

# HOLDING OUR SISTERS ACCOUNTABLE

## *Teaching Social Responsibility; My Sister, My Responsibility®*

Developed by Heather Matthews Kirk, Chief Communication Officer, Sigma Phi Epsilon

**TIME** | 65 minutes

### **Objectives:**

- Articulate how accountability positively relates to sisterhood and friendship.
- Understand that each person is responsible for holding others accountable.
- Demonstrate preparation of how to utilize the ZTA judicial procedures.

### **Group size:**

- Any group size is possible

### **Setup:**

- Choose a space where the group can sit and face the facilitator comfortably.
- Choose a room that offers a lot of open space for small groups to be able to spread out and remain undistracted by others. Members will need to have the ability to either sit and gather on the floor or move chairs around into small groups.
- You will play a PowerPoint presentation during the lesson, so you'll need to connect a laptop to a projector and screen.

### **Preparation:**

- Choose 10 people to assist with the judicial hearing role play. The roles of the Judicial Chair, accused and accuser have numerous lines, so take that into consideration. The other roles (judicial secretary, committee members and advisor) sit and follow along with proceedings and do not have lines. In the script, the workshop facilitator also serves as the role play "facilitator."
- You should all read the script in advance and practice, so the hearing appears organized. You will also need to fill in the blanks in the script for the volunteers participating.
- For further preparation, review the judicial procedure with the Judicial Chair. If the chair or an advisor is a good presenter, she could also present this workshop. Obtain a list of the Judicial Committee members and alternates.

### **Materials needed:**

- Projector and screen
- PowerPoint
- For each participant: "Form of Charges" and "Judicial Notice" handouts
- Sample "Judicial Hearing Script" handout

### **Resources:**

- *Zeta Tau Alpha Judicial Procedures Handbook* (2016 Revised Edition)

## INTRODUCTION | 2 minutes

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

### Share:

- Our conversation today will help us explore an important Zeta Tau Alpha value that we learned in the new member program, reiterated in our Ritual—Responsibility. We are responsible for each other. In our sisterhood, one of the first promises we make is to share our joys, sorrows and interests. But as sisters, we also share accountability for each other, and when a sister’s behavior falls short of our high ZTA standards, we each have a responsibility to hold her accountable and lift her up to those expectations.
- Today’s workshop will help us learn how to better hold each other accountable and relate accountability to our sisterhood and friendship. We’ll use a real situation as the basis of our discussion today. I’ll read you the case study situation, and then we’ll discuss what should happen next.

## THE SITUATION | 20 minutes

### Share:

One of the biggest campus events at Midwest University each year is the homecoming parade. Student organizations across campus spend weeks coordinating and decorating themed floats for the parade. Students, alumni, parents and community members all gather to cheer on the team and celebrate MU homecoming.

Fraternities and sororities are an enthusiastic and visible presence each year in the parade. Each sorority is paired with a fraternity for the homecoming festivities, including the parade float-building contest. Fraternities and sororities are known for going above and beyond in the competition, developing complex creations. ZTA is no exception and has placed in the competition for the last three years.

This year, the Zeta Tau Alpha chapter paired up with the Alpha Beta Tau men’s fraternity for the float decorating contest. Building the float is a great way for the Zetas to get to know the ABTs better, and the organizations are aiming to continue ZTA’s winning record. They’ve put long nights and a lot of hard work into creating the float.

The morning of the parade, the 30 members who have signed up to ride on the float were asked to meet early to put on the finishing touches. Before the parade, all of the floats are lined up together in the parking lot of the school stadium while final preparations are made. It’s an exciting time with so many fraternity and sororities together.

Everyone arrives on time except for five senior members, which causes the other Zetas present to scramble to get their work finished. During this time, all of the chapter Executive Committee officers and other chapter members are setting up along the parade route to

### Holding Our Sisters Accountable

#### Objectives

- Articulate how accountability positively relates to sisterhood and friendship.
- Understand that each person is responsible for holding others accountable.
- Demonstrate preparation of how to utilize the ZTA judicial procedures.

#### Holding Our Sisters Accountable

- We are responsible for each other.
- In our sisterhood, one of the first promises we make is to share our joys, sorrows and interests.
- But as sisters, we also share accountability for each other, and when a sister’s behavior falls short of our high ZTA standards, we each have responsibility to hold her accountable and lift her up to those expectations.
- Today’s workshop will help us learn how to better hold each other accountable and relate accountability to our sisterhood and friendships. We’ll use a real situation as the basis of our discussion today.

