

AKPsi Risk Prevention Program

General Module

Case Study #1



Alpha Kappa Psi is recognized as the premier developer of principled business leaders.

The Gamma Alpha chapter of Alpha Kappa Psi has a traditional pledge activity known as “Southern Comfort Night.” The activity is designed to teach the pledges fraternity history in a fun way. The event is set up as a contest between one team made up of the pledges and another team made up of the big brothers. Each team has a copy of the fraternity’s Pledge Education Program manual and gets to look through it and pick out a history question for any member they choose of the other team. The person answering the question cannot look in the manual nor can he be assisted by his fellow teammates. Usually both teams try to target the person on the other team who they think knows the least fraternity history and usually try to pick obscure or trick questions. To reinforce the concept of pledge class and member unity, if the selected team member answers the question incorrectly, all members of the team must drink a shot of Southern Comfort.

There’s a catch to the game, however. The bottles of Southern Comfort used by the student members are actually a mixture of non-alcoholic juices and soft drinks concocted so that the color matches the color of Southern Comfort almost exactly. The fun of the game is the student members watching the pledges get slowly plastered while the members remain sober. To add to the ruse, the student members pretend to be getting slowly wasted.

This year’s Southern Comfort Night was a blast. As usual, the big brother team won. The pledges missed 18 questions (meaning they each drank 18 shots of Southern Comfort) and the big brothers only missed 12 questions. The pledges all ended up pretty drunk and the student members enjoyed watching the pledges make fools of themselves. Since the big brothers were fairly sober (although they did pass around a real bottle of Southern Comfort so they could at least get a little buzzed), they walked the little brothers to their apartments or residence halls to make sure they arrived home safely.

The following morning, Kevin Miller, president of Alpha Kappa Psi gets a telephone call from the residence hall coordinator at one of the freshman halls. He is told that Sam Murphy, one of the Alpha Kappa Psi pledges was found passed out in his bed and rushed to the hospital. He apparently had vomited during the night.

- Outline the steps you would take in the next hour to handle this crisis. The next 48 hours?
- How will you handle the media?
- How will you interact with the family of the hospitalized member?
- How could this crisis have been prevented?
- What, if any, policy violations occurred in this incident?
- What alternative ways to learn fraternity history could be utilized?