

# CRITICAL ISSUES IN GREEK LIFE

## COURSE SYLLABUS

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EDL 396A - TOPICS IN LEADERSHIP

W 2:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Location: Student Union Memorial Center – Agave Room

Course Syllabus Spring 2012 University of Arizona

### INSTRUCTOR:

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*"I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something, And because I cannot do everything. I will not refuse to do the something that I can do."*

~ Helen Keller

### COURSE PURPOSE:

This course was developed to help engage students in meaningful discussions regarding the purpose and relevancy of the college fraternity and sorority. The fraternity and sorority culture that exists today is very different than the culture the first fraternity was founded upon. This course is designed to provide a basic understanding of the challenges facing today's fraternal community, as well as to create a positive and realistic plan of action to address these critical issues.

### COURSE OVERVIEW:

Critical Issues in Greek Life is an upper-division three credit seminar course designed to help students look critically at the contemporary issues facing the North American Fraternity and Sorority Movement, locally and nationally. Students will research, debate, and present on critical issues facing the contemporary fraternity and sorority including legal issues (risk management, alcohol, liability, hazing), diversity and multiculturalism, and the history and purposes of Greek-letter organizations. Students will also learn how to become effective change agents in addressing these serious and complicated issues. As an outcome of the course students will be able to look critically at Greek-letter organizations and their respective communities and will become better skilled as leaders to address problems and effect change as necessary.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES:

This course is designed to be an *experience* in leadership. Learning in this class requires students to be active participants in the learning process. It is imperative that students come to class prepared to engage in dialogue surrounding the issues addressed in the readings and in everyday life. Students will need to think about personal goals for the course to help direct the learning environment. Learning can and should be intellectually challenging and requires hard work and extensive time. Your involvement in helping the course meet your needs will be assessed throughout the semester.

- Students will reflect on historical contexts and current issues and trends of North American fraternities and sororities
- Students will learn to articulate values, qualities, and skills important to leadership positions
- Students will learn how to work collaboratively with others and how to seek feedback from others
- Students will explore issues of power, culture, ethics and personal responsibility
- Students will develop an expanded awareness of diversity and develop a deeper understanding of societal influences on diversity as they relate to North American fraternities and sororities
- Students will enhance their written and oral communication skills through reading responses, written assignments, quizzes, and class presentations
- Students will be able to learn and think critically about legal issues
- Students will learn how to exhibit behaviors that promote a healthy community and how to challenge behaviors that compromise the safety and well being of others
- Students will learn how to be effective change agents
- Students will learn to apply leadership skills to complex local and national issues

- Students will have fun!

### **REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:**

- Since this course provides a holistic exploration of the fraternity and sorority movement, there is no one text required for the course. All readings will be posted on the D2L site.

### **USING D2L:**

Desire2Learn (D2L) is a web-based course management system designed to create a rich online learning environment for students. D2L includes features such as an electronic dropbox, automated gradebook, discussion boards, and quizzes.

Steps for logging into D2L:

1. Open up an internet browser (i.e. Internet Explorer, Firefox, etc.)
2. Go to <http://d2l.arizona.edu>
3. Click on NetID button in the upper left corner of the screen
4. Log in using the same information you use for UA Webmail

For other additional tips on D2L use this link

<http://help.d2l.arizona.edu/StudentTools/Tipsheet/StudentTipSheet.htm>

Steps for accessing the readings on D2L:

1. Follow the steps above to login to D2L.
2. Click on **Content** on the menu bar.
3. A list of readings by week will appear. Click on the reading for each week to access the document.

**COURSE FORMAT:** Each class will be a two hour and thirty minute segment with a 10 minute break during the class period. Methods of instruction will include experiential learning, course readings, small group activities, video clips, and guest speakers. Community building activities will be utilized in an attempt to open dialogue among students. Hands-on activities will often be utilized as learning tools. This will be a very interactive and dynamic class. Learning in this class will require students to be active participants in the learning process. It is imperative that students come to class prepared to engage in dialogue surrounding the leadership principles addressed in the readings and in everyday life. Learning can and should be intellectually challenging and requires hard work and extensive time. By the end of the term, students will be expected to relate the principles from the lectures, activities, and readings to their own experiences with fraternities and sororities.

