Office of Fraternity Sorority Life
President’s Retreat—Fall 2011

Crisis Management Exercise

Copyright 2011 SReikofski
Crisis Management Exercise

As a chapter president or executive officer OR as a governing council officer, it is very possible you will face various crises that arise. It is your responsibility to stay calm, think clearly, and to lead your brothers or sisters through the crisis.
Crisis Management Exercise

This exercise will give you the opportunity to hear about real crisis situations that have occurred on this campus in the past few years. Luckily, at least this time, you will have a small group of others with whom you can consult to determine the best way to address the situation. In situations like these, though, you must think clearly and quickly. Therefore in this exercise you will only have
Crisis Management Exercise

Break into small groups. Each group will have a short description of a crisis situation.

Your task as a group is to determine the best way to handle the situation. Who needs to be notified? And in what order? What other action should be taken? What should be carefully documented? By whom? When? What could have been done to prevent or minimize this situation?

Be ready to present your decisions and plan of action, including why you have decided that these are the best plans of action in handling this situation.

Because you usually have only a minute or two to respond to an emergency, you and your group will only have 4 minutes to plot out your course of action.
Crisis Management Exercise

Scenario A

• As chapter president, you have gone away for a couple of days, and you return on Saturday evening only to discover that, unbeknownst to you until now, the brothers have planned an unregistered party. Your chapter doesn’t have a chapter house, but several brothers share a house off campus and the party as the chapter’s name on it. The party has escalated in size and scope so that the party is active throughout the entire house and has spilled out onto the front lawn and into the neighbor’s properties on both sides of the house. Suddenly you hear several people scream and you run out to discover that a couple of guys, one brother and one guest had fallen, apparently from the roof, onto the ground in front of the house. They are breathing and conscious but in a great deal of pain and it is unclear the extent of their injuries.
Crisis Management Exercise

Scenario B

• Your chapter has planned for months to have a registered party to celebrate founders day—75 years at Penn. You and your officers have been diligent in trying to do everything by the book and have a well managed party. As things happen, your party also happens to coincide with the weekend that Penn wins in the first round of the NCAA basketball playoffs, advancing to the next round, so everyone is celebrating in Penn style! As you are sober-monitoring through the party, someone calls you over and has found a woman who is nearly unconscious, obviously drunk beyond any level of coordination or muscular function. As you ask around, you find out that this woman is actually a high school junior who is visiting the campus for the weekend and was brought to the party by her campus host who is across the room partying.
Scenario C

Your chapter has just gotten off of probation with your national headquarters for risk management violations. You are happy and proud of the work that you and your executive board have done to ramp up the education and awareness within the sisterhood relative to risk management issues. Things are going pretty well now.

As you prepare to go to class Wednesday morning, you look out your bedroom window and see that it is cold and the snow that fell Monday night and Tuesday is still on the ground. As you come down the stairs and prepare to put on your coat to head to class, you notice that there is a police car and an ambulance in front of your house. You go out to see what is going on, only to discover that a 57 year old woman has fallen on the ice outside your house. As you look around it is obvious that people coming and going from the house for the last day or two have trampled the snow into a slick sheet of ice on the sidewalk, and the woman now being treated has slipped on the ice and fallen. The EMTs say that she has at least one broken bone in her arm and multiple contusions on the right side of her body.
It is the end of February, and your chapter has done a stellar job with rush and is about to wrap up new member education. Initiation is in 8 days for the largest new member class in chapter history. You are in Van Pelt in a study group when you get a call on your cell phone from your Vice President. He tells you that three of the new members and two sorority pledges are at HUP ER. Apparently they are all very inebriated and one of the new members and a one of the sorority pledges had been staggering across Walnut Street when they tripped and fell over each other and were hit by a car. They are alive and there are no SERIOUS injuries, but they are injured and likely to be admitted in the next hour. The only other thing that he knows at this point is that beyond those who accompanied the injured to the hospital, the rest of the new member class is no where to be found. Apparently a few of the older brothers and their girlfriends had taken it upon themselves to take the entire pledge class “out” for the evening. These brothers that had arranged this excursion are now back at the house and have locked themselves up in a brothers’ room and aren’t talking to anyone.
You and your executive board have just finished an E-board meeting and you all are just hanging out in the living room of the house when you look out the window onto the walk and see a group of another fraternity’s new members jogging by. They stop in front of your house and start doing some calisthenics. It is pretty clear that this is not their first stop since they are all dirty, sweaty, winded and obviously exhausted. Just as the exercise session stops and they are ready to move on, one of the men collapses on the ground, clearly unconscious.
Crisis Management Exercise

Scenario F

• You have returned home after being out for the evening. Everyone at the house has settled down and started heading to bed. About an hour after you go to bed, you wake up and think you smell smoke. It’s not even a minute later, the smoke alarm goes off. You get up and open your bedroom door and see that smoke is starting to fill the hallway. It looks like it is coming from a bedroom of a brother that you know has gone home for the weekend. His bedroom door is locked so you know that no one is in that room.
Crisis Management Exercise

Scenario G

- You come home from class and find one of your brothers, who is from California, very upset. You do your best to calm him down but to no avail. Through his ranting, though, you are able to determine that his father has died suddenly. He is obviously upset at the loss of his father, but is also extremely upset about other things as well. His mother is totally distraught and when he has talked to her, she isn’t making much sense. He feels like he is failing her by not being there at her side to help and comfort her. Taking of his family is obviously a large part of his concern and frustration. He is on scholarship to Penn and his family doesn’t have much money. He has no idea how he is going to afford to fly home. You are seriously worried about his mental health as well as his family.
Scenario H

You have just arrived back in Philly and the fraternity house after a spring break on the beach in Cancun. You are unpacking, have just ordered a pizza, and start to look around the house to see who else is back when your cell phone rings. Through the sobs on the other end, you recognize the voice of another brother. You immediately start to worry because you know he and three other brothers should be driving back from Daytona. It takes him a while but he explains that he is in the hospital. There had been a car accident and he is injured but will be okay. Then he gives you the news that stuns you—one of the other brothers is currently in surgery, and the other two brothers were killed in the crash.
Crisis Management Exercise

Scenario I

- You are called to the front door of your fraternity house at 2:30am after a party at the chapter house has been cleaned up. UPPD officers are at the door and they inform you that it has been reported that someone was sexually assaulted at the chapter house earlier that evening, and they are taking control of the entire third floor of the house as a crime scene. They won’t tell you anything other than that.
Crisis Management Exercise

Scenario J

- You receive a call from a parent of one of your brothers, who states that they are concerned because they have not heard from their son in several days. As you hang up from that call, a brother who happens to be the roommate of the brother in question says that he found a note from the brother in question that leads him to fear that the brother may be suicidal, and that he has been acting strange lately and has been depressed. The brother is nowhere to be found.
Crisis Management Exercise

Wrap up

• FIRST AND FOREMOST is immediate personal health & safety of everyone involved.
• Notify some OSA/FSL personnel as soon as possible—there may be additional resources that the University has available to help.
• Notify your alumni/ae advisor, or make sure that OSA/FSL will do that for you.
• OSA/FSL will take care of notifying your national.