#### The Situation

- One of the biggest campus events at Midwest University each year is the homecoming parade.
- This year, the Zeta Tau Alpha chapter paired up with the Alpha Beta Tau men’s fraternity for the float decorating contest.
- The morning of the parade, the 30 members who have signed up to ride on the float were asked to meet early to put on the finishing touches.
- Everyone arrives on time except for five senior members, which causes the other Zetas present to scramble to get their work finished.
- Just minutes before the parade is set to begin, the group of five seniors shows up. They are two hours late for the morning’s preparation and almost miss the float’s departure.

#### The Situation continued...

- They are all wearing ZTA T-shirts and show obvious signs of intoxication.
- Several are holding red plastic cups full of liquid. Some are slurring and talking loudly, and one stumbles as she tries to step up on the float and damages decorations trying to hold herself up.
- Several Zetas overhear these women talking with some of the ABTs; they are laughing and reminiscing about how they spent the last night and early morning playing drinking games with the ABTs to “pre-party” for the parade.
- Other fraternity and sorority members look over at the group of ZTA seniors who are causing a disturbance. It’s almost time for the float to leave...

cheer on the ZTA float. Just minutes before the parade is set to begin, the group of five seniors shows up. They are two hours late for the morning's preparation and almost miss the float's departure. They are all wearing ZTA T-shirts and show obvious signs of intoxication. Several are holding red plastic cups full of liquid. Some are slurring and talking loudly, and one stumbles as she tries to step up on the float and damages decorations trying to hold herself up. Several Zetas overhear these women talking with some of the ABTs; they are laughing and reminiscing about how they spent the last night and early morning playing drinking games with the ABTs to "pre-party" for the parade.

Other fraternity and sorority members look over at the group of ZTA seniors who are causing a disturbance. It's almost time for the float to leave.

Let's take a timeout and discuss what is happening in this situation.

### Discuss:

- What are the main problems that you can identify with what is happening? *(If participants need more guidance, ask leading questions like: What are the red flags? What are the risks involved? What policies have been broken?)*

Answers should include:

- *Five seniors signed up to be there but were late, and other people had to pitch in to do their work.*
- *The seniors are not in any condition to ride on the float. With members slurring and stumbling, there is danger in them being at the event and especially being on a moving float.*
- *These women are obviously intoxicated, wearing ZTA letters and making an awful representation of the organization to its members and many others in the fraternity/sorority and campus community.*
- *They have likely brought alcohol to a ZTA event, which was not sanctioned to have alcohol. (We need to realize that because the parade was announced, planned for and on the ZTA calendar, it is a chapter "event.")*
- *They held a pre-party with the ABT fraternity. Pre-parties break the National Policies of Zeta Tau Alpha because they do not meet proper risk reduction planning and procedures.*
- *Drinking games are strictly prohibited in the National Policies of Zeta Tau Alpha.*
- How are these women representing Zeta Tau Alpha?
- What are they role modeling to other members through their actions?
- How do their actions reflect on the values of ZTA?
- Remember, we left them with the group of seniors drawing attention to themselves with their behavior and the float about to depart. Let's think about what should happen next.

### Discussion

- What are the main problems that you can identify with what is happening?
- How are these women representing Zeta Tau Alpha?
- What are they role modeling to other members through their actions?
- How do their actions reflect on the values of ZTA?

Break the larger group into smaller groups of around 10 people. This can be done by having participants count off to 10 and then separating or dividing by who is sitting near them. Each group should take five to seven minutes to consider the three questions below. Afterwards, ask participants to face the larger group and call on several members to share their discussions.

**Discuss:**

- What are the resolutions that you thought of to some of the problems in this situation?
- What should happen next?
- How should the women be held accountable?

**Share:**

For incidents that involve misuse of alcohol, it’s important that the risky behavior is addressed before it goes any further. These members need to be confronted and taken safely home so that they do not create even more risk and draw further negative attention on the float.

**Small Group Discussion**

- What are the resolutions that you thought of to some of the problems in this situation?
- What should happen next?
- How should the women be held accountable?

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TRAINING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY      ZETA TAU ALPHA BY ZETA, BY RESPONSIBILITY

**ACCOUNTABILITY** | 10 minutes

**Share:**

You’ve identified some ways that these five senior members could be held accountable for their actions.

**Ask:**

- Why do you think accountability is so important?
- When members are not held accountable for their actions, what occurs?

**Share:**

- As Zeta Tau Alphas, we learn the values of loyalty, responsibility and leadership in the new member experience. These are derived from our *Creed*, which teaches:
- “To be true to ourselves and to those within and without our circle,”
- “To have the welfare and harmony of the Fraternity at heart, striving ever to make our lives a symphony of high ideals,”
- To have “devotion to the Right, the Good, and the True,”
- “Remembering always that the foundation precept of Zeta Tau Alpha was Love, the greatest of all things.”

