



## HAZING

### **POLICY**

The University of West Alabama ("University") is dedicated to fostering a supportive and educational environment that promotes the well-being of all members of its community. This dedication aligns with the institution's mission, its associated policies, and applicable state and federal laws. In accordance with this commitment, the University has established the following policy regarding hazing. Hazing is prohibited by the University's Code of Student Conduct and considered a crime in the State of Alabama under [Alabama Code § 16-1-23](#).

For purposes of this policy, hazing is defined as: Any intentional, knowing, or reckless act committed by a person (whether individually or in concert with other persons) against another person or persons regardless of the willingness of such other person or persons to participate that:

- I. is committed in the course of an initiation into, an affiliation with, or the maintenance of membership in, a student organization; and
- II. causes or creates a risk, above the reasonable risk encountered in the course of participation in University or the organization (such as the physical preparation necessary for participation in an athletic team), of physical or psychological injury including -
  - whipping, beating, striking, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on someone's body, or similar activity;
  - causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, extreme calisthenics, or other similar activity;
  - causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to consume food, liquid, alcohol, drugs, or other substances;
  - causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to perform sexual acts;
  - any activity that places another person in reasonable fear of bodily harm through the use of threatening words or conduct;
  - any activity against another person that includes a criminal violation of local, State, or Federal law; and
  - any activity that induces, causes, or requires another person to perform a duty or task that involves a criminal violation of local, State, or Federal law.

The term 'student organization' is defined as an organization at the university (such as a club, society, association, varsity or junior varsity athletic team, club sports team, fraternity, sorority, band, or student government) in which two or more of the members are students enrolled at the University, whether or not the organization is established or recognized by the university.

## **REPORTING**

Any person having knowledge of any activity or conduct which may constitute hazing should report their concerns to the Dean of Students' Office or the UWA Police Department.

### **Self-Reporting of Incidents**

Individuals and student organizations are required by state law to self-report hazing violations. An organization or group that self-reports must notify the Dean of Students' office of the names of those individuals responsible for the hazing behaviors and the details of the hazing incident. In addition, the organization must disclose any actions taken by the organization to address the behavior. Such actions are taken into consideration by the appropriate decision-making body when determining what, if any, sanction(s) should apply.

Student organization/team members and officers/captains should immediately report any hazing incidents that occur within their organization to the Dean of Students' Office, providing a detailed description of the events that have transpired, the names of any individuals involved, and a description of any actions taken by the organization. Upon receiving the report, the Dean of Students' Office will investigate as described in this policy and the organization president and advisor/coach will be notified. The investigation and adjudication will proceed related to the violations by the individual(s) implicated in the report, unless evidence discovered in the investigation proves the incident to have been sanctioned by the organization. If the incident appears to have been sanctioned by the organization, a follow-up investigation into the organization's role may be undertaken. If the student organization is affiliated with a national organization, the national headquarters will be notified.

## **INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE**

Upon receiving a report of alleged hazing, the Dean of Students, or his/her designee, will assign the case to be investigated. As part of the investigation, the University will:

- a) Make contact (if possible) with the individual(s) bringing forward the allegations of hazing;
- b) Make contact with the individual(s) alleged to have perpetrated the hazing. If the conduct is organizational in nature, the investigator will contact the advisor and president of the organization under investigation;
- c) Conduct interviews with all parties, including victims, the accused student(s) and any witnesses. The investigator may, at his/her discretion, recommend interim actions (as described in the Student Code of Conduct) to the Dean of Students at any point during the investigation;
- d) The investigator may, at his or her discretion, require students, or a select group of students (i.e. all new members of an organization) to participate in an investigatory meeting at a pre-determined time and location and may exercise discretion regarding the communication of students during the investigation process, including but not limited to restriction on the use of any electronic devices during the investigation process.
- e) The investigator will provide a written investigative report to the Dean of Students, or his/her designee. Upon receipt of this report, the Dean of Students, or his/her designee will determine if charges are warranted. If charges are warranted, the Dean of Students' Office



will charge the individual student(s), the involved student group(s), and/or the president or other responsible officers of the involved student group(s) or any other complicit bystanders in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct.

### **INDIVIDUAL & ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

The University will, on a case-by-case basis, determine whether any violations of this policy are individual or organizational in nature. In determining whether or not a violation is organizational in nature, the University will consider the following:

- a) How many members were present when the alleged violation occurred or had specific knowledge of the alleged violation?
- b) What knowledge the appropriate chapter officers and/or advisors had of the alleged violation?
- c) What action the appropriate chapter officers and/or advisors took in addressing/preventing the alleged violation?
- d) Were chapter members acting in concert, or did the individual's membership in the chapter serve as an impetus for the alleged violation?
- e) Did the violation arise out of a chapter sponsored, financed, or endorsed event?
- f) Is there a pattern of individual violations that have occurred without proper action by the chapter?

### **AMNESTY**

Students who make a hazing complaint in good faith, or victims of hazing who participate in an investigation, will not be charged with other University policy violations that are brought to light in the course of the investigation that arose out of, or were committed as a direct result of, the hazing incident(s) under investigation (i.e. students forced to consume alcohol as part of a hazing incident will not be charged with violations of the University's alcohol policy). The University reserves the right to follow up with those students related to those issues as appropriate in a non-disciplinary setting.

### **SANCTIONS**

- a) Sanctions for violations of this policy shall be administered by the Dean of Students.
- b) Student groups subject to University jurisdiction and individual students found responsible for violations of this regulation shall be sanctioned in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct. For student groups, sanctions may include, but are not limited to, revocation of registration or denial of application for registration, loss of University privileges, such as the ability to host social events, to formally meet on campus and to use campus facilities, or to represent the University, and, in the case of fraternities and sororities, the right to be recognized or operate at the University.
- c) Sanctions imposed by the University for violations of this policy may be in addition to any penalty imposed for violation of the criminal laws of the State of Alabama and for violation of any other University policies.

- d) For groups that are formally associated with the University (i.e. varsity athletic teams, performing arts groups, such as marching bands, or any other groups supported or sponsored by the University that are not required to register as student organizations), sanctioning for violations of this policy shall be determined by the vice president of the administrative unit that sponsors/supports the group in consultation with the Dean of Students, or his/her designee.

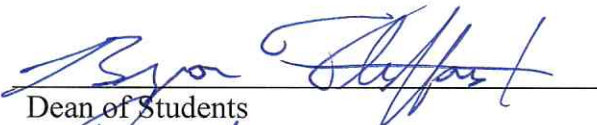
### **RETALIATION**

It is a violation of this policy to retaliate or take adverse action towards any person for reporting an alleged violation of this policy or for cooperating with a University investigation related to this policy. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, verbal or implied threats, physical or psychological abuse, intimidation, harassment (verbal or written), isolation, or any other action intended to create a hostile environment for the intended target of the retaliation.


### **REVIEW**

The Dean of Students is responsible for the review of this operating policy every four years, or as needed.

### **REVIEWED BY:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean of Students

6/23/25  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Vice President of Administration &  
Human Resources

6/23/2025  
Date

### **APPROVED BY:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
President

6/23/25  
Date