

CalGreeks and Safety

October 2022

Summary

UC Berkeley is committed to the safety of all students. Our campus actively encourages, supports, and offers leadership training for students within student organizations, including fraternities and sororities. Our approach to infusing safety into the CalGreeks culture is to intensify our leadership development approach, integrate safety into our leadership training, and support student leaders in proactively promoting safety within their organizations. Initiatives build on the core competencies of supporting student-centered learning and cultivating leadership skills, and this work is ongoing.


Background

Since the first fraternity and sorority were established at Berkeley in 1870 and 1880, respectively, these organizations have provided an opportunity for students to be leaders and find community. Today, as part of leadership development, specially trained staff provide advising, training, and support to enhance ongoing services and create new initiatives designed to infuse safety into the CalGreeks culture. The work is being done in close collaboration with the CalGreeks community to best ensure increased awareness of safety and safety practices.

A multipronged approach has been taken to embed safety into CalGreeks culture. This includes education and training, safety-focused projects supported by University and CalGreek funding sources, information-sharing and coordination between departments and organizations, and student-initiated policies and leadership focusing on safety.

Information Sharing and Coordination

UC Berkeley provides direct services to the CalGreeks community and coordinates between multiple departments to support safety. CalGreeks leaders, Student Affairs professionals, and UC Berkeley departments responsible for safety meet regularly to share information and provide educational support to CalGreeks leadership.



Coordination: Weekly or biweekly communication occurs between the Leadership, Advising, and Development (LEAD) Center (the office supporting student leadership, including the CalGreeks community), Berkeley Police Department, and Berkeley Fire Department enabling the groups to share information and coordinate services. For example, police can be notified of specific events where people will be walking at night so that patrol is informed.

The four CalGreeks Councils, which comprise all recognized fraternity and sorority chapters, meet regularly with LEAD Center staff. During these meetings, staff provides advice and guidance on various subjects, including chapter operations, financial management, chapter leadership development, and sharing resources and education on sexual assault, alcohol abuse, and hazing. Staff also respond to ad hoc requests for support from individuals and groups and provide crisis and emergency management and resources. This consistent collaboration has resulted in real policy change within the fraternity and sorority community, including policies on alcohol abuse at parties, required sexual assault training, and the development of officer positions in the governing councils focused on safety, which will be discussed in more detail below.

Emergency Alerts: Emergency alerts are disseminated to chapter members and used as an opportunity to reinforce policies and messages about preventing and responding to criminal activities such as underage drinking, alcohol poisoning, hazing, and sexual assault, as well as emergency preparedness such as wildfires and power shut-offs.

Education

Ongoing education is a centerpiece of creating a cultural shift in terms of sexual assault and alcohol safety within the Greek community. These include training and information for leaders, mandatory education for members, and special education programs and events.

Education and Information for CalGreeks Leaders

Train-the-Trainer/Leader Events: Train-the-Trainer events take place each semester. These include Social Risk Management training for all chapter presidents, social chairs, and risk managers. Topics covered include sexual assault prevention, alcohol consumption and risk, BYOB and event policies, and event themes/cultural appropriation. Leadership development training is embedded with safety information. For example, formal training on risk management integrates information on safety issues, such as sexual assault, alcohol abuse, and hazing.

CalGreeks leaders and members are also provided with information about additional resources available through the campus and community by the LEAD Center. Examples include the Tang University Health Services, PATH to Care Center, UC Berkeley and Berkeley Police Departments, and the Berkeley Fire Department.

Mandatory Education Requirements

Mandatory Sexual Assault Prevention Training: The Interfraternity and Panhellenic Councils require sexual assault prevention training for all members each semester. The LEAD Center works closely with these organizations and the PATH to Care office to ensure these educational sessions take place and are effective. In addition, GASA, Greeks Against Sexual Assault — a student organization — has taken a peer-led approach in educating the community.

These CalGreeks-specific programs supplement the Berkeley-wide programs required of all students, including sororities and fraternities. All Berkeley students must take an online training on sexual assault and harassment prevention, an additional online training on alcohol safety, and an in-person presentation with an interactive component on sexual assault and harassment, mental health, and alcohol abuse. Students who do not complete these required training by the deadlines face registration blocks and will not be able to register for classes for the spring semester.

Educational Events

UC Berkeley offers services, training, and programs to all students, in which CalGreeks members participate. An example is Bears That Care, a bystander intervention education program. In addition, the CalGreeks organization has initiated educational forums and has joined in annual awareness events. These educational programs and events leverage the student-as-leader/student self-educator approach to embed safety into the CalGreeks culture. Examples of educational events include a forum on healthy relationships, sexual assault awareness month, and hazing prevention week.

Sexual Assault Awareness Month: During the spring semester, campus and community partners provide programming, which has included a survivors symposium, an open mic session on “breaking the silence,” and many events relating to sexual assault prevention, to create a stronger culture of consent and to share how to best support survivors. Targeted messaging is sent to the CalGreeks community, inviting them to the various programming. Additionally, targeted educational messages on consent, available resources, and how best to support survivors are also sent to the CalGreeks community.

Hazing prevention week: Each September, the CalGreeks community and the LEAD Center work with various campus departments to send out targeted educational messages on hazing. The LEAD Center is working closely with the Hazing Prevention Collaborative to develop policies, prevention education, and resources on hazing. Additionally, the LEAD Center works closely with the Center for Student Conduct regarding any concerns, complaints, or hazing allegations.

Funding for Safety-Related Projects

UC Berkeley and the CalGreeks community have made funding available for special projects that enhance safety on campus.

Chancellor's Community Partnership Fund: This fund has supported the safety program *Every Bear Goes Home* to the CalGreeks community. Developed and run through the Berkeley Fire Department, the goal is to reduce the loss of life and injury by promoting safe party practices in the UC Berkeley community.

Policies and Leadership

As part of the effort to embed safety into the culture, CalGreeks have established policies and created leadership roles focusing on health, safety, and well-being.

Alcohol Policies and Practices:

CalGreeks student leadership is actively working to create a culture of responsibility around alcohol. The IFC voted to impose escalating financial penalties on their members that break alcohol rules. The IFC has set a limit on the number of social events a chapter can hold during the semester. In addition, the IFC created an IFC-wide Standards/Judicial Committee, which is composed of appointed students charged with ensuring organizational compliance with council regulations. The IFC and PHC also support the CalGreeks Alcohol Taskforce (CAT) as they conduct a walk on the weekends to check on all registered fraternity events.

Leadership Messages: University and CalGreeks leaders have sent formal messages to CalGreeks members, alumni, and headquarters staff, unequivocally condemning sexual violence, supporting a culture of safety and accountability, and publicizing policies about sexual assault.

Executive Officers to Promote Safety: The Interfraternity and Panhellenic Councils created Vice President for Health and Safety positions to address issues of health and safety across the community, and Vice President of Community Development positions, to address issues around diversity and inclusion. The LEAD Center continues to provide advice, counsel, and leadership development to all council officers, with attention to these student leaders along with the Vice President of Risk Management positions.