**Share:**

- In your small groups from earlier, take two minutes to discuss how accountability relates to one of the sections pulled from *The Creed*.

**Accountability**

- Why do you think accountability is so important?
- When members are not held accountable for their actions, what occurs?

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**Accountability and Values**

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- “To have the welfare and harmony of the Fraternity at heart,”
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Divvy up one of the chosen lines to each group; if you have more than five small groups, give the same line to multiple groups. After several minutes, ask participants to face the large group and call on each small group to briefly share its responses.

- Holding our sisters accountable closely relates to the values we learn and live as women of Zeta Tau Alpha. In order to be true to ourselves and to have Zeta Tau Alpha’s welfare at heart, we have to hold our sisters, who are our friends, accountable for living these values. The key to all of this is that we do it out of love, out of friendship and out of sisterhood, because, as you pointed out, “the Foundation precept of Zeta Tau Alpha was Love, the greatest of all things.”

**Accountability**

- Holding our sisters accountable closely relates to the values we learn and live as women of Zeta Tau Alpha
- In order to be true to ourselves and to have Zeta Tau Alpha’s welfare at heart, we have to hold our sisters, who are our friends, accountable for living these values.
- The key to all of this is that we do it out of love, out of friendship and out of sisterhood, because as you pointed out, “the Foundation precept of Zeta Tau Alpha” is “Love, the greatest of all things.”

TRAINING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | ZETA TAU ALPHA: MY SISTER, MY RESPONSIBILITY

## TAKING AWAY THE MYSTERY: ZTA JUDICIAL PROCEDURE | 30 minutes

### Share:

One of the main measures of accountability in Zeta Tau Alpha is through our judicial procedure. When a member’s conduct falls short of our expectations and standards, the judicial procedure exists to help us address the situation. It is meant to help prevent and react to times when sisters do things that may hurt other sisters, themselves or Zeta Tau Alpha. When judicial charges are filed, it is simply a way of saying, “Hey, I recognize that your behavior may be harmful or causing problems, and I want to help.” The judicial procedure is one way that sisters check in on sisters, get to the root of the problem and find constructive ways to keep it from happening in the future.

**Taking Away the Mystery:  
ZTA Judicial Procedure**

- One of the main measures of accountability in Zeta Tau Alpha is through our judicial procedure.
- It is meant to help prevent and react to times when sisters do things that may hurt other sisters, themselves or Zeta Tau Alpha.
- The judicial procedure is one way that sisters check in on sisters, get to the root of the problem and find constructive ways to keep it from happening in the future.

TRAINING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | ZETA TAU ALPHA: MY SISTER, MY RESPONSIBILITY

Ultimately, the judicial procedure is rooted in sisterhood. It is about caring enough about Zeta Tau Alpha and our sisters to hold each other accountable. It helps us mediate problems to make our members better members, our sisters better sisters, and ultimately, our chapter a better chapter. The end result of a judicial hearing is a solution that addresses the negative behavior and creates positive change for the member and the chapter.



**The Judicial Procedure is Rooted in Sisterhood**

- It is about caring enough about Zeta Tau Alpha and our sisters to hold each other accountable.
- It helps us mediate problems to make our members better members, our sisters better sisters, and ultimately, our chapter a better chapter.
- The end result of a judicial hearing is a solution that addresses the negative behavior and creates positive change for the member and the chapter.

The judicial procedure does involve some formal paperwork, but in reality, it’s a conversation between sisters. We’re going to use our homecoming situation to walk through how the judicial procedure works to make it more familiar and less of a mystery to us all.

Let’s go through the process.

### Filing the Charges

First off, members can utilize the judicial procedure for any of four reasons:

- If a member violates the *Constitution and Bylaws of Zeta Tau Alpha*, chapter bylaws, and national and/or chapter policies or procedures
- If a member fails to fulfill her duties and obligations of membership in ZTA

**Filing the Charges**

Members can utilize the judicial procedure for any of four reasons:

1. If a member violates the *Constitution and Bylaws of Zeta Tau Alpha*, chapter bylaws, and national and/or chapter policies or procedures
2. If a member fails to fulfill her duties and obligations of membership in ZTA
3. If a member fails to act in the best interest of ZTA
4. If a member’s behavior is detrimental to the chapter, organization or its members

TRAINING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | ZETA TAU ALPHA: MY SISTER, MY RESPONSIBILITY

- If a member fails to act in the best interest of ZTA
- If a member’s behavior is detrimental to the chapter, organization or its members

These are the reasons a Zeta Tau Alpha member can file judicial charges on another member. In the *Judicial Procedures Handbook*, they are worded a little more formally, so we’ve put them in our own words to make them easier to understand.

