



OP 91.208 HAZING

PURPOSE

To provide uniform guidelines for the protection of the University community against the dangers associated with hazing.

POLICY

Hazing is prohibited. Any organization, student, or other person affiliated with the university found to have engaged in hazing as defined in this policy is subject to disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct and other applicable university policies. Under certain circumstances, hazing may also be a violation applicable laws, resulting in a criminal prosecution.

DEFINITIONS

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 latter's willingness 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 participation in the organization (such as the physical preparation necessary for participation in an athletic team), of physical or psychological injury.

Examples of hazing include but are not limited to:

- Beating, striking, electronic shocking, or the placement of a harmful substance on someone's body
- Causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, extreme calisthenics, or similar activities
- 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, tribal, or federal law
- Any activity that induces, causes, or requires another person to perform a duty or task that involves a criminal violation of local, state tribal or federal law, and
- Any activity that would be reasonably expected to unduly impair a person's academic efforts.

REPORTING AND TRANSPARENCY

A hazing incident may be reported by anyone by contacting any of the following university offices:

- Dean of Students Office, First Floor, YMCA Building, Starkville Campus, 662-325-3611
- Fraternity & Sorority Life, 662-325-2930
- Mississippi State University Police Department, Butler Williams Building, Starkville Campus, 662-325-2121
- Deanna Smith, Associate Dean of Students for Meridian, 601-696-2344

Reports of hazing or other conduct matters can also be submitted online to the Office of Fraternity & Sorority Life at <https://www.greeks.msstate.edu/> or the Dean of Students Office at <https://www.students.msstate.edu/>.

All reports of hazing behavior, including those reported anonymously, will be investigated by the Dean of Students Office, which may enlist the assistance of other university offices or personnel where appropriate. Investigations will follow the normal procedures outlined in the Code of Student Conduct (OP 91.100) and other relevant university policies, such as the policy on Sexual Misconduct (OP 3.04) where applicable.

While the university will take appropriate steps to address matters identified by anonymous disclosures, its ability to investigate, respond, impose discipline, and/or accommodate the complainant may be significantly limited. Members of the community are therefore strongly encouraged to consider the other options for reporting listed in this policy

The university will compile statistics on reported hazing incidents which will be reflected in its Annual Security and Fire Safety Report. Additionally the university will summarize findings concerning any student organization found to be in violation of this policy in its Campus Hazing Transparency Report, which will be made publicly available on the university's website.

PREVENTION AND AWARENESS

The university provides prevention and awareness programs on the dangers of hazing, options to report hazing, bystander intervention, and healthy alternatives for team building through its Maroon U online course, the Office of Fraternity & Sorority Life, and other avenues.

APPLICABLE LAWS

The university will comply with and cooperate fully with the enforcement of applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations regarding hazing in connection with student organizations and other activities. These include but are not limited to:

- Mississippi Code § 97-3-15: Establishing criminal penalties for hazing, defined as intentionally or recklessly causing or creating a substantial risk of physical injury to

another person in the course of initiation into or affiliation with any organization.

- Stop Campus Hazing Act: Establishing statistical reporting, transparency, prevention, and awareness requirements for institutions of higher education.

REVIEW

The Vice President for Student Affairs is responsible for the review of this operating policy every four years or as needed.

REVIEWED BY:

/s/ Regina Hyatt
Vice President for Student Affairs

03/28/2025
Date

/s/ Tracey N. Baham
Associate Vice President, Institutional Strategy & Effectiveness

04/14/2025
Date

/s/ Joan Lucas
General Counsel

04/21/2025
Date

APPROVED BY:

/s/ Mark E. Keenum
President

07/28/2025
Date