

# WHAT WORKS

## for Fraternity and Sorority Success and Safety



*We are announcing the expansion of the What Works for Fraternity and Sorority Success and Safety Study (What Works Study or WWS) and Community of Practice (CoP) with a start date of July 1, 2024. Please consider joining the second cohort.*

### Executive Summary

The formal study name, Creating Communities of Practice to Address Campus Hazing and Hazardous Drinking and Other Resulting Behaviors in Fraternity and Sorority Life, highlights the study's focus on the intersection of hazing and alcohol misuse as well as associated issues. The study draws from the Gordie Center's APPLE Model, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Strategic Prevention Framework, and StopHazing's Hazing Prevention Framework. The study adds and emphasizes a clinical lens to campus prevention, referring to the precision in both the use of data, the design of programs, and the implementation of programs with the highest fidelity.

Designed with top prevention and content experts from behavioral health, psychology, and higher education, the What Works Study invites campuses to combine a prevention and data-driven approach to designing, implementing, assessing, and revising programs that lead to measurable changes in student attitudes, motivations, and behaviors. To assist practitioners in implementing hazing policies and programs, the tandem Community of Practice provides consistent professional development and resources for study participants.

The study aims create and improve comprehensive hazing prevention programs through incremental and manageable steps focused on prevention practices that target specific issues and needs. Through the application of grounded evidence and the involvement of prevention and intervention experts, campuses develop custom strategies through an iterative process. The project will improve hazing prevention data utilization, intentionality, and goal achievement.

### Study Design

Participating campuses must assign to the project at least two students, one staff member from fraternity and sorority life, and one from the prevention field to manage implementation of high-fidelity practices for three years. Through three checkpoints a year, campuses will be asked to engage with the research team to build relationships and ensure strategies are meeting campus needs. A key benefit of the project is campus-specific reports to help diagnose, implement, and measure efficacy of hazing prevention programs. In summary, the study design highlights:

- Three-year assessment cycle
- Monthly Community of Practice professional development
- Building professional capacity to implement prevention programs with high fidelity
- Developing custom prevention and intervention strategies with experts
- Testing and validating sound professional practices based on empirical data and an emerging framework
- Sharing results from the study to inform professional practice and literature

## Campus Implementation Teams

Each campus is responsible for an Implementation Team. The staff members must represent a fraternity and sorority life staff member and a prevention and intervention specialist and may include additional staff and students. The teams must also develop transition plans for student and staff departures. A Campus Agreement or letter will outline the institutional commitment including:

- Two students and two staff
- Participation in Community of Practice meetings each month
- Full implementation of vetted strategies
- Agreement not to alter strategies during implementation without consultation with the research team

## First Cohort

Current partner campuses in the First WWS Cohort include Baylor University, James Madison University, Louisiana State University, Penn State University, Washington State University, and West Virginia University. The second cohort will join the first for select professional development opportunities.

## Impact Statement

What Works for Fraternity and Sorority Success and Safety Study (WWS) and Community of Practice (CoP) proposes that the application of prevention and intervention research in fraternity and sorority life can be a starting point for positive campus cultural change and will:

- Substantially reduce hazing and substance misuse,
- Fill a gap in the literature on sound professional practices in what creates group behavior change
- Create a new standard for prevention in FSL nationwide

## Cost

Participating campuses pay an estimated \$17,500 per year for three years which includes campus assessment, consultations, and professional development. In-kind contributions from WITH US, the Gordie Center, and the Piazza Center's endowment subsidize research costs.

## Sponsors and Support Team

The WWS and CoP is a partnership of WITH US Center for Bystander Intervention at California Polytechnic State University, the Gordie Center at the University of Virginia, and the Timothy J. Piazza Center for Research and Reform at Penn State University. Respected higher education professionals and prevention research faculty have been recruited to assess and consult with campuses on their prevention and intervention strategies.

To learn more information please email Stevan Veldkamp, Piazza Center, Executive Director ([sv54@psu.edu](mailto:sv54@psu.edu)) for questions and Emily Pride Sutton, WWS Project Coordinator ([ep5791@psu.edu](mailto:ep5791@psu.edu)) to schedule a project orientation session.



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