

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION Student Affairs and Academic Support	POLICY NUMBER STAF 3.05
POLICY TITLE Hazing	
SCOPE OF POLICY Columbia Campus	DATE OF REVISION July 21, 2020
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER Vice President for Student Affairs	ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE Student Life

PURPOSE

This policy outlines campus policies pertaining to hazing, including what activities may constitute hazing and procedures to report hazing at the University of South Carolina Columbia campus.

DEFINITIONS

Hazing: Any act, occurring on or off university property, by one person or acting with others, directed against an individual when both of the following apply:

- The person knew or should have known that the act in question would endanger the physical health or safety of the other person or a reasonable person would appreciate that the act in question would cause immediate or future mental distress for the impacted individual; and
- The act was associated with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, participating in, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any student group.

Student group: A number of persons associated with each other who either maintain status as a student organization in accordance with STAF 3.10 or a number of persons who do not maintain status as a student organization (e.g. athletic teams, musical or theatrical ensembles, etc.).

POLICY STATEMENT

The University of South Carolina is committed to providing a safe educational environment for everyone, cultivating a community that fosters respect for the dignity and rights of all persons. Therefore, hazing will not be tolerated by any group or individual affiliated with the University.

A. Activities that would constitute hazing include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Submission of members or prospective members to situations that a reasonable person would understand to be potentially dangerous or hazardous.
2. Activities which have a foreseeable potential for resulting in personal injury.
3. An activity that would have a potential to cause:

- a. Mental anxiety or distress – any activity that would subject the individual to extreme mental stress, such as: verbal abuse, sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, excessive cleaning and errand-running
 - b. Public embarrassment - an action that causes embarrassment, humiliation, or ridicule, regardless of a person's willingness to participate
 - c. Panic
 - d. Unreasonable interference with a student's academic progress or academic performance
 - e. Experience or observance of forced or coerced sexual acts, whether real or simulated
4. Acts of physical violence which include beating, branding, paddling, whipping, and the link as well as exposure to the elements (activities that include having individuals participate in physical acts of exertion in extreme heat, having members hold ice or other frozen objects, sleeping outside, etc.).
5. Tests of Endurance:
- a. Calisthenics
 - b. Forced runs
 - c. Forced workouts
 - d. Line ups – Acts where individuals are forced, coerced, or encouraged to line up in any formation and be questioned on information either through physical or verbal threats.
6. Unwanted Ingestion of any substance including, but not limited to:
- a. Alcohol
 - b. Condiments
 - c. Drugs
 - d. Food
 - e. Tobacco
 - f. Animals, alive or dead

7. Forced Personal Servitude Activities that interfere with one's ability to enjoy time outside of organization activities or unduly interferes with one's ability to succeed academically; this can include, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. Cleaning
 - b. Driving
 - c. Running errands
 - d. Being on call for members
8. Unusual Attire – wearing apparel which is conspicuous, embarrassing, and not normally in good taste, and/or inappropriate for the time of year.
9. Aiding in any form of academic misconduct.

B. Student Group Initiation Ceremonies and Activities

Student groups shall be permitted certain initiation ceremonies and activities, which when examined by the ordinary University student, would seem reasonable under the circumstances and justified in view of the purpose for which they are conducted.

C. Adjudication of Hazing

1. Adjudication of hazing is governed by the Student Code of Conduct ([STAF 6.26.](#)). An individual or group is responsible for hazing if they personally take part or contribute to the actions described in this section or if they know hazing will occur or is occurring and does nothing to stop and report it to the appropriate university and legal authorities.
2. It shall not constitute a defense to the charge of hazing that the participants:
 - a. Took part voluntarily
 - b. Gave consent to the conduct
 - c. Voluntarily assumed the risks or hardship of the activity
 - d. That the conduct was not part of an official student group event or sanctioned or approved by the student group
 - e. That the conduct was not done as a condition of membership in the student group
 - f. That no injury in fact was suffered
3. A person commits the offense of hazing and is subject to discipline if the person:

- a. Took part voluntarily
 - b. Engages in hazing
 - c. Solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in engaging in hazing
 - d. Recklessly permits hazing to occur
 - e. Has firsthand knowledge of the planning of a specific hazing incident
 - f. Has firsthand knowledge that a specific hazing incident has occurred, and knowingly fails to report that knowledge to the appropriate official of the institution
4. An organization commits a hazing offense and is subject to discipline, if the organization:
- a. Took part voluntarily
 - b. Condone, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid in hazing - if an officer, authorized representative, or any combination of members, prospective members, or alumni of the organization commits or assists in the commission of hazing
5. Retaliation against any individual who reports a hazing violation or suspected hazing violations to the university or law enforcement official would be considered a violation as defined by policy [STAF 6.26 Student Code of Conduct](#).

PROCEDURES

- A. If there is an immediate threat to a student's health and safety, please call the University of South Carolina Police Department at (803-777-4215).
- B. To initiate a complaint for alleged hazing, submit an Incident Report through the Office of Student Conduct: <https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofSouthCarolina>
- C. Individuals may also call the Hazing Hotline (803-777-5800) or The [Rave Guardian](#) App to report alleged hazing.
- D. All supervisors, administrators, employees, and university officials are responsible for promptly reporting incidents of hazing that come to their attention to the Dean of Students.

RELATED UNIVERSITY AND STATE POLICIES

[S.C Code of Laws section 16-3-510 and 16-3-520](#)

[S.C. Code of Laws section 59-63-275](#)

[S.C. Code of Laws section 59-101-200](#)

[S.C. Code of Laws section 59-101-210 \(a report of actual findings of violations related to formally affiliated student organization shall be provided online for the public\)](#)

[STAF 3.10 Student Organizations](#)

[STAF 6.26 Student Code of Conduct](#)

[Tucker Hipps Transparency Act](#)

HISTORY OF REVISIONS

DATE OF REVISION	REASON FOR REVISION
June 1, 1992	New policy approval
July 21, 2020	Content reviewed. Links updated. Language updated for comprehension.