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Title: Racial conflicts between Fraternities and Sororities

Specific Purpose: To persuade students that SJSU sororities and fraternities should undergo racial sensitivity training.

INTRODUCTION

- I. Attention Getter: In 1986, the first black sorority by the name of Alpha Kappa Alpha joined "sorority row" which primarily consisted of white sororities, and as a result someone put a burning cross on their lawn to exemplify the fact that they were unwelcome (Emily Domrose).
- II. Thesis: Sororities and Fraternities on college campuses should be required to undergo racial sensitivity training prior to initiation into the organization in order to prevent further segregation within the Greek System.
- III. Credibility: Being a member of the Greek System at San Jose State, I have come to learn that acceptance is key. The Greek System was created solely to provide a strong support system for students going through a time of change and crucial development in their lives.

[Transition:] To this day there still remains segregation between white and multicultural organizations.

BODY

- I. **Problem:** There were various controversial racial incidents pertaining to Sororities and Fraternities at different college campuses and they should at no point feel unwelcome in any chapter, no matter their ethnicity.
- A. An incident at Santa Clara University took place regarding discriminatory statements against latinos, "If a Latino were to join a regular fraternity, it would be awkward," said Oscar Lopez of Sigma Lambda Beta, a predominately Latino fraternity.
 - B. A chapter of a fraternity at the University of Vermont was suspended by the university for sending recruits on a "scavenger hunt" with a mission to harass minority students (Emily Domrose).
 - C. A third incident took place in the year of 2010, where the sorority Alpha Phi, a white sorority at the University "threw a hip-hop/rap themed party in which partygoers dressed in bandanas, sports jerseys and a pimp outfit." This extremely offended those associated with the multicultural community, even though Alpha Phi denied any intention of being racist. (Emily Domrose).
 - D. At Princeton University, 88 percent of the Greek Life is white, and 70 percent of Greeks come from families that make more than \$150,000 a year (Miranda Lewis).
- II. **Cause:** The history of the Greek System plays a large role in the reason as to why there may be discrimination and segregation between whites and minorities within the system.
- A. The Founding Fathers created each of the chapters in the Greek System to be shaped in a certain way, and individuals of these chapters have continued to mimic those same ideals. Historically, whites tended to join the same chapters, and those of color tended to join the same chapters, so it has been this way since the start of the system.
 - B. Amber Hamby, The Vice President of Marketing for Sigma Lambda Gamma says, "I feel the Greek system is divided because it is based on tradition, and after passing these traditions on for hundreds of years, most see no reason to change what their

- founders and others have created for them" (Brittney Knox).
- C. "At University of Alabama, Kimberly McCord, a black junior who hopes to join a black sorority, says that none of her black friends are interested in joining white sororities" (Emily Domrose). While joining the organization of a different skin color is possible, some individuals claim that they would inevitably feel excluded and unwelcome.
 - D. At the University of Alabama, the Greek life consists of 21 percent of the campus, and of that 21 percent there is little to no integration between races. It became so severe that the school decided to implement self-assessment surveys, asking precisely what good-faith attempts they have made to integrate (NY Times).

- III. Solution:** All members of the Greek chapters should be required to go through racial sensitivity training before they become initiated into the organization. This way, the likelihood of segregation and discrimination in the Greek system will hopefully decrease.
- A. By going through a process such as this one, members of the Greek System will learn to be more accepting and sensitive to the fact that we are all individuals and we have no control over the color of our skin. This process could only lead to good things, such as uniting the Greek System and eliminating some, if not all discrimination.
 - B. Although multicultural and white fraternities and sororities have a different process of recruitment, which may be something that skews peoples' decision of whether or not to join, this is something that is out of our hands and we cannot control. Something within our reach would precisely be this specific training because it is not only a drastic measure, but it is a very good start to reuniting the Greek community.

CONCLUSION

Summary of main points: Although we may have a significant amount of segregation in the Greek system to this day, it is nothing that cannot be solved. Even though our founding fathers created each chapter to be molded a certain way, they did not have intentions of excluding people because of their skin color. They simply formed their own group based on vast similarities between themselves and their peers, and color happened to be one of them. Fortunately, there is a very reachable goal, and facile solution to this entire problem, and that being for the entire Greek community to hold a racial sensitivity training to expose each and everyone to the different backgrounds of the chapters.

Clincher: At San Jose State, we pride ourselves on the diversity of our community, so we must uphold these strong values and continue to generate them in the Greek community.

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