



The
UNIVERSITY
of **VERMONT**

Policy V. 3.4.7.2

Responsible Official: Dean of Students

Effective Date: October 20, 2008

Hazing

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the University of Vermont that no member of the University community may participate or be involved in hazing activities. Any student will be subject to disciplinary action for violation of this policy.

Reason for the Policy

The University of Vermont is first and foremost an educational institution. Its hazing prevention policies, and response procedures for hazing incidents, must grow from, and embody, its educational mission.

Membership in clubs, organizations, and other University-affiliated groups can increase leadership and service potential; provide athletic, recreational, intellectual, and spiritual opportunities; and otherwise contribute positively to personal and social development. When membership is linked with involvement in hazing activities, the educational purpose of the endeavor is compromised and can endanger the safety of students.

Hazing is therefore prohibited at the University of Vermont.

Strategic Direction

This policy supports the following goal in the University's Strategic Plan
http://www.uvm.edu/president/?Page=strategic_planning/strategicplan.html:

- Institutional Efficacy: As an institution, model the highest standard of ethical conduct, public service, and strong commitment to lifelong learning.
- Student Experience: Provide a distinctive university experience that prepares students for success as accountable leaders in the 21st century.

Applicability of the Policy

This policy applies to all members of the University community and their guests.

Policy Elaboration

1. Activities outside the scope of the Hazing Policy

There is a wide array of activities in which members of University-affiliated groups, organization, and teams can engage that positively nurture camaraderie and team building; develop unity, connectedness, and a sense of belonging; and promote the development of self-esteem. Examples include:

- Attending pre-season or organizational training sessions
- Administering or conducting supervised testing for skills, endurance, or performance
- Sponsoring a skit night
- Doing community service
- Signing a good conduct or academic standards contract
- Completing a Ropes course
- Participating in a supervised group, organization, or team trip

Because it is not always clear to individuals which activities are unacceptable and constitute hazing, student leaders and members of student groups are strongly encouraged to consult with groups' advisers, coaches, or other University officials responsible for the program or activity in advance of the planned event.

2. Activities likely to fall within the scope of the Hazing Policy

The following activities are examples of conduct that is likely to violate the hazing policy. These activities can diminish one's sense of full membership within the team or organization. These activities can also be a warning sign of the risk of more dangerous behaviors being undertaken by members of the group or organization:

- Participating in calisthenics not related to a sport
- Associating with specific people, but not others
- Requiring acts of servitude
- Forcing or coercing shaving of the head or any other part of the body
- Conducting hunts or quests
- Engaging in public stunts or buffoonery
- Forcing, coercing, or encouraging someone to wear apparel that is conspicuous and not within community norms
- Making prank calls

3. Hazing can place persons at risk of serious harm

The examples appearing below represent hazing conduct considered aggravated due to the risk of harm created. Such conduct may result in more serious University sanctions as well as criminal prosecution:

- Requiring or coercing tattooing, piercing, or branding
- Engaging in or simulating sexual acts
- Engaging in sexually violent or sexually harassing behavior
- Threatening or causing physical restraint or abuse (such as being held down, tied up, taped, or confined in a small space)
- Forcing or coercing consumption of any substance
- Kidnapping, or transporting and abandoning, a person
- Conducting interrogations
- Requiring nudity in a public or private place
- Causing excessive fatigue through physical or psychological abuse
- Furnishing alcohol to minors, or requiring consumption of alcohol or use of illegal drugs by any person
- Damaging, destroying, or stealing property
- Identifying hazing targets or subjects on the basis of their actual or perceived race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, gender identity and expression, or other legally protected classification

Note: All of the examples that appear above are intended to provide illustrations of conduct that may fall within the scope of the hazing policy. The examples are not all-inclusive. Determinations as to whether hazing occurred are made by the appropriate University official, hearing officer, or hearing body with due consideration of the relevant facts and circumstances.

4. Be Alert to Potential Hazing Situations.

The questions below may aid the determination whether a particular activity is hazing and thus prohibited:

- Is this a team or group activity that members are encouraged or expected to attend and where minors are consuming alcohol?
- Will current members refuse to participate with the new members?
- Does the activity risk emotional or physical abuse?
- Is there a risk of injury or a question of safety?
- Would you have any reservations describing the activity to your parents, a professor, or a University official?
- Would you object to the activity being photographed for the school newspaper or local TV news?

