

# **Texas Woman's University University Regulation and Procedure**

**Regulation and Procedure Name: Hazing**

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Number: URP: 06.240**

**Policy Owner: Student Life**

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

Texas Woman's University ("TWU" or "University") is committed to providing a learning environment free of all forms of violence, abuse, intimidation, fear, discrimination, and coercive conduct, including hazing. TWU encourages its students to fully immerse themselves in a variety of experiences and activities. TWU offers many clubs and organizations, in addition to our many athletic teams, that students may elect to participate in during their undergraduate and graduate collegiate experience. Through these involvements, students will gain many skills and acquire both knowledge and experience that will serve them far beyond their years on campus.

All students have certain rights and privileges through their membership in clubs, organizations, and athletic teams. All individuals have a right to be treated with respect and free from any form of physical, mental, or emotional abuse. This is true regardless of the nature of the group. Hazing, on or off-campus, by any individual or group associated with Texas Woman's University is prohibited. Hazing violates Texas state law, University Policies and Regulations, and the rules of all student organizations recognized by TWU.

## **APPLICABILITY**

This policy is applicable to TWU Students, Faculty, Staff, and Guests.

## **DEFINITIONS**

1. "Faculty" means an individual who is employed by TWU as a member of the faculty and whose duties include teaching, research, service, and administration. Professional librarians and graduate assistant titles are excluded from the definition of faculty.
2. "Guests" means any individual not affiliated with TWU.
3. "Hazing" means any reckless or intentional act that is committed on- or off-campus against a person joining, becoming a member, or maintaining membership in any group, which is humiliating, intimidating or demeaning; which produces physical, mental, or emotional pain or discomfort; or which

endangers the health and safety of the person. A person who is joining, becoming a member, or maintaining a membership is referred to as a “new member.”

- a. Hazing includes active and passive participation in such acts and can occur regardless of the willingness of a person to participate in the activities. Hazing creates an environment or climate in which dignity and respect are absent. In short, hazing is any action taken or situation created intentionally or recklessly:
  - i. That causes embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule;
  - ii. Risks emotional or physical harm to members of any group or team;
  - iii. Whether the person subject to the hazing is new or not; and
  - iv. Regardless of that person’s willingness to participate.
- b. Types of hazing: The examples below should not be considered an exhaustive list of actions which may constitute hazing. Though some of these activities may not be considered physically violent, any form of hazing can quickly escalate into far more dangerous incidents. A list of these types of hazing can be found on the hazing webpage (See References).
  - i. Subtle Hazing: Behaviors that emphasize a power imbalance between new members and experienced members of the group or team. Subtle hazing typically involves activities or attitudes directed toward new members that breach reasonable standards of mutual respect, and place new members on the receiving end of ridicule, embarrassment, or humiliation.
  - ii. Harassment Hazing: Behaviors that cause emotional anguish or physical discomfort required of those new members joining the group or team. Harassment hazing confuses, frustrates, or causes undue stress, for new members.
  - iii. Violent Hazing: Behaviors that have the potential to, and frequently do, cause physical, emotional, or psychological harm.

4. “Staff” means each classified, administrative, and professional employee who is appointed to work in a regular full time or regular part time position, excluding students employed in positions for which student status is required as a condition of employment and those employees holding teaching and/or research positions classified as faculty.
5. “Student” means a person taking courses at TWU, a person who is not currently enrolled in courses but who has a continuing academic relationship with TWU, or a person who has been admitted or readmitted to TWU.

## **REGULATION AND PROCEDURE**

### **I. General Guidelines**

- A. Texas Woman’s University’s policy on hazing is focused on actions or situations impacting new members of any group, whether that group is a fraternity, sorority, association, corporation, order, society, corps, club, student government, band, multicultural group, academic, athletic, cheerleading, dance team (including any group or team that participates in NCAA competition), or any other group, whether or not the group is formally recognized by the University as a student organization. Not all activities which constitute hazing when applied to new members are illegal or considered hazing when the entire group might participate – a hallmark of hazing is the differentiation of new members from other members.
- B. The University’s policy on hazing is not intended to limit any anti-hazing policy adopted by an organization.
- C. A person violates this policy if the person:
  1. Engages in hazing;
  2. Solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in engaging in hazing;
  3. Intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly permits hazing to occur;  
or
  4. Has firsthand knowledge of the planning of a specific hazing incident involving a student, or firsthand knowledge that a specific hazing incident has occurred and knowingly fails to report said knowledge to the Center for Student Development, the Student Accountability and Growth Education (“SAGE”) Center, or other appropriate officials of Texas Woman’s University, a police officer, or law enforcement agency.

- D. An organization violates this policy if the organization's officer or any combination of members, new members, or alumni of the organization, team, or other group commits or assists in the commission of hazing, condones or encourages hazing, or fails to prevent or report hazing.