**Discuss:**

- So let’s think back to our scenario. Which of these reasons fits the bill for our five senior members?

*Take feedback from the group. Guide them to reason through why they would or would not choose each reason. Ultimately, the first reason should definitely be chosen, because the members did violate several risk management policies as stated earlier. They could choose option two, because the women had signed up and committed to ride on the float but were in no shape to do so. They could also choose reason three and/or four, because the members’ behavior was in conflict with the interests of ZTA and cast a negative light on the chapter in front of others.*

- We all understand that what the seniors have done is wrong and against ZTA policy, correct?

*This has to be established before moving further.*

- So when someone wants to file judicial charges, they decide which of these four “grounds for charges” fit the behavior. You will see these same four grounds on the sample Form of Charges.
- Who do you think can file charges for the homecoming incident?

*Take feedback from the group.*

- It is important to understand that any ZTA member can file charges; it does not have to be an officer. We are all responsible for holding each other accountable. The person that files the charges is called the Accuser. In this situation, we’ll name her Allie Accuser. Allie is a general member who saw what happened and took responsibility to hold these five women accountable. She’ll be bringing them all to judicial hearings one at a time.
- Allie will submit the Form of Charges to the chapter Judicial Chair. To do this, she chooses the grounds for charges and writes a factual description of what happened. This is the “who, what, when and where” that describes the member’s behavior.
- What do you think should be included in the factual description for the homecoming situation?

*Take feedback from the group. Then distribute the sample “Form of Charges” and “Judicial Notice” handouts.*

**Discuss**

Lets think back to our scenario:

- Which one or more of these fits the bill for our five senior members?
- We all understand that what the seniors have done is wrong and against ZTA policy, correct?

When someone wants to file judicial charges, they decide which of these four “grounds for charges” fit the behavior. You will see these same four grounds on the sample Form of Charges.

- Who do you think can file charges for the homecoming incident?

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**Things to Remember**

- It is important to understand that any ZTA member can file charges.
- It does not have to be an officer; we are all responsible for holding each other accountable.

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**The Accuser**

- The person that files the charges is called the Accuser.
- In this situation, we’ll name her Allie Accuser. Allie is a general member who saw what happened and took responsibility to hold these five women accountable.
- Allie will submit the Form of Charges to the chapter Judicial Chairman.

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**Form of Charges**

- To submit a Form of Charges, she chooses the grounds for charges and writes a factual description of what happened.
- This is the “who, what, when and where” that describes the member’s behavior.
  - So what do you think should be included in the factual description for the homecoming situation?
- It’s important to be detailed and factual.
  - In this case, charges should be filed for each of the five seniors who were intoxicated at the homecoming event, illustrating each person’s specific actions and behavior.

TEACHING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | ZETA TAU ALPHA BY ZETA, BY RESPONSIBILITY

- Take a look at the Form of Charges Allie filed. It’s important to be detailed and factual. In this case, charges should be filed for each of the five seniors who were intoxicated at the homecoming event, illustrating each person’s specific actions and behavior. However, we’re just going to go through a case for one person (we’ll name her Susie Senior) to show you how the judicial procedure works.

## Pre-Hearing

Once Allie Accuser files the charges with the Judicial Chair, she sets the time, date and place for the hearing and makes sure an advisor can be present. The chair will deliver a judicial notice and an exact copy of the charges to Susie. The judicial hearing should take place between 48 hours and 96 hours after the notice is delivered. This gives Susie fair warning and time to collect her thoughts, but doesn’t extend the process any longer than necessary.

The Judicial Chair also provides a notice of the hearing to the Judicial Committee and the Accuser. However, the Judicial Committee does NOT see the charges before the hearing. The hearing is where they find out who is involved and what happened and discuss a solution. This helps the Committee to be fair and impartial.

Who is our chapter’s Judicial Chair? Who is on the committee? Be sure to have this information in advance.

*You should point out each member and the alternates on the Judicial Committee. Also note that the President, Vice President II and an advisor serve on the committee as ex-officio members.*

## The Hearing

A ZTA judicial hearing follows a specific script to make sure the conversation is fair and that everyone involved gets to share their opinions and viewpoints.

*Call up the 10 predetermined volunteers for the judicial hearing role play activity. It is best for you to play the “facilitator” role in the script. The other 10 roles include the Judicial Chair; Susie Senior, the Accused; Allie Accuser, the Accuser; four Judicial Committee members; the chapter President; the VP II; and an advisor.*

We’ll go through the script for the hearing. We won’t take the time for Susie and Allie to really defend their sides or ask specific questions, but this will give you a good idea of the process. We’ll take a few timeouts to explain what is happening and get your thoughts about what the committee should be asking or doing.