### **COURSE POLICIES:**

#### **GENERAL COURSE POLICIES**

- Students are expected to turn off cell phones and keep them out of sight during class.
- Students who chose to bring laptops to class should use them to take notes or for course related work. They should not be used to check facebook or other non-course related sites.
- Information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grading and absence policies, may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

#### **CLASS PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE**

A key learning tool for this class is weekly participation in discussions and exercises. It is important that students attend class, and actively participate in all class discussions, exercises, and special outside activities. Participation in class discussions is important. In order to participate in discussions, you should complete all assigned readings before class and be prepared to offer your opinion of and reactions to the readings. The input of each student is valued and valuable.

Your attendance for the full class period is expected and you are responsible for everything that is covered, distributed, or announced during class. If an absence is unavoidable, you should arrange with a classmate to receive handouts and announcements. **There are no unexcused absences.**

- Students arriving late to class or leaving early will be penalized attendance/participation points relative to how tardy or how early the student leaves.
- Students with **three** or more absences are unlikely to earn a grade higher than a B.
- Students who are absent are expected to be responsible for materials covered during their absence, and are required to complete and submit course assignments either in person or via e-mail on or before the class time on their due date.
- Students who plan to miss class should notify the instructor.
- Students who have class on a religious holiday and need to miss class to observe this holiday may do so if they notify the instructor at least **2 weeks** in advance of the absence.
- Absences pre-approved by the UA Dean of Students (or Dean's designee) will be honored.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS**

If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with me. I would like us to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. If you determine that formal, disability-related accommodations are necessary, it is very important that you be registered with Disability Resources (621-3268; [drc.arizona.edu](http://drc.arizona.edu)) and notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. We can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.

### **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

The University of Arizona observes a Code of Academic Integrity, which demands that all material submitted by a student is the student's own work. This also pertains to a student doing his/her own work on all tests and quizzes. Failure to comply with this code will result in disciplinary sanctions. A complete copy of this code is available from the Office of the Dean of Students or the Committee on Academic Integrity.

### **THREATENING BEHAVIOR**

Threatening Behavior is prohibited. "Threatening behavior" means any statement, communication, conduct or gesture, including those in written form, directed toward any member of the University community that causes a reasonable apprehension of physical harm to a person or property. A student can be guilty of threatening behavior even if the person who is the object of the threat does not observe or receive it, so long as a reasonable person would interpret the maker's statement, communication, conduct or gesture as a serious expression of intent to physically harm.

### **ASSIGNMENTS:**

Assignments are due during class on the dates listed on the syllabus. **Late assignments will be accepted with a penalty of one letter grade for each day the assignment is late unless we have made other arrangements prior to class.** Late assignments may receive little or no written feedback. Unless otherwise instructed, all assignments must be typed, double-spaced, using 12-pt Times New Roman font.

### **Reflective Responses on D2L**

You will be asked to post a reflective response on the course D2L site **6 times** throughout the course of the semester. You will choose the readings that you want to respond to, but your response must be posted **by the start of class** during the week of your chosen post. The response will be a typed reflection that connects the week's readings, course material, and real-life experiences. In other words, response postings are a means by which to clarify, examine, digest, and react to the course readings. Some more specific possibilities for the content of these postings include: a) identifying a common question posed in the readings and comparing and contrasting the approach of different authors to that question; b) offering a critique of an argument by clarifying an author's assumptions (stated or unstated) and their consequences; c) examining and evaluating the beliefs of a theory or

concept. Your response may have just a one sentence opening and closing rather than a fully developed introduction and conclusion. However, you do need to engage critically with the readings in specific, focused ways.

Tips for writing reading reflections:

- Identify a specific, focused question at the start of the reflection and think carefully about what to write, as well as what not to write.
- Choose strong examples from the readings to pose your questions and support your points (you don't need a reference list, but be sure to use in-text citations).
- **Don't simply summarize the author's argument.**
- Avoid long quotes.