## II. Reporting Hazing

The only way to truly prevent and address incidents of hazing and the proliferation of a hazing culture on a University campus is to report such behavior. If you know of a hazing incident on Texas Woman's University campus, it can be a violation of policy and a crime not to report it.

- A. You may contact any of the following resources to discuss your concerns, to report an incident, or to ask any general questions you may have about hazing:
  - 1. Center for Student Development
  - 2. Department of Athletics
  - 3. SAGE Center
  - 4. Office of the Vice President of Student Life
  - 5. TWU Police Department
- B. There are also ways to confidentially or anonymously report hazing, although this limits the University's ability to address this important issue. Students may seek out confidential wellness counseling through Counseling and Psychological Services ("CAPS"). Students may also report hazing anonymously online via the Code of Conduct online reporting form.
- C. Although not affiliated with Texas Woman's University, students may also consult the National Hazing Hotline for more information on hazing by calling: 1.888.NOT.HAZE (1.888.668.4293).
- D. Additionally, some of the organizations on campus have established their own hazing hotlines or organizational contact, and while students should feel free to consult with those resources as well, a report to an organization hotline is not considered a report to the University, and the University may not learn of an incident that is reported only to an organization's hotline.
- E. Texas Woman's University staff will take all reasonable measures to protect the identity and confidentiality of victims of hazing as well as of any individuals, organizations, or teams that work to assist such victims.
- F. Any retaliation against any person who reports, is a witness to, or is involved with or cooperates with the adjudication of hazing is strictly prohibited.

Efforts to prevent the discovery of or reporting of hazing violate Texas Woman's University's hazing policy.

- G. In an effort to encourage reporting of hazing incidents, immunity from institutional, civil or criminal prosecution may be granted to any person reporting a specific hazing incident involving a student in an educational institution to appropriate officials at Texas Woman's University or law enforcement agency provided that the report is voluntary, that the report happens prior to being contacted by the institution or law enforcement agency regarding a report or investigation of hazing, and that the reporter cooperates in good faith throughout any institutional process regarding the incident or any law enforcement agency's investigation regarding the incident. A person reporting their own act of hazing or in bad faith or with malice is not protected by this section.

### III. Investigating and Adjudicating Incidents of Hazing

- A. The University must investigate reports of hazing. It is always to the benefit of the organization, club, or team involved to cooperate fully in the investigation process in order to make Texas Woman's University a better and safer place for all students. Organizations that have an internal conduct or accountability process are encouraged to adhere to those standards and processes; however, internal organizational consequences do not replace, supersede, or suspend campus or legal consequences.
- B. Individuals or groups may both be held responsible for hazing incidents, depending on the nature of the incident and the various roles played.
- C. Any student found responsible for a violation of the hazing policy will receive a sanction ranging from warning to expulsion. The sanction will depend on the severity of the incident, and will take into account any previous disciplinary infractions.
- D. Any group, team, or organization responsible for a violation of the hazing policy will receive a sanction ranging from warning to restrictions on competition or social activities to removal of institutional recognition. The sanction will depend on the severity of the incident, and will take into account any previous disciplinary infractions.
- E. Depending on the nature of the hazing, victims of hazing may be entitled to know the results of the adjudication process.
- F. Appeals from any sanctions may be made pursuant to the appeal process found in the Student Handbook.
- G. The URP 06.200: Student Code of Conduct disciplinary process is specific to Texas Woman's University students and student organizations and is

separate from disciplinary processes and policies connected with the national Greek Organizations.

- H. Incidents of hazing involving sexual misconduct will be adjudicated through University policies and regulations regarding Title IX and sexual misconduct.

#### IV. Special Notes

- A. Texas Woman's University shall distribute to each student, faculty, and staff member during the first three weeks of each semester via an email sent to all TWU students and through the Student Handbook:
  - 1. A summary of the provisions of state law related to hazing; and
  - 2. A list of organizations that have been disciplined for hazing or convicted for hazing on or off the campus of TWU during the preceding three (3) years according to Texas law.
- B. The TWU Student Handbook shall publish a summary of the provisions of state law related to hazing in each edition of the publication. In addition, TWU will notify students annually of the hazing statutes.
- C. Texas Woman's University follows state, local, and federal guidelines when handling alleged criminal activity, including hazing activities. In addition to legal sanctions, Texas Woman's University will adhere to TWU Regent Policies and University Regulations and Procedures for possible Code of Conduct Review as noted in the URP 06.200: Student Code of Conduct for individuals and student organizations.

#### REVIEW

This policy will remain in effect and published until it is reviewed, updated, or archived. This policy is to be reviewed once every six years. Interim review may be required as a result of updates to federal and state law or regulations, Board of Regents policies, or internal processes or procedures.

#### REFERENCES

[TWU Hazing Prevention Website](#)

[URP 06.200: Student Code of Conduct](#)

[URP 01.225: Prohibition of Sexual Misconduct](#)

[URP 01.220: Title IX Policy](#)

## FORMS AND TOOLS

[TWU Report an Incident Form](#)

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