

Texas Woman's University University Regulation and Procedure

Regulation and Procedure Name: Hazing

**Regulation and Procedure
Number: URP: 06.240**

Policy Owner: Student Life

POLICY STATEMENT

Texas Woman's University is committed to providing a learning environment free of all forms of violence, abuse, intimidation, fear, discrimination, and coercive conduct, including hazing. We encourage our students to fully immerse themselves in a variety of experiences and activities. We offer many clubs and organizations, in addition to our many NCAA (Division II) 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, and/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. Texas Woman's University complies with the provisions of Chapter 37, Subchapter F, "Hazing," of the Texas Education Code (51.936). 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. "Hazing" means any reckless or intentional act that is committed on- or off-campus against someone 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; and/or which endangers the health and safety of the person. For purposes of this policy, individuals who are joining, becoming a member, or maintaining a membership are referred to as "new members."

a. Hazing includes *active* and *passive* participation in such acts and can occur regardless of the willingness of a student to participate in the activities. Hazing creates an environment/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, or
- ii. Risks emotional and/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.

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 in writing to the Center for Student Development, the Office of Civility and Community Standards, or other appropriate officials of Texas Woman's University, and/or 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. Conditions That Create a Hazing Dynamic

- A. New members often wish to be accepted, either formally or informally, into any group, and will submit to hazing in order to be included. Because of this, consent to be hazed does not excuse hazing. Students have died or been seriously injured as a result of participating in activities to which they "consented." The psychological pull to be accepted is so strong that hazing victims cannot be expected to resist hazing, even if the hazing is presented as optional. That this pull can be so coercive should make this need to prohibit this conduct, to any degree, undeniably clear.
- B. Any activity that places new members in a subservient position to experienced members of the group creates an unhealthy and unsafe power dynamic in which control has been yielded to the experienced member. New members in any organization may expect to be trained, oriented, or indoctrinated, but membership in any group that puts a new member in a lesser role, unrelated to the original conditions for membership or mission of the group, is inappropriate and unfair to the new members. Any activities involving new members should be equally shared among all members.

III. Examples 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 as physically

violent as paddling or beating, any form of hazing can quickly deteriorate into far more dangerous incidents.

A. Subtle Hazing

1. Behaviors that emphasize a power imbalance between new members and experienced members of the group or team. These activities are referred to as "subtle hazing" because they are often inappropriately taken-for-granted or accepted as harmless or meaningless.
2. 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 and/or humiliation. New members often feel the need to endure subtle hazing to feel like part of the group or team.
3. Some Examples:
 - a. Deception
 - b. Silence periods with implied threats for violation
 - c. Deprivation of privileges granted to other members
 - d. Requiring new members to perform duties not assigned to other members or expecting new members to do anything that experienced members will not do with them
 - e. Socially isolating new members
 - f. Line-ups and drills/tests on meaningless information
 - g. Memorization of stories, poems, or information not directly related to the organization
 - h. Name calling
 - i. Requiring new members to refer to other members with titles (e.g., Mr., Miss), while new members are identified with demeaning terms (rookie, fresh meat, dogs, etc.)
 - j. Expecting certain item or items to always be in the possession of the new member that an individual would not normally carry

or is not part of a national organization requirement and with the threat of consequences.

B. Harassment Hazing

1. Behaviors that cause emotional anguish or physical discomfort required of those new members joining the group or team. Harassment hazing confuses, frustrates, and/or causes undue stress, for new members.

2. Some Examples:

a. Line-ups that include berating or any other activity involving verbal abuse and/or yelling and screaming at new members

b. Threats or implied threats directed to new members

c. Asking new members to alter their appearance in humiliating ways, including but not limited to, wearing unusual, conspicuous, embarrassing, or uncomfortable clothing, or clothing that is not normally considered to be in good taste

d. Degrading games, activities or public stunts, including but not limited to, stunt or skit nights with degrading, crude or humiliating acts, coerced lewd conduct or sexual simulations, public nudity, public stunts of buffoonery and/or tests of courage, bravery and stamina, etc. Any activity that would degrade or otherwise compromise the dignity of the individual or any activity that makes the individual an object of amusement or ridicule or that threatens the student with ostracism

e. Scavenger hunts where only new members are the “hunters”, whether or not such hunts promote theft, vandalism, or humiliating public acts

f. Expecting new members to perform personal service for other members, such as carrying books, errands, cooking, cleaning, etc. This is also known as servitude.

g. Expecting new members to be deprived of maintaining a normal schedule or basic routine for things, such as body cleanliness, excessive fatigue or sleep deprivation, class

attendance or other interference with academic pursuits, eating, etc. This includes any activity that requires an unreasonable or inordinate amount of the individual's time, or that is likely to impair the individual's academic efforts (e.g., all-night work or study sessions) or that is likely to adversely affect the student's ability to enter or remain registered at Texas Woman's University, or that may reasonably be expected to cause a student to leave the organization or Texas Woman's University rather than submit to acts described in this policy.

C. Violent Hazing

1. Behaviors that have the potential to, and frequently do, cause physical and/or emotional or psychological harm.
2. Some Examples:
 - a. Any physical act of violence expected of, or inflicted upon, another, such as beating, paddling, branding, burning, bondage, or other forms of assault
 - b. Any physical activity or exercise expected of, or inflicted upon, another, whether extreme or not, including calisthenics
 - c. Any situation that risks serious harm or damage to an individual, whether physical or mental or any activity that might reasonably bring physical harm to the individual
 - d. Pressure or coercion of another to consume any legal or illegal substance and/or making available unlawful substances.
 - e. Asking a new member to participate in any activity or become involved in any situation that is in violation of federal, state or local laws contrary to the person's genuine moral or religious beliefs; or contrary to the rules and regulations of Texas Woman's University or of the organization
 - f. Exposure to cold weather or extreme heat without appropriate protection

- g. Forced road trips off-campus, kidnapping, abandonment or other situations where the new member is transported against his or her will
- h. Forced or coerced ingestion of any liquid or solid matter, edible or non-edible, including vile substances or concoctions, water intoxication, eating contests, etc.
- i. Putting new members in a room or space that is uncomfortable (noise, temperature, too small) at any time (i.e., confinement) or subjecting them to uncomfortable, inconvenient, or required sleeping arrangements, including sleeping outdoors
- j. Expecting abuse or mistreatment of animals

IV. 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/or 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. Office of Civility and Community Standards
4. Office of the Vice President of Student Life
5. Department of Public Safety

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, student 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 or organizations/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 and/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.
- V. 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/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 and/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/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 TWU 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.

VI. 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 Subchapter F, Chapter 37; 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 years according to Texas law.

- B. The TWU Student Handbook shall publish a summary of the provisions of Subchapter F, Chapter 37, of the Texas Education Code 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 TWU Student General 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

[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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