Definitions

Hazing means any act committed by a person, whether individually or in concert with others, against a student in connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization that is affiliated with an educational institution; and that is intended, or should reasonably be expected, to have the effect of humiliating, intimidating, or demeaning the student or endangering the mental or physical health of a student.

- Hazing also includes soliciting, directing, aiding, or otherwise participating actively or passively in such acts.
- Hazing occurs regardless of the consent or willingness of a person to participate in the activity.
- Hazing may occur on or off campus.
- Hazing does not include any activity or conduct that furthers legitimate curricular, extracurricular, or military training program goals, provided that (1) the goals are approved by the University; and (2) the activity or conduct furthers the goals in a manner that is appropriate, contemplated by the University, and normal and customary for similar programs at other educational institutions.

This policy is intended to be consistent with State law. The policy will be reviewed periodically and revised in light of legal developments and experience gained.

Procedures

1. Reports of Hazing

- University officials are required to report possible hazing incidents in a prompt and effective manner. Students and other members of the University community are strongly encouraged to report possible hazing incidents.
- To maximize safety, all reports of hazing should first be directed to the UVM Department of Police Services (“Police Services”).
- University officials who receive reports of hazing must refer such reports immediately to Police Services.
- The Chief of Police Services, or designee, promptly will take steps to respond to hazing reports consistent with the exercise of reasonable professional discretion, including the convening of responsible University administrators.

2. Administrative Response

- The University’s response to hazing allegations will occur through the processes outlined in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Staff Handbook, or the Officers’ Handbook, or the applicable collective bargaining agreement.
- Since hazing may violate more than one University policy, the same incident may be referred to more than one hearing channel. In addition, Police Services may refer conduct that may constitute a violation of criminal law to appropriate law enforcement officials, subject to the requirements of governing law. Student groups and organizations are also subject to suspension or revocation of University recognition for policy violations.

3. Sanctions

A. Factors that may be considered in imposing sanctions - Hearing officials or bodies responsible for imposing sanctions for hazing policy violations may consider factors such as the following:

- Nature of the offense, including whether aggravated conduct occurred
- Severity of the harm or damage resulting from the offense
- The respondent's role in the hazing incident
- Disciplinary history of the respondent
- Whether the respondent cooperated during the proceedings, responded honestly to questions, and promptly accepted responsibility for his/her actions
- Any leadership role or seniority of the respondent in the club, organization or team relative to which hazing occurred
- Whether any offense involved behavior directed at another person because of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, gender identity and expression, or other legally protected classification

B. Examples of sanctions - Hearing officials or bodies responsible for imposing sanctions will do so exercising reasonable discretion in light of factors such as those just described.

Examples of sanctions that may be imposed upon individual students are:

- Disciplinary suspension or dismissal;
- Attendance at educational programs or other training;
- Restitution; and/or
- Participation in alcohol, drug, or other counseling services

Examples of sanctions that may be imposed upon organizations that knowingly permit, authorize, or condone hazing are:

- Probation
- Revocation or suspension of the organization's existence or recognition
- Cancellation of some or all the organization's activities or events (such as intercollegiate or intramural sports contests)
- Decrease in, or restriction of, the organization's privileges

Forms

None

Contacts

To maximize safety, all reports of hazing should first be directed to UVM Police Services. Anonymous information may be reported to Police Services for investigation via Internet or phone:

REPORT A CRIME - <http://www.uvm.edu/~police/?Page=reportcrime/index.php>

UVM TIP LINE 2 - 656-TIPS

Any UVM student wishing to speak privately and in confidence about a hazing incident should contact the UVM Counseling Center at 656-3340 (24 hours).

Faculty and staff may contact the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Because other University officials are required to report possible hazing violations for investigation, communications outside of the Counseling Center and EAP Office are not guaranteed to be confidential.

For additional information regarding this policy and related matters, please contact the Dean of Students Office at 656-3380.

The University official responsible for oversight of the policy when committed by a student or student organization is the Dean of Students. The official responsible for oversight of the policy when committed by a staff or faculty member is the Provost.

Related Documents/Policies

Group and Organization Recognition Policy and Administrative Guidelines
http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/general_html/grouprecognition.pdf

Effective Date

Approved by the President and the Chair Board of Trustees on October 20, 2008