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STU-005: Prohibition on Hazing

Date: 10/12/2018 Status: Final Last Revised: 01/21/2022

Policy Type: University

Contact Office: [Dean of Students \(Office of the\), Vice President and Chief Student Affairs Officer \(Office of the\)](#)

Oversight Executive: Vice President and Chief Student Affairs Officer

Applies To:
Academic Division.

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Reason for Policy:

The University is committed to maintaining an educational environment that promotes the health and safety of its students.

Definition of Terms in Statement:

- Hazing:
Any action or situation created by one or more members, advisors, or coaches of a student organization (including athletic teams) toward other organization members or prospective members that intentionally or recklessly threatens or produces mental or physical harassment, humiliation, fatigue, degradation, ridicule, shock, or injury. The action or situation is in connection with initiation, admission, affiliation, or ongoing membership in the organization, may occur with or without the consent of the participants, and may occur on or off University Property.

Examples of actions and situations that may constitute hazing include, but are not limited to, the following*:

- Paddling;
- Kidnapping;
- All forms of physical activity which are used to harass, punish, or harm an individual;
- Forced excursions or road trips;
- Confinement;
- Spraying, painting, or pelting with any substance;
- Burying in any substance;
- Nudity with the intent to cause embarrassment;
- Servitude;
- Exposure to uncomfortable elements;
- Verbal abuse;
- Wearing of apparel that is conspicuous and/or indecent;
- Coerced consumption of alcohol or any other substance, legal or illegal;
- Being forced or coerced to engage in any kind of sexual activity;
- Depriving students of sufficient sleep (six consecutive hours per day is normally considered to be a minimum);
- Coerced burning, branding, or tattooing any part of the body;
- Psychological hazing, defined as any act which is likely to:
 - Compromise an individual's dignity;
 - Cause an individual embarrassment or shame;
 - Cause an individual to be the object of malicious amusement or ridicule; or
 - Cause an individual emotional distress;
- Interrogating an individual in an intimidating or threatening manner;
- Misleading prospective members in an effort to convince them that they will not become members unless they complete tasks, follow instructions, change class/personal schedules, or act in a certain way;
- Misleading prospective members into believing that they will be hurt during induction or initiation;
- Carrying any items (shields, paddles, bricks, hammers, etc.) that serve no constructive purpose or that are designed to punish or embarrass the carrier;
- Blindfolding and parading individuals in public areas, blindfolding and transporting in a motor vehicle, or privately conducting blindfolding activities that serve no constructive purpose;
- Binding or restricting an individual in any way that would prohibit them from moving on their own;
- Requiring or suggesting that an individual obtain or possess items or complete tasks in an unlawful manner (e.g., for a scavenger hunt); and
- Prohibiting an individual from social contact or from associating with other individuals or groups.

Note: *Examples included in the list have been adapted from the Commonwealth of Virginia's model hazing prevention policy as developed by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia.

- Retaliation:
Adverse action, including but not limited to reprisal, interference, restraint, penalty, discrimination, intimidation, or harassment.

Policy Statement:

Hazing is a crime in the Commonwealth of Virginia and is prohibited in accordance with this policy and the University's Standards of Conduct. The University does not condone hazing in any form. In addition to students, this Policy applies to employees with involvement in student organizations or groups, including those acting in an official capacity as an adviser or coach.

1.

Retaliation:

The University prohibits retaliation directed against a person for making a good faith complaint under this policy or who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation or adjudication process. Retaliation may exist even when the underlying complaint is without merit or not substantiated.

2.

Support for Reporting Allegations of Hazing and Retaliation:

The University community encourages the reporting of hazing behavior or retaliation. Parties or witnesses may be hesitant to report this behavior or participate in an investigation because they fear that they themselves may be in violation of certain policies, such as underage drinking or illicit drug use at the time of the incident. To encourage reporting under this policy and participation in the investigation process, the University will not pursue disciplinary action against complainants, respondents, or witnesses for disclosure of minor policy violations such as illegal personal consumption of drugs or alcohol where such disclosures are made in connection with a good faith report or investigation of hazing or retaliation. This provision does not apply to more serious allegations such as physical abuse of another or illicit drug or alcohol distribution that contributed to the commission of a policy violation.

3.

Investigations of Allegations of Hazing and Retaliation:

State and/or local law enforcement agencies investigate allegations of hazing under Virginia law. The Division of Student Affairs investigates allegations of hazing under University policy. (For more information and resources aimed at hazing prevention and education, see [Hoos Against Hazing](#).)

4.

Duty to Report:

Consistent with University Policy [HRM-028: Preventing and Addressing Threats or Acts of Violence](#), faculty, staff, and students should report hazing behavior as defined in policy STU-005 to Student Affairs at 434-924-7133 or through [UVA Just Report It](#). Confidential employees are not required to report hazing behavior. Anyone with general concerns about hazing and/or the well-being of any student is also encouraged to contact Student Affairs. Anonymous reports are accepted; however, the University's ability to obtain additional information may be compromised and the ability to investigate anonymous reports may be limited.

5.

State Statute:

The state statute on hazing, Section 18.2-56 of the Virginia Code, states:

It shall be unlawful to haze so as to cause bodily injury, any student at any school, college, or university.

Any person found guilty thereof shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

Any person receiving bodily injury by hazing shall have a right to sue, civilly, the person or persons guilty thereof, whether adults or infants.

The president or other presiding official of any school, college or university receiving appropriations from the state treasury shall, upon satisfactory proof of the guilt of any student hazing another student, sanction and discipline such student in accordance with the institution-s policies and procedures. The institution-s policies and procedures shall provide for expulsions or other appropriate discipline based on the facts and circumstances of each case and shall be consistent with the model policies established by the Department of

Education or the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, as applicable. The president or other presiding official of any school, college or university receiving appropriations from the state treasury shall report hazing which causes bodily injury to the attorney for the Commonwealth of the county or city in which such school, college or university is, who shall take such action as he deems appropriate.

For the purposes of this section, –hazing|| means to recklessly or intentionally endanger the health or safety of a student or students or to inflict bodily injury on a student or students in connection with or for the purpose of initiation, admission into or affiliation with or as a condition for continued membership in a club, organization, association, fraternity, sorority, or student body regardless of whether the student or students so endangered or injured participated voluntarily in the relevant activity.||

6.

Compliance with Policy:

Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion or termination in accordance with relevant University policies and the University's Standards of Conduct. Additionally, such prohibited actions may also be in violation of state or federal law.

Questions about this policy should be directed to the [Office of the Dean of Students](#) or the [Office of the Vice President and Chief Student Affairs Officer](#).

Procedures:

[UVA Just Report It](#)

Related Information:

[Hoos Against Hazing](#)

[HRM-028: Preventing and Addressing Threats or Acts of Violence](#)

[HRM-041: Policy on Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment and Other Forms of Interpersonal Violence](#)

Major Category: Students and Student Programs

Category Cross Reference: Safety, Security and Environmental Quality

Next Scheduled Review: 01/21/2025

Approved by, Date: Policy Review Committee, 10/12/2018

Revision History: Updated Dept in Section 4 6/23/22; Added Sections on Retaliation, Reporting; removed geographic boundaries 1/21/22. Supersedes (previous policy): Hazing (Undergraduate Record).

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