### **In- Class Reflective Responses**

Occasionally throughout the semester, you will be asked to respond in class to the readings. This will occur at random so it is important to read each week and to attend class. You will not be able to access the readings during this in-class reflection so it is important to read weekly even if you know you are not posting a response on D2L. A question will be posed at the start of class to help focus your in-class response. You will have about 20 minutes to respond to the question and demonstrate a thorough understanding of the readings.

### **Discussion Leads**

There will be 10 discussion lead days over the course of the semester. Students will select a day to act as the discussion lead. Each student pair/group will come up with discussion questions and lead the reading discussion during one class session. Discussions should last 30 minutes. There is no required format for the discussions; you can be as creative as you like in how you present the material for discussion. This can include any or all of the following: presenting information, leading a discussion, doing an activity, showing a video, role play etc. If you plan to use more than the allotted 30 minutes you will need to seek permission ahead of your discussion date. The discussion session you facilitate will be assigned at the beginning of the semester. **No make-ups for Discussion Leads.** Students will be evaluated on their effectiveness in integrating the day's reading assignments and presenting the material, their ability to facilitate activities/discussion effectively, and their ability to engage the class.

### **Current Event**

There will be 12 current event presentations on class dates over the course of the semester. As individuals, students will select a day, in advance, to present a current news story from a credible news source. The news story that is presented should relate to the week's course topic. The presentation should include a summary of the news story: Who, What, Where, When, and How? The presenter should discuss how the article or video relates/expands on the weekly course topic. The current event story must be from within the past twelve months of the presentation date. The presentation should not last longer than 15 minutes. In addition to the presentation, the news story should be turned in along with the summary and a reference page for the story.

### **Reflection Papers**

*Purpose:* Research has shown that when students take time to reflect on their experiences and the knowledge they have gained from various learning processes that they are more likely to gain a deeper understanding of the concepts they have learned. Reflection has also been shown to lead to increases in critical thinking and self-awareness.

*Guidelines:* Over the course of the semester you will be asked to write two reflection papers. As you write these guided reflections you should draw upon the readings, knowledge gained from your case study, class discussions, and personal experiences. Your reflections should be insightful and demonstrate your ability to reflect on your personal experiences, while incorporating the knowledge you have gained from this course. Each reflection piece should be about 3- 4 pages in length. Please remember to include references and in text citations if you are referring to an idea or concept that is not your own; however it is not necessary to have supporting references for your first reflection.

The topic for your first reflection will be: “Do you believe that your/the fraternity & sorority experience has better prepared you/members to be a citizen in a global society? Please thoroughly explain why you chose your answer.

There are several topics you can select from for your final reflection paper. This reflection paper should include references. They are:

- a) “What are the limitations to Greek-letter organizations survival on a college campus? Are Greek-letter organizations still relevant? If so, to who? Will they continue to exist in another 100 years?”
- b) “Do you buy what you sell? When you are talking to those who are not Greek and explaining your values-based organizations, do you believe you are selling the truth, or have our values-based organizations taken on an identity that is more like the stereotype?”
- c) “Culturally-based fraternities, sororities and governing councils are popping up on college campuses around the country, demonstrating an obvious need for this type of organization. Why do you believe there is a need for this type of Greek-letter organization and how can Greek communities come together to support these organizations?”
- d) “Chapter advisors who are trained by their national organization, committed to their role as an advisor, and connected to the students in the chapter are few and far between. Why do you believe this is the case? If chapter advisors were more connected to the undergraduate students, do you think this would influence the character of Greek-letter organizations? If so, how?”

### **Quiz**

An in-class 25 question quiz will be administered. The quiz will cover Greek terminology, and the history of Greek-letter organizations.

### **In Class Case Study**

*Purpose:* Greek Life professionals and Greek student leaders are often called upon to prepare written documents or respond to interview questions or crisis situations involving Greek students or Greek chapters. Since senior level administrators, faculty, or un-affiliated students with little experience regarding Greek life often read these papers/articles or observe the actions of Greek students it becomes important to be able to present both written and oral arguments clearly, concisely, and convincingly (with appropriate support).