*Read slowly through the sample judicial hearing script provided. Do not speed through it; that will not help the chapter to better understand the process. As the facilitator, you will be summarizing what is happening throughout the script. Note: Each of the role players will need a script, but you do not need to provide the script as a handout to all workshop participants.*

### Pre-hearing

- Once the Accuser files the charges with the Judicial Chairman, she sets the time, date and place for the hearing and makes sure an advisor can be present.
- The chairman will deliver a hearing Notice and an exact copy of the charges.
- The judicial hearing should take place between 48 hours and 96 hours after the notice is delivered.
- The Judicial Chairman also provides a Notice of the hearing to the Judicial Committee and the Accuser.
- The Judicial Committee does NOT see the charges before the hearing.
- The hearing is where they find out who is involved, what happened, and discuss a solution.
- This helps the committee to be fair and impartial.

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LET'S TOGETHER BE BETTER BY RESPONSIBILITY



### Judicial Committee

- Who is our chapter’s Judicial Chairman?
- Who is on the committee?

### The Hearing

A ZTA judicial hearing follows a specific script to make sure the conversation is fair and that everyone involved gets to share their opinions and viewpoints.

**Let's practice:**

- We'll go through the script for the hearing.
- We won't take the time for Susie and Allie to really defend their sides or ask specific questions, but this will give you a good idea of the process.
- We'll take a few "time outs" to explain what is happening and get your thoughts about what the committee should be asking or doing.

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*When you come to a timeout, make it clear that you are stopping the role play to review what is occurring with the large group of participants. In a real judicial hearing, there are no timeouts.*

## After the Hearing

Once the hearing is adjourned, the Judicial Committee meets to discuss what they've heard and formulate an opinion on whether the Accused is responsible for what she is charged with and what type of action will help rectify her behavior and prevent her or others from repeating her mistakes.

It is important that the sanction fits and addresses what occurred—that the “punishment fits the crime.” For example, in this case, it wouldn't make sense to require Susie to do extra study hours or visit her professors because her actions had nothing to do with her academic performance, but you might consider that sanction for someone with consistently poor grades who had not been participating in the academic achievement program.

Based on the problems we identified with the situation earlier, we know that the sanction should concern the social aspect of ZTA, being responsible in social situations, meeting ZTA commitments and/or being a positive representative for ZTA.

The outcome of a judicial hearing should help the member to become a better sister and member, and ultimately help the chapter to improve. Through the sanction, it's important that a member learn from her action and see the error in repeating it.

### Discuss:

- Quickly get back with your small groups. Spend five minutes brainstorming sanctions that you think would benefit Susie and help her learn from her actions.

*Once the time is over, ask participants to face the front and call on each group to share one or more of their ideas.*

- Once the Judicial Committee decides on the sanction, the chair will deliver a Notice of Action to the Accused. Over time, the chair should follow up with the Accused about her progress and make sure she has completed her sanction.
- It is important to note that the Accused cannot appeal the Judicial Committee's decision unless the action results in expulsion of membership. If a member is judicially expelled, she can appeal to National Council within 30 days.

### After the Hearing

- Once the hearing is adjourned, the Judicial Committee meets to discuss what they've heard and formulate an opinion on whether the Accused is responsible for what she is charged with and what type of action will help rectify her behavior and prevent her or others from repeating her mistakes.
- It is important that the sanction fits and addresses what occurred—that the “punishment fits the crime.”
- Based on the problems we identified with the situation earlier, we know that the sanction should concern the social aspect of ZTA, being responsible in social situations, meeting ZTA commitments and/or being a positive representative for ZTA.
- The outcome of a judicial hearing should help the member to become a better sister and member, and ultimately help the chapter to improve. Through the sanction, it's important that a member learn from her action and see the error in repeating it.

LEARNING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

ONE YOU KNOW BY HEART, BY RESPONSIBILITY



### Small Group Discussion

- Spend five minutes brainstorming sanctions that you think would benefit Susie and help her learn from her actions.
- Once the Judicial Committee decides on the sanction, the chairman will deliver a Notice of Action to the Accused.
- Over time, the chairman should follow up with the Accused about her progress and make sure she has completed her sanction.
- It is important to note that the Accused cannot appeal the Judicial Committee's decision unless the action results in Expulsion of Membership.
- If a member is judicially expelled, she can appeal to National Council within 30 days.

