

Workshops and Lectures for Fraternity and Sorority Members, Leaders and Advisors

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We are facing a critical historical moment for the Greek system. While many of us are aware of the strengths, values, and positive contributions of today's sorority and fraternity women and men, the system is also under attack on a variety of fronts. It is thus especially important that leadership be provided to allow the Greek system to demonstrate its strengths while addressing its problems. My work with fraternity and sorority members, leaders, and advisors has the goal of using the strengths and assets of members to positively address the problems. Please feel free to contact me if you would like additional information about these workshops/lectures, or if you would like me to adapt any of them to better suit your needs.

“It’s not Greek to Me” - What the Greek System Needs to do to Survive. This workshop outlines the critical challenges facing the Greek system and provides direction for solutions. Problem discussed include: infighting and destructive competition between houses, the definition of loyalty, challenges and dilemmas for leaders, not marketing the positive accomplishments of Greeks, allowing the negative to define us, turnover and loss of leaders, and the role of alumni

Caught in the Middle: Strategies for Greek Leaders. Leaders in Greek organizations must serve two constituencies that often have conflicting and even adversarial agendas: the administration and the members of their houses. What are some strategies that can be used to build consensus while addressing problematic aspects of Greek culture? Theory and research based on the social norms approach can be used to identify the “silent majority” within each house that can be used to support positive efforts to transform Greek culture.

How to Be a Better Brother or Sister. What can individual members of fraternities and sororities do to help their brothers and sisters who have emotional and behavioral problems? What are effective skills for compassionately confronting and addressing these problems? How can we prevent these problems from hurting the reputation of our houses? This presentation outlines common dilemmas faced by brothers and sisters who are concerned about their siblings and provides effective solutions.

Improving the Perceptions of Greeks on Campus. Members of sororities and fraternities often complain that their many positive contributions and accomplishments are overlooked while negative media predominates. What can be done to change public discussion of Greeks and present a more positive image? How can we prevent the negative behavior of the minority from being seen as the defining characteristic of the majority?

Hazing Prevention. “Response Ability: Transforming Values into Action” is a powerful, unique program for the prevention of hazing and other problems. To book this program please contact “Beck & Company” at www.beck-company.com or e-mail mike@beck-company.com.

Creating a Positive Culture in our Chapters: Chapters struggle with a variety of issues, including alcohol and substance use, eating problems, lack of involvement and destructive behavior. In most chapters, a few individuals with these problems can affect the whole group. What are some guidelines for supporting the healthy majority to positively influence the behavior of problem members? How can leaders, advisors and alums leadership support the healthy majority? This workshop/lecture reviews a number of strategies for creating a healthy group culture and supporting the leadership of chapter officers to act on behalf of the healthy majority.

Sexual Assault Prevention for Greeks: Accusations of sexual assault are damaging to the reputation of the Greek system. This workshop outlines components of an effective sexual assault prevention program for men and women, taking into consideration the unique role and circumstances of fraternities and sororities. Guidelines for effective rape prevention programs for men (including what men can do to ensure that both parties are fully consenting) and strategies to reduce female victimization will be reviewed. Finally, the role that members can play in reducing the risky behaviors of their brothers and sisters will be explored.

Effective Drug Prevention Programs for Greeks: Considerable attention has been devoted to the drug use and abuse of fraternity men, yet research shows that many drug prevention programs are ineffective. Guidelines for effective drug prevention programs tailored to the unique characteristics of the fraternities and sororities are presented, with an emphasis on supporting and increasing the positive behaviors already exhibited by a majority of members. The important role of leaders and advisors in addressing this issue is discussed.

Bystander Intervention Training: For almost all problems experienced in chapters there are bystanders: individuals who are concerned about the problem but don't act on their concern. This may result in not responding to misbehavior, prejudicial remarks, and other problems. Bystanders want to act but don't. This session reviews reasons for bystander behavior and provides guidelines for how to reduce it, helping individuals act in ways that are more congruent with their values and ideals. Situations are explored in which staff may act as bystanders as well.

Each of these workshops can be adapted for presentation to individual houses and/or to large groups of fraternity and/or sorority members.

Comments from Workshop Participants

“I wish we could have more time with him”

“I attended two sessions with Alan and could have spent the entire day learning from him”

“I highly recommend Alan Berkowitz to other Universities”

“As a coach for 19 years I have been to many presentations, and this was by far the most useful and interesting one. I actually walked out feeling that it was well worth my time, something that hasn't happened often.”

Alan David Berkowitz is an independent consultant who helps colleges, universities, the military, and communities design programs that address health and social justice issues. He is well-known for his scholarship and innovative programming and frequently serves as an expert advisor to organizations and federal agencies. He is the founder of [The Report on Social Norms](#) and has received five national awards for his work addressing the concerns of students.

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