*Guidelines:* You will be divided into small teams to present a response to a case study that is focused on a topic/issue related to the North American Fraternity and Sorority Movement. The case study your team is given will be a realistic situation that Greek student leaders may encounter. You will be provided with an outline for presenting your response to the case. There will be one in-class case study and you must be present in class the day of the case study. Therefore, if you are absent the day of the case study competition you will not be able to make up the points.

A handout discussing the format for the case study and a grading rubric will be provided to you at the same time you receive the case. Your ability to utilize information from the course readings, as well as your critical thinking ability will be critical when presenting your case. Teams will be formed in class 3 weeks before the case studies are presented. You will draw for a time slot to present your case and will need to attend class, as usual, the day of the case study in order to support and learn from the other teams. You will receive the case 3 weeks before the presentation.

## **POINT DISTRIBUTION AND GRADING STANDARDS**

### **Assignments & Point Values**

Class Participation/Attendance	75 points (5 points per class)
Reflective Responses on D2L	60 points (6 at 10 points each)
In Class Reflections	40 points (4 at 10 points each)
Discussion Leads	25 points
Greek History and Terminology Quiz	50 points
Current Event	25 points
Reflection Papers	100 points (2 at 50 points each)
In Class Case Study	150 points

### **Grade Scale**

A	= 473-525
B	= 420-472
C	= 368-419
D	= 315-367
E	= < 315

## CRITICAL ISSUES IN GREEK LIFE

Date	Tentative Schedule (Subject to change)
WEEK #1 JANUARY 11TH	Welcome, Class Introductions, Introduction to course, Overview of Syllabus, Class Contracts, and Class Norms, Reference Citations Overview
WEEK # 2 JANUARY 18TH	History of Greek-letter organizations, History of American Colleges and Universities, History of Student Affairs/Greek-life professionals, Greek Terminology  Reading: Komives, Woodard, et. al. "Student Services" p. 65-67 Whipple, E & Murphy, R. "Chapter 11, Student Activities" p. 298-316 skip 311&312
WEEK #3 JANUARY 25 <sup>TH</sup>	Leadership, 5 Practices of Exemplary Leadership, Ethics and Leadership  Reading: Kouzes & Posner, "The 5 Practices of Exemplary Leadership" Mathiasen, R. "A Fraternity's Impact on Member's Moral Development."  <b>Discussion Lead Day 1 and Current Event Day 1</b>
WEEK #4 FEBRUARY 1ST	Understanding Values, Values Based Organizations, Values Movement in Greek Life  Reading: King, E. "Secret Thoughts of a Ritual" Khu, G. et al., "The questionable value of fraternities?" "A Call for Values Congruence" use this link <a href="http://www.fraternityadvisors.org/uploads/publicdocuments/callforvaluescongruence.pdf">http://www.fraternityadvisors.org/uploads/publicdocuments/callforvaluescongruence.pdf</a>  <b>Current Event Day 2</b> <b>Submit: Reflection Paper #1</b> <b>Bring your own organizations' creed, motto, values, mission statement etc.</b>
WEEK #5 FEBRUARY 8TH	Intro: What are the critical issues facing Greek Life? <b>Quiz- History of Greek-letter organizations and terminology</b>  Reading: Asel, A., Seifert, T. & Pascarella. "The effects of fraternity/sorority membership on college experiences and outcomes: A portrait of complexity." Whipple, E. & Sullivan, E. "Greek Letter Organizations: Community of learners?"  <b>Submit: Discussion Lead Day 2 and Current Event Day 3</b>
WEEK #6 FEBRUARY 15 <sup>TH</sup>	Multiculturalism and Diversity in Greek Life: Cultural Movements and Changes to College Campuses, Historically Black Colleges and Universities and NPHC The Development of NALFO  Reading: Ross- "Beginnings of Alpha Phi Alpha" Kimbrough, W. "Are you paper?" Boschini, V. & Thompson, C. "The future of the Greek experience: Greeks and diversity."  <b>Discussion Lead Day 3 and Current Event Day 4</b>
WEEK #7 FEBRUARY 22ND	Multiculturalism and Diversity in Greek Life Cont.: The Development Multi-cultural and Multi- Interest Greek Letter Organizations, Veterans involved in GLO, Emergence of GLBT Greek Letter Organizations & Current Practices Within Greek Life that Create Barriers