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## WRAP UP | 3 minutes

### Share:

Accountability in Zeta Tau Alpha is something that we are each responsible for. It's not something that only EC officers do or that is someone else's responsibility. We are each responsible for helping to make each other better people. It is at the core of the mission statement of Zeta Tau Alpha, which says Zeta Tau Alpha exists "to make a difference in the lives of our members by developing the potential of each individual."

### Wrap Up

- Accountability in Zeta Tau Alpha is something that we are each responsible for.
- It's not something that only EC officers do or that is someone else's responsibility.
- It is at the core of the mission statement of Zeta Tau Alpha, which says Zeta Tau Alpha exists "to make a difference in the lives of our members by developing the potential of each individual."



TRAINING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | HOLDING OUR SISTERS ACCOUNTABLE | SEE THE STORY BY ZETA, BY RESPONSIBILITY



# FORM OF CHARGES

## GROUNDINGS FOR CHARGES

*Susie Senior has (check all grounds that apply):*

- Violated the chapter bylaws or *Constitution & Bylaws* or established policies or procedures of Zeta Tau Alpha
- Failed or refused to fulfill the duties and obligations of her membership
- Failed to cooperate in the best interest of the Fraternity
- Conducted herself in a manner detrimental to her chapter and/or members of the Fraternity

## FACTUAL BASIS FOR THE CHARGE

*The following facts support the charge(s) set forth above (attach additional sheets if needed):*

At the chapter meeting on Sept. 1, Susie signed up to participate in the float preparations and ride in the homecoming parade on Sept. 7. She showed up two hours late and so could not help get the float ready before the parade when we were counting on her and her friends to assist. When she arrived at the parking lot, she was intoxicated and carrying a red plastic cup of liquid. I could smell alcohol when she came up to talk to me about the float. She was slurring her words and speaking loudly, causing a disturbance. When Susie moved to find a spot to ride on the float, she stumbled and fell into the structure, damaging some of the decorations. Members from other fraternities and sororities obviously noticed Susie and her friends were intoxicated while wearing their ZTA shirts. I overheard Susie discussing how she and several other Zetas (who were also present that morning) were “pre-partying” with the ABTs all night to make riding on the float more fun.

I talked with Susie and the other intoxicated women and told them I was concerned about them riding on the float since they were drunk. They were angry but said that they would leave. I called Zoe Zeta to provide Susie and the other intoxicated members a ride home.

*Allie Accuser*

Accuser



# JUDICIAL NOTICE

## NOTICE

To: Susie Senior  
From: Judicial Committee Chair  
Re: Notice of Judicial Hearing  
Date: September 10, 2020

The attached charges were delivered to me as chair of the Judicial Committee. The Judicial Committee will meet on Sept. 13, 2020 at 8:00 p.m. in the chapter room to conduct a hearing on these charges.

At the hearing, you will have an opportunity to present evidence relating to the charges against you. If you wish to have witnesses present evidence on your behalf, please bring those witnesses to the hearing with you. It is not necessary that your witnesses be members of Zeta Tau Alpha. If you fail to appear at the hearing, disciplinary action may be taken against you in your absence.

Because this or any disciplinary action may result in termination of membership, applicable sections of the *Constitution and Bylaws of Zeta Tau Alpha* to be followed in all disciplinary actions are attached for your review.

## JUDICIAL PROCEDURE SEQUENCE

1. Incident/behavior occurs
2. ZTA member files charges with Judicial Chair
3. Chair works with advisor to set date/time/place
4. Chair notifies Accused, Accuser and committee of hearing date/time/place
5. Hearing occurs within 48 to 96 hours from delivery of notice
6. Committee deliberates and decides on Action
7. Notice of Action delivered to Accused



# SAMPLE JUDICIAL HEARING SCRIPT

**Set up:** *Chair, advisor, secretary, four committee members, President and Vice President II should sit in a row or semicircle in front of Susie Senior, the Accused. There should be a vacant chair for Allie Accuser next to Susie. Be sure that no one is positioned with her back to the audience.*

**Chair:** I call this meeting of the Omega Omega Chapter Judicial Committee to order and appoint \_\_\_\_\_ as secretary to record the minutes of the meeting. *Insert names of appointed volunteers where there are blanks in the script.*

For the record, I will state that the only people present at this time are members of the Judicial Committee, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, our advisor, \_\_\_\_\_, and Susie Senior, the Accused.

