



NUMBER: 6.400
DIVISION: Student Affairs
TITLE: Hazing & Organizational Conduct
DATE: June 26, 2025
AUTHORIZED: President's Cabinet

I. Purpose and Scope:

This Policy was created to comply with the Stop Campus Hazing Act ([H.R. 5646](#)) signed into law in December 2024. The purpose of this Policy is to establish processes and procedures for reporting, investigating, and responding to reports of hazing and applicable laws related thereto.

II. Definitions:

- A. 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 willingness of such other person or persons to participate, that (a) is committed in the course of an initiation into, an affiliation with, or the maintenance of membership in, a student organization and/or (b) causes or creates a risk, above the reasonable risks, encountered in the course of participation in the institution of higher education of the organization (such as the physical preparation necessary for participation in an athletic team) of physical or psychological injury including:
- whipping, beating, striking, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on someone's body, or similar activity;
 - causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, extreme calisthenics, or other similar activity;
 - 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; and
 - 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.
- B. Student Organization is defined as an organization (such as a club, society, association, varsity or junior varsity athletic team, club sports team, fraternity, sorority, band, or student government) in which two or more of the members are students enrolled at Western Kentucky University, whether or not the organization is established or recognized by the institution. Student organizations that are established and registered with the University may be referred to as a “Registered Student Organization” or “RSO.”
- C. A participant is defined as a University student, pledge, or individual participating in an intake process.
- D. A person is defined as a University student, member, alumnus, affiliate alumnus, guest of any campus organization or other individual(s).

III. Reporting & Records

- A. Submission of a Report of hazing by a student organization may be communicated (e.g., telephone, email) via any of the following:
1. **Department of Student Activities**, Downing Student Union 2059, phone 270-745-2459, www.wku.edu/sao/
 2. **Office of Student Conduct**, Potter Hall 425, phone 270-745-5429, email student.conduct@wku.edu, website: www.wku.edu/studentconduct
 3. **Online**, www.wku.edu/report/
- B. Records of Reports of hazing by a student organization shall be maintained by the Office of Student Conduct.

Records of reports will be published in the Annual Security Report available at www.wku.edu/police according to the standards of the Clery Act.

The Office of Student Conduct shall publish the Campus Hazing Transparency Report (CHTR) on a biannual basis. This report will include all incidents involving student organizations for which a formal finding of responsibility has been issued with a hazing violation, including:

1. Name of the student organization;
2. A general description of the violation that resulted in a finding of responsibility including:
 - a. whether the violation involved the use or misuse of alcohol or drugs,

- b. the findings of the institution,
 - c. and any sanctions placed on the student organization by the institution, as applicable; and
- 3. The dates on which:
 - a. The incident was alleged to have occurred
 - b. The investigation into the incident was initiated
 - c. The investigation ended with a finding that a hazing violation occurred, and
 - d. The institution provided notice to the student organization that the incident resulted in a hazing violation.

IV. Procedure

A. Investigatory Process and Procedures

The Office of Student Conduct, and designees, shall be responsible for investigating reports of alleged violation(s) of hazing pursuant to [University Policy # 6.3000: Student Code of Conduct](#). The processes and procedures for the investigation of a report of hazing/organizational misconduct are outlined in University Policy # 6.300.

Alleged violations of [University Policy # 0.2070: Sex and Gender-Based Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#), will be governed by the institutional policies and investigatory procedures outlined in said policy.

B. Title IX Implications

When a report also includes allegations that may fall under Title IX, such as sexual harassment, sexual assault, and/or stalking, the University will initiate a coordinated response to ensure compliance with both anti-hazing and Title IX regulations. Upon receipt of such a report, the Office of Student Conduct will conduct a preliminary assessment to determine whether the reported behavior constitutes hazing under the Code of Student Conduct. Simultaneously, the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) will assess whether the allegations meet the criteria for a Title IX investigation pursuant to the Title IX jurisdiction is established, or additional information is needed for a jurisdiction determination, the OIE will assume primary responsibility for investigating those elements, while collaborating with the Office of Student Conduct to address any overlapping hazing elements and/or conduct violations. This collaborative approach ensures that all aspects of the complaint are thoroughly investigated, while safeguarding the rights of all parties involved and maintaining compliance with state and federal law and institutional policies.

C. Standard of Proof

The standard of proof for a Student Code of Conduct