

SEWANEE

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH

Hazing Prevention Policy

Purpose

The University of the South, in accordance with Tennessee State Law (Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-7-123), is committed to providing a safe and educational environment for all and does not tolerate hazing by any group or individual. The University is unequivocally opposed to all acts of hazing and acknowledges the intersection of hazing and other forms of power-based violence. At its core, “hazing” is characterized by the abuse of power that interferes with community members' ability to thrive as leaders and learners and is counter to the University’s motto of EQB.

Under Tennessee State Law, hazing is defined as “any intentional or reckless act in Tennessee on or off the property of any higher education institution by one (1) student acting alone or with others which is directed against any other student, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of that student, or which induces or coerces a student to endanger such student’s mental or physical health or safety. “Hazing” does not include customary athletic events or similar contests or competitions, and is limited to those actions taken and situations created in connection with initiation into or affiliation with any organization.”

Scope

All members of the University community are responsible for the prevention of hazing. A person or group may be found responsible for hazing when they solicit, aid, or attempt to aid another person in planning or committing a behavior defined as hazing. Demonstrating complicity in the behavior by concealing the incident after the fact may constitute additional violations of University policies.

Responsible Party

Division of Student Life

Definitions

Term	Definition
Hazing	Is defined by Tennessee Law and the University expands its definition to include any behavior associated with recruiting, joining, initiating, admitting, affiliating, or retaining membership in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers a person’s mental, physical or emotional well-being, regardless of their consent or willingness to participate.

Group	A “ Group ” is made up of persons who are associated with the University and each other including formalized, recognized student organizations and athletic teams, as well as informal groups (e.g. music ensembles, theater, dance, or residential halls).
Recognized Student Organization (RSO)	Is any Student Organization, including, but not limited to, fraternities and sororities and club sports. A Recognized Student Organization is a group of undergraduate students who unite to promote or celebrate a common interest.
Student	For the purposes of this policy, a student will be defined using the definition in the Code of Student Conduct available here .
University Community	Includes students, faculty, and staff.

Policy

1. Hazing is prohibited.
2. Members of the University Community may not solicit, encourage, or assist anyone to engage in hazing.
3. It is not a defense to a violation of this policy that the hazing victim consented to or agreed to participate in the hazing activity.
4. All members of the university community must take reasonable measures within the scope of their individual capacity or authority to prevent violations of this policy.

Examples of Hazing

Hazing is interpersonal and contextual in nature. It is important to consider the situational interactions within a group that could be considered problematic and promote environments that are hospitable to hazing. Examples of hazing situations may include, but are not limited to:

- Activities meant to ‘prove’ an individual’s worth within an organization or team
- Asking a subset of members to wear conforming, silly, or humiliating attire
- Assigning pranks such as stealing, painting, or harassing others
- Burning, branding, or tattooing
- Controlling a student’s time (e.g. house hours or on-call hours)
- Expecting abuse or mistreatment of animals
- Expecting certain items to be in one's possession
- Exploiting a power imbalance between new members and the rest of the group
- Forced or coerced consumption of substances including, but not limited to, alcohol or other drugs
- Intimidation
- Line-ups or drills
- Personal servitude (e.g. errands, buying food, cleaning, doing laundry, etc.)
- Physical or mental exhaustion
- Pointless tasks
- Provoking anxiety or intimidation about future events/requirements

- Public nudity
- Sleep deprivation
- Social isolation (e.g. not allowed to be around certain people)
- Stunt or skit nights with degrading, crude, or humiliating acts
- Threats or implied threats
- Verbal abuse

Education

All university community members will be notified annually of the policy and the expectations outlined within this policy. Notification will be distributed via email.

1. The University will educate all new students as a part of their New Student Orientation to understand this policy and expectations as outlined in Tennessee State Law.
2. Leaders of student groups such as RSOs, intercollegiate athletic teams, and departmental student groups must participate in annual hazing prevention education and provide an annual acknowledgement statement that they have informed their members of the expectations outlined in this policy.
3. Human Resources will offer education on this topic to employees.

Accountability

Undergraduate students and RSOs are subject to accountability under the Code of Conduct for violations of this policy or interference in a fact-finding process related to hazing.

Retaliation

The University of the South strictly prohibits retaliation against any person for reporting suspected hazing violations, or for cooperating with, or participating in, any fact-finding or resolution process of alleged hazing violations.

Reporting

A person who has knowledge of hazing activities or a person who believes that they have been subjected to hazing should report the incident(s) at hazing.sewanee.edu. Allegations of hazing, including anonymous reports, may be reported 24 hours a day via the [online reporting form](#) or to the Sewanee Police Department (931-598-1111 or 911 in an emergency).