**Chair:** Susie, did you receive a notice of this hearing?

**Susie:** Yes, you delivered the notice to me on Tuesday as I was getting ready for dinner.

**Chair:** Did you also receive a copy of our disciplinary procedure and the charges against you?

**Susie:** Yes.

**Chair:** Susie, the charges against you are as follows:

At the chapter meeting on Sept. 1, Susie signed up to participate in the float preparations and ride in the Homecoming parade on Sept. 7. She showed up two hours late and so could not help get the float ready before the parade when we were counting on her and her friends to assist. When she arrived to the parking lot, she was intoxicated and carrying a red plastic cup of liquid. I could smell alcohol when she came up to talk to me about the float. She was slurring her words and speaking loudly, causing a disturbance. When Susie moved to find a spot to ride on the float, she stumbled and fell into the structure, damaging some of the decorations. Members from other fraternities and sororities obviously noticed Susie and her friends were intoxicated while wearing their ZTA shirts. I overheard Susie discussing how she and several other Zetas (who were also present that morning) were “pre-partying” with the ABTs all night to make riding on the float more fun.

I talked with Susie and the other intoxicated women and told them I was concerned about them riding on the float since they were drunk. They were angry but said that they would leave. I called Zoe Zeta to provide Susie and the other intoxicated members a ride home.

Signed by Allie Accuser.

Do you understand these charges?

**Susie:** Yes.

**Chair:** Do you agree or disagree with the charges?

**Susie:** I disagree.

**Facilitator:** **TIMEOUT**—in a judicial hearing, if the Accused states that she understands and agrees with the charges, the hearing does not continue. The Accused, Susie, would be asked if she had anything further that she wanted the Judicial Committee to consider, and then the meeting would be adjourned for the committee to deliberate about possible sanctions for Susie. But since she stated she did not agree with the charges, the hearing continues. **END TIMEOUT.**

**Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_, will you ask Allie Accuser to come in? *Call on a committee member.*

*Allie enters.*

Allie, Susie has stated that she does not agree with the charges against her, so we will proceed with the hearing.

Authority for disciplinary hearing is derived from Article VII, Section I of the *Constitution & Bylaws of Zeta Tau Alpha*. In accordance with the *Guide for Chapter Officers*, the chapter President appointed this Judicial Committee which is composed of five members who have not been previously involved in any manner in this disciplinary action. Mere knowledge of the matter involved does not preclude a member of the chapter from serving as a member of this Judicial Committee.

I would now ask each member of the committee to identify herself and state for the record whether or not she has previously participated in any capacity in this disciplinary action against Susie. I will also ask the committee members if they know of any reason why they cannot render a fair and impartial decision in this matter.

*Each person states her name and if she can render a fair and impartial decision.*

Susie and Allie, do you know of any reason why any committee member cannot render a fair and impartial decision in this matter?

**Susie:** No.

**Allie:** No.

**Facilitator:** **TIMEOUT**—if either Susie or Allie had objected to a committee member being able to make a fair decision, the committee member could be replaced with an alternate member. Each year, a committee and set of alternates should be appointed by the President with the approval of EC and the Advisory Board. The committee is a chair and four other members. The President and VP II serve as ex-officio members on the committee, which means they do not get a vote in the deliberation. An alumnae advisor must be present to ensure that the hearing is conducted according to the judicial procedures and that everyone is treated fairly. **END TIMEOUT.**

**Chair:** The purpose of this hearing is to permit Susie to be confronted with the evidence upon which Allie bases her charges, to cross-examine those who offer evidence against her and to offer evidence on her own behalf. The ultimate function of this committee is to provide a full and fair hearing and to develop a complete record upon which this committee can base its decision.

Zeta Tau Alpha disciplinary hearings do not have to be conducted strictly according to the rules of evidence. Any relevant matter upon which reasonable persons customarily rely in the conduct of serious affairs will be admitted. To ensure an orderly and complete presentation of the evidence, this hearing will be conducted in the following manner:

1. A formal record of the hearing will be made and will consist of both statements of the parties and witnesses and documentary evidence, if any. The hearing will be taped to assist the secretary in the preparation of the minutes.
2. Only one party or witness will testify at a time.

For the purposes of this hearing, the following sequence of presentations will be made:

1. Allie and her witnesses, if any, will make a full and factual presentation of her evidence.
2. Susie and then the committee members may cross-examine Allie and any of her witnesses as they are presented and, if necessary, Allie may then again question the witnesses.
3. Susie and her witnesses, if any, will make a full and factual presentation of her evidence.
4. Allie and the committee members may cross-examine Susie and any of her witnesses as they are presented and, if necessary, Susie may then again question any of the witnesses.
5. If Susie does not testify on her own behalf, she may be called and examined by Allie or the committee members.
6. If, under the discretion of the Judicial Committee, additional evidence is necessary to make a decision, both Allie and Susie shall be notified and shall have an opportunity to be present when such evidence is presented.
7. The parties, if they so desire, may each make a short closing statement. These statements may address the evidence presented, the seriousness of the charges and the impact on the Fraternity and its members, and suggested action by the Judicial Committee. At the conclusion of the presentation of evidence, the hearing shall be closed, and all persons except the Judicial Committee (including ex-officio members and the advisor) will be excused. The committee shall then meet to deliberate. Upon conclusion of these deliberations, the hearing shall be finally adjourned. Written notice of the Judicial Committee's decision will be delivered to Susie.