	<p>Reading: Thomas- “Silent Rituals, Raging Hearts”  Ana, C. “Muslims, sororities exploring common ground.”  Danielson, Emilee. “Starting the conversation: Fraternity and sorority soldiers.”</p> <p><b>Submit: Discussion Lead Day 4 and Current Event Day 5</b></p>
<p>WEEK #8  FEBRUARY 29TH</p>	<p>Hazing, Group Think and Conformity, Bystander Effect</p> <p>Reading: Land, B. “Goat a memoir.”  Grassgreen, Allie. “Hazing Beyond the Frat House.”</p> <p><b>Discussion Lead Day 5 and Current Event Day 6</b></p>
<p>WEEK #9  MARCH 7TH</p>	<p>Violence, and Sexual Assault &amp; Bystander Effect</p> <p>Dilbeck, Mike. “From Bystander Behavior to Intervention.” p.4-7  Foubert, John. “Conquering Rape: A Men’s Issue”</p> <p><b>Discussion Lead Day 6 and Current Event Day 7</b></p>
<p>WEEK #10  MARCH 21ST</p>	<p>Risk Management and Liability  The Role of Chapter Advisors &amp; Greek Alumni</p> <p>Reading: Hennessy, N. &amp; Huson, L. “Legal Issues and Greek Letter Organizations.”  Bureau, Daniel, “Advisor P.R.E.P.”  Searcy, Beth, “Retaining Chapter Advisors.”</p> <p><b>Discussion Lead Day 7 and Current Event Day 8</b></p>
<p>WEEK #11  MARCH 28TH</p>	<p>Alcohol and Drug Abuse in Greek-letter organizations</p> <p>Reading: Zailckas, K. “Smashed, a story of a drunken girlhood.”  Ebert, L. H. “Alcohol and Risk Management Education: Pi Kappa Phi’s Approach”  Turning R.J. &amp; Thomas, N.P. “Ten-Plus Years: Alcohol-Free Housing within Phi Delta Theta</p> <p>Case study groups assigned and case study distributed</p> <p><b>Discussion Lead Day 8 and Current Event Day 9</b></p>
<p>WEEK #12  APRIL 4TH</p>	<p>Accountability, Community Standards, and Judicial Process for Greek-letter organizations</p> <p>Reading: Robbins, “Pledged- The Scope of Authority and Breaking the Rules”  Shonrock, M. “Standards and Expectations for Greek Letter Organizations.”</p> <p><b>Discussion Lead Day 9 and Current Event Day 10</b></p>
<p>WEEK #13  APRIL 11TH</p>	<p><b>No Class meet with Case Study Group</b></p>
<p>WEEK #14  APRIL 18TH</p>	<p><b>CASE STUDY</b></p>

<p>WEEK #15 APRIL 25TH</p>	<p>Community, Changing the Culture of Greek organizations</p> <p>Reading: Cobb, M. &amp; McRee, M. "Why we should close more chapters." Peck, "The Different Drum: Community Making and Peace"</p> <p><b>Discussion Lead Day 10 and Current Event Day 11</b></p>
<p>WEEK #16 MAY 2ND</p>	<p>Fraternal Relevance</p> <p>Shertzer, J. "The Right Questions of Relevance." Bureau, D. "Making Your Mark on the Fraternal Relevance Movement."</p> <p>Course Evaluations</p> <p><b>Discussion Lead Day 11 and Current Event Day 12</b></p>
<p>WEEK #16 FINAL MAY 4<sup>TH</sup> 1-3PM SABINO ROOM</p>	<p><b>Submit: Reflection Paper #2</b></p>