

HAZING

Policy S.02.06

SCOPE:

Students and Student Groups

PURPOSE:

Hazing of any kind is inconsistent with the University's values and incompatible with the safe, healthy environment that the University of St. Thomas community expects. All members of this community share responsibility for creating and maintaining an environment which promotes the safety and dignity of each individual. Not only is hazing against the law, but the very act and its outcomes are detrimental to the type of leaders the institution strives to develop. UST is committed to providing a safe environment for all members of the university community and prohibits hazing by any student or student group.

DEFINITIONS:

1. Appropriate University Official – any UST employee or official who is in a position to stop or remedy hazing; including, but not limited to officials responsible for student housing, student conduct, student organizations; athletic coaches and trainers; and advisors to student organizations.
2. Hazing - any intentional, knowing or reckless act, occurring on or off campus, by one person acting alone or with others, directed against an individual or group that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of that individual or group for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization regardless of whether the student victim may have consented to or acquiesced in the activity. The term “hazing” includes, but is not limited to:
 - Subjecting the student(s) to an unreasonable risk or harm.
 - Adversely affecting the mental or physical health or safety of the student(s).
 - The destruction of private or personal property or the disruption of a campus community environment.
 - Unreasonably or unusually impairing an individual's academic efforts.
3. Student – any person who (a) is currently enrolled at the University; (b) is accepted for admission or readmission to the University; (c) has been enrolled at the University in a prior semester or summer term and is eligible to continue enrollment in the semester or summer term that immediately follows; (d) is attending an additional program sponsored by the University while that person is on campus; or (e) had engaged in prohibited conduct at a time when he/she met the criteria of (a), (b), (c), or (d).
4. University Student Organization / Group – a number of persons who have complied with the University requirements for official recognition or registration as a student club/organization.

POLICY:

All students are strictly prohibited from engaging in any hazing activity.

1. Prohibited Personal Conduct

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No person may engage in hazing; solicit, encourage, direct, aid, or attempt to aid another to engage in hazing; recklessly permit hazing to occur; or have firsthand knowledge of the planning of a specific hazing incident involving a student at UST, or have firsthand knowledge that a specific hazing incident has occurred, and knowingly fail to report that knowledge to the Dean of Students or other appropriate university official.

No person who has cause to believe that an incident of hazing may have adversely affected the physical or mental health or welfare of an individual under 18 years of age, shall fail to immediately report the incident to law enforcement authorities in accordance with the obligation to report child abuse or neglect. The obligation to report child abuse or neglect is mandated by state law and a report must be made to law enforcement authorities prior to the notices related to hazing. Reporting an incident of child abuse or neglect to any other institutional official, other than the police department, does not fulfill the legal obligation to report child abuse or neglect.

2. Prohibited Organizational Conduct

No student group may condone or encourage hazing. No officer, authorized representative, or any combination of members, potential new members, or alumni of the organization commit or assist in the commission of hazing. Both a student group and individuals participating in hazing may be subject to discipline.

3. Example of hazing activities, which are explicitly prohibited include, but are not limited to the following:

- Compelling individuals to consume alcohol or drugs.
- Paddling in any form, shoving or otherwise striking individuals.
- Compelling individuals to wear or carry unusual, uncomfortable, degrading or physically burdensome articles or apparel.
- Compelling individuals to engage in sexual behavior, sexual or racial harassment or slurs or exhibitionism.
- Depriving individuals of the opportunity for sufficient sleep, decent edible meals or access to means of bodily cleanliness.
- Activities which impair an individual's academic efforts by causing exhaustion, loss of sleep or reasonable study time, or by preventing an individual from attending class.
- The creation of excessive fatigue by participation in physically demanding activities (calisthenics, runs, etc.)
- Compelling individuals to eat or drink unusual substances or compelling the consumption of undue amounts or odd preparations of food.
- Having substances thrown at, poured on or otherwise applied to the bodies of individuals.
- Morally degrading or humiliating games or any other activities which make an individual the object of amusement, ridicule or intimidation.
- Transporting individuals against their will, abandoning individuals at distant locations, or conducting any "kidnap," "ditch" or "road trip" that may in any way endanger or compromise the health, safety or comfort of any individual.
- Causing an individual to be indecently exposed or exposed to the elements.
- Requiring an individual to remain in a fixed position for a long period of time.
- Compelling an individual to be branded or tattooed.
- "Line-ups" involving intense shouting of obscenities or insults.
- Compelling individuals to participate in activities (pranks, scavenger hunts, etc.) which encourage the defacement of property; engage in theft; harass other individuals, groups of individuals or organizations; or disrupt the normal activities of the University.

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- Tests of courage, bravery, stamina or sexuality.
- Intentionally deceiving members, prior to initiation, to make them believe they will not be initiated.
- Intentionally deceiving new members of an organization to make them think they will be struck or hurt.
- Excluding an individual from social contact for prolonged periods of time.
- Compelling an individual to engage in acts of personal servitude.

4. How to Report Hazing

Anyone with knowledge of hazing should immediately report the matter to UST by contacting the Dean of Students Office at 713-525-3570 or the University Police Department at 713-525-3888.

UST will investigate all reports of hazing involving students, whether the alleged misconduct took place on or off campus and regardless of the victim's acquiescence to the alleged misconduct.

5. Applicability of Community Standards

The terms and concepts (e.g., humiliating, degrading, unusual, uncomfortable, embarrassing, demeaning, etc.) cited in this policy shall be interpreted by university officials in relation to acceptable and applicable community standards.

6. Immunity for Good Faith Reporting

The University may elect not to pursue disciplinary sanctions for a violation of this policy for persons who voluntarily and in good faith provide information related to hazing. A person who makes a report in bad faith or with malice may be subject to disciplinary actions.

7. Obligation to Report

A person who believes that he or she had been subjected to hazing or a person who has knowledge of hazing activities should report the incident(s) to the Dean of Students, the University Police Department or another university official. All university officials must promptly report incidents of hazing to the Dean of Students or UPD.

8. Reporting By Health Care Professional

A doctor or other medical practitioner who treats a student who may have been subjected to hazing activities may report the suspected hazing activities to police or other law enforcement officials, and, in accordance with Texas law, will be immune from civil or other liability that might otherwise be imposed or incurred as a result of the report, unless the report is made in bad faith or with malice.

9. Sanctions

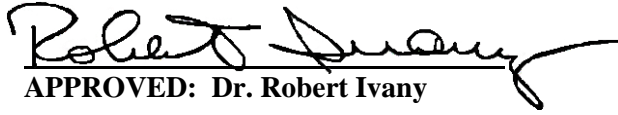
Students or student groups may be disciplined and sanctions for the misconduct of hazing under the UST Student Code of Conduct. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, with sanctions up to and including suspension or expulsion from the University.

All reports of hazing regarding student groups will be investigated by the Dean of Students or a designee. Student groups may also be referred for investigation by the UST Police.

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10. Notification

UST will distribute a list of organizations that have been sanctioned for hazing or convicted for hazing on or off the campus of the institution during the preceding three years to each student within the first three weeks of each semester.


APPROVED: Dr. Robert Ivany

Date of Original Formation: 01/20/2017

Effective Date: _____