



Sigma Nu Fraternity

EXCELLING WITH HONOR

Here for the Game, not the Gamble Discussion Guide

Today's discussion will raise awareness about the risks of gambling, highlight the potential consequences, and encourage responsible decision-making.

Show participants the *Here for the Game, not the Gamble* poster.

Introduction to Gambling

Start with a simple definition.

- **What is gambling?**
Gambling involves risking money or valuables on an event with an uncertain outcome, with the hope of winning something of greater value.
- **Types of Gambling:**
 - Casino games (poker, blackjack, roulette)
 - Sports betting
 - Online gambling
 - Lottery
 - Slot machines

Discussion question: By a raise of hands, how have you engaged in any form of gambling, either online or in person?

Understanding Gambling Risks

Discuss the various concepts of risk associated with gambling.

- **The odds are not in your favor:** The house always has an advantage in casino games.
- **Addictiveness of gambling:** Gambling can be addictive. Studies show that gambling addiction can affect anyone, even those who initially gamble casually.
- **Escalation of risks:** Some individuals may escalate their gambling behaviors as they chase losses, which increases the potential financial and personal consequences.

Discussion question: Why do you think gambling can be so appealing to people, especially young adults?

Solicit a few participant responses.

Consequences of Gambling

Short-term consequences:

- Financial losses
- Emotional stress (guilt, anxiety, regret)

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- Impact on relationships (strained friendships, conflicts with family)

Long-term consequences:

- **Gambling addiction:** Like substance addiction, gambling addiction can severely disrupt one's personal and professional life.
- **Financial ruin:** Individuals may fall into debt, leading to severe consequences like bankruptcy, loss of property, or illegal activities to fund gambling.
- **Mental health concerns:** Anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts can be triggered or worsened by gambling.

Discussion question: How do you think a gambling addiction might affect a student's daily life or academic performance?

Solicit a few participant responses.

Warning Signs of Gambling Problems

Warning signs will likely include:

- Spending more money or time on gambling than intended
- Borrowing money to gamble or pay off debts
- Feeling distressed, anxious, or upset about gambling
- Hiding gambling activities from friends or family

Discussion question: Have you or someone you know ever shown any of these signs? What might be some early ways to recognize a problem?

Solicit a few participant responses.

Responsible Gambling and Prevention

If you choose to gamble, here are tips to consider to gamble responsibly:

- Set limits before you start: time, money, and emotional investment.
- Never gamble with money you can't afford to lose.
- Take breaks and don't chase losses.
- Seek help if gambling becomes a problem (e.g., counseling, helplines).

Prevention Resources:

- National Gambling Helpline (1-800-522-4700)
- Campus counseling services
- Online resources for self-assessment and support

Discussion question: What can you do to protect yourself or your friends from the risks of gambling?

Solicit a few participant responses.

Conclusion

Summarize the key points:

- Gambling can seem harmless at first, but it has serious risks and consequences.
- It is important to recognize the signs of gambling problems early and seek help if necessary.
- Responsible gambling practices and awareness of your limits can reduce potential harm.

Concluding discussion question: How can we foster a campus culture where students look out for one another and share resources if gambling becomes a concern?