this workshop.

Setup:

- Choose a space where the group can sit and face the facilitator comfortably.
- A classroom environment works best.
- If no classroom is available, it's fine if everyone sits on the floor.
- You will play a PowerPoint presentation during the lesson, so you'll need to connect a laptop to a projector and screen.

Preparation:

- Look up the university and state hazing policies and add them to the PowerPoint.
- Find state hazing policies at www.stophazing.org.
- Be sure to review these policies in advance to gain a clear understanding of each set and any differences between them.

Materials needed:

- Projector and screen
- PowerPoint
- For each participant: "What is Hazing?" and "Personal Commitment Form" handouts

INTRODUCTION | 5 minutes

The facilitator should introduce him/herself, welcome participants and thank everyone for attending the session.

Share a personal story about why you joined ZTA.

Share:

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

NEW MEMBER EXPERIENCE | 15 minutes

Open the floor for discussion of what might be included in a productive new member experience.

Discuss:

- Why do we have a new member education program?
- 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 the new member experience to being something that might be defined as hazing?

There are defined components in a positive new member experience. 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
- Discussion of what sisterhood means to you
- Discussion of values—personal values and chapter values
- Development of social skills, etiquette, social policy and responsibilities
- Knowledge of chapter and national history
- Knowledge of fraternity/sorority community
- Discussion of career goals—academic major, internships, etc.
- What are positive (non-hazing) activities that would touch on those topics?

Discuss:

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

A Conversation About Positive Member Experience

A Conversation About Positive Membership Experience

- Insert your personal story about why you joined ZTA. Share your positive membership story.

Objectives

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New Member Experience

- Why do we have a new member education program?
- What do you think should be required of new members before they are initiated into our membership?



New Member Experience

- At what point does something move from being a good part of the new member experience to being something that might be defined as hazing?

New Member Experience

- Why do you think that education should occur throughout your time as a member?
- Why is this kind of 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, relevant 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 | 5 minutes

Share:

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, but it is also against what we commit to be as sisters in ZTA.

FACILITATOR TIP

- Distribute the “What is Hazing?” handout.
- Ask different participants to read the organization, university and state policies out loud.
- Summarize the policies or ask a participant to define them in her own words.

WRAP UP | 5 minutes

Share:

- To close, I would like 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 a positive experience for your sisters.

FACILITATOR TIP

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

- Additionally, make an effort to be an active member of your community to eliminate hazing in all organizations on your campus. Challenge yourself to speak up when you see or hear about hazing on your campus and in your community.

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

University Hazing Policy

- Insert the university's hazing policy.

State Hazing Policy

- Insert the state's hazing policy.

ZTA's Hazing Policy

No chapter, colony, student or alumna shall conduct, participate in or condone hazing activities. Permission or approval by a person being hazed is not a defense. Hazing activities are defined as: "Any action taken or situation created intentionally, whether on or off fraternity premises, to produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment or ridicule. Such activities may include but are not limited to the following: use of alcohol; paddling in any form; creation of excessive fatigue; physical and psychological shocks; quests, treasure hunts, scavenger hunts, road trips or any other such activities carried on outside or inside of the confines of the chapter house; wearing of public apparel which is conspicuous or not normally in good taste; engaging in public stunts and buffoonery; morally degrading or humiliating games and activities; and any other activities which are not consistent with academic achievement, fraternal law, ritual or policy or the regulations and policies of the educational institution or applicable state law."

Zeta Tau Alpha does not condone any form of hazing by any member, new member or alumna member. Such activities conflict with the Fraternity's ideals and traditions and project a negative image of the organization. ZTA collegiate chapters must develop new member programs that reflect the true meaning and high standards of sisterhood. These programs must not demean, embarrass or endanger members or new members.

Wrap Up

Personal Commitment Form

- What is your personal commitment to stop or prevent hazing within the chapter?
- What is your personal commitment to positively contribute to the new member experience?

WHAT IS HAZING?

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STATE HAZING POLICY

(Find each state’s policy on www.stophazing.org.)

UNIVERSITY HAZING POLICY

(Search your university website or ask your fraternity/sorority advisor what your university’s policy states.)

WHO CAN YOU TALK TO?

If you have lingering questions after a *My Sister, My Responsibility* workshop, want further information about hazing or need to talk about something happening in your chapter or on your campus:

1. Contact your New Member Advisor, General Advisor or Collegiate National Officer.
2. You can call International Office at (317) 872-0540 if you are not comfortable discussing the issue with women who work with your chapter.
3. If you are uncomfortable speaking to a Zeta about the activity, you may call the Greek Hazing Hotline at 1-888-NOT-HAZE (888-668-4293).

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 the new member experience?