

**Center for Student Leadership  
eLEADER Conflict Resolution**

**Case Studies**

1. To Sink or Swim

Sara and María are respectively the President and Vice-President of the women's club swim team. As the student leaders for this organization they are responsible for all aspects of the management of this club team. These responsibilities include the selection of a volunteer coach, collection of player dues, balancing the budget, scheduling practices and swim meets, maintaining their status in the conference swim team association, as well as meeting their requirements to be a club team at the university.

The majority of the season went very well for the team. Near the end of the season though, the team was required by the university to forfeit one of their meets due to a team member who was treated for alcohol poisoning after attending a team party. Additionally, the team was told that if they had another discipline issue this year they would have to forfeit multiple meets during the upcoming year. Many of the team members understood why the university implemented this sanction, however others didn't and thought the university was overreacting. In particular, Sara was one of the members who felt this way and made it known to her teammates.

It is now near the end of the season and traditionally the swim team has had a party to celebrate the successes of the season. Sara, who is a senior, and some of the other members want to purchase a keg for this party. María, who is a junior, wants to have the party but does not want alcohol to be served at the party. Sara is insistent that this is the tradition and that there is nothing wrong with them doing this. María is concerned that something will happen again and the university will learn about this, which would result in sanctions for next year's swim team.

How would respond to this conflict if you were María?

2. Two members of your staff are constantly butting heads. During meetings they criticize each other and during office hours you notice how cold they are with one another. Some staff members think it's not their problem and the problem should be resolved on their own. Although you are hesitant to get involved, you think the problem will only escalate if it's not addressed soon. How should you approach this situation?