

ADDRESSING THE POLITICAL TROLL: BALANCING FREE EXPRESSION AND CHAPTER HARMONY



PHI MU DELTA

Every chapter may have a member who takes political discourse too far, becoming disruptive or intentionally provocative. This discussion aims to explore how to address such behavior while still supporting appropriate self-expression and maintaining a respectful chapter environment.

Desired Outcomes



- Identify behaviors that cross the line from healthy political discourse to trolling
- Develop strategies for addressing disruptive political behavior
- Establish guidelines for appropriate political expression within the chapter
- Reinforce the importance of respectful dialogue and chapter unity

Ground Rules for Civil Discourse



1. Listen to understand, not to respond
2. Speak from your own experience using "I" statements
3. Respect others' rights to hold different opinions
4. Avoid personal attacks or generalizations about groups
5. Seek common ground and shared values
6. Be open to changing your perspective



Remember, the goal is to find a balance that respects individual expression while maintaining a positive chapter environment. This discussion should help us develop strategies to address disruptive behavior constructively while reinforcing our values of mutual respect and brotherhood/sisterhood.

Discussion Questions

How would you define a "Political Troll"? What behaviors cross the line from passionate discussion to trolling?

Have you witnessed or experienced political trolling? How did it affect you or others?

Why do you think some members might engage in political trolling? What needs or desires might they be trying to fulfill?

How can we distinguish between provocative but genuine political expression and intentional trolling to upset others?

How could political trolling impact our chapter's unity and sense of brotherhood/sisterhood?



How can we address political trolling while maintaining an environment that supports the free expression of diverse viewpoints?

What role should chapter leadership play in addressing political trolling? What about the role of general members?

How can we create appropriate venues or forums for members to express strong political views without disrupting chapter harmony?

What strategies can we use to de-escalate situations when political discussions become too heated or cross into trolling territory?

How can we support members who feel targeted or upset by political trolling without stifling political discussion altogether?

How can we encourage passionate political engagement among our members while discouraging trolling behaviors?



CIRCLE is an independent research organization focused on youth civic engagement in the United States. It conducts extensive research on youth participation to improve opportunities for all young people to learn the skills they need to participate in civic life, with a focus on addressing systemic barriers for marginalized and underrepresented youth.



Phi Mu Delta stands out among fraternities for its founding principle of democracy. Since its establishment in 1918, this brotherhood has been dedicated to shaping young college men into future ethical community leaders, emphasizing the importance of civic engagement and local service.