The final determination of the Judicial Committee may then be subject to review as provided in the *Constitution & Bylaws of Zeta Tau Alpha*.

**Facilitator:** **TIMEOUT**—I know that may have sounded confusing, so let's boil it down to make it easier to understand. That nine-step process from the judicial script basically states that:

- The hearing is recorded and the secretary takes notes.
- The accuser presents her evidence, calls witnesses and that the accused and the committee can ask questions.
- Then, the accused does the same thing.
- At the end, the accused and accusers present closing statements
- The committee closes the hearing and deliberates.
- Their decision is put in writing and delivered to the accused.

**END TIMEOUT.**

**Chair:** Do you understand the procedure?

**Susie and Allie:** Yes.

**Chair:** Are you ready to proceed?

**Susie:** Yes.

**Allie:** Yes.

**Chair:** Allie, please present your evidence.

**Facilitator:** Here's where Allie would make her opening statement and present her side.

**Chair:** Susie, do you have any questions for Allie?

**Facilitator:** **TIMEOUT**—Susie and the committee would then ask Allie questions.

What questions do you think would be important to ask Allie about this incident? *Take feedback from the group.*

Remember when we discussed how this judicial procedure was rooted in our values and sisterhood? The questions the Judicial Committee asks Allie and Susie really lend to that conversation about sisterhood.

What questions would help to gain Allie’s point of view about how Susie’s actions impacted others or represented ZTA?

*Reiterate that the committee is seeking the facts of what occurred, as well as why she feels it was detrimental to the chapter. END TIMEOUT.*

**Chair:** Allie, do you have anything further you wish to state?

**Facilitator:** Allie would have the chance to make a summary statement.

**Chair:** Allie, do you have any witnesses you wish to call?

**Allie:** I want to call \_\_\_\_\_ as a witness.

**Facilitator:** Allie would then ask her witness questions about the incident. Then, Susie and the committee would have a chance to ask questions. Allie would then ask summarizing questions.

**Chair:** Allie, do you have any other witnesses?

**Allie:** No.

**Chair:** Susie, please present your evidence.

**Facilitator:** Here’s where Susie would make her opening statement and present her side.

**Chair:** Allie, do you have any questions for Susie?

**Facilitator:** **TIMEOUT**—Allie and the committee now ask Susie questions.

What questions do you think would be important to ask Susie about this incident? *Take feedback from the group.*

What questions would help to gain Susie’s point of view about how her actions impacted others or represented ZTA? Or how to prevent such behavior in the future?

*Reiterate that the committee is seeking the facts of what occurred, as well as Susie’s attitude about her actions and preventing them in the future. This is also a great time to ask Susie what sanction might provide a positive resolution for both her and the chapter. END TIMEOUT.*

**Chair:** Susie, do you have anything further you wish to state?

**Facilitator:** Susie would have the chance to make a summary statement.

**Chair:** Susie, do you have any witnesses you wish to call?

**Susie:** I want to call \_\_\_\_\_ as a witness.

**Facilitator:** Susie would then ask her witness questions about the incident. Then, Allie and the committee would have a chance to ask questions. Susie would then ask summarizing questions.

**Chair:** Susie, do you have any other witnesses?

**Susie:** No.

**Chair:** Committee members, do you wish to recall any witnesses or call any additional witnesses?

**Committee:** No

**Chair:** Allie, do you wish to present a summary statement?

**Facilitator:** This is Allie's chance to present a closing statement. This often includes how she thinks Susie should be sanctioned.

**Chair:** Thank you Allie. Susie, do you wish to present a summary statement?

**Facilitator:** Now Susie has her chance to present a closing statement. This often includes her feelings about her behavior and/or what she thinks would be a positive resolution or sanction.

**Chair:** Thank you. This hearing is now closed. Allie and Susie, you are excused. The Judicial Committee will meet to deliberate. The ex-officio members of the Judicial Committee and the advisor may participate in the discussion, however they will not vote on the action to be taken. You will be notified of our decision at a later date. Please remember that this hearing is confidential and should not be discussed with others.

Committee members discuss the evidence presented and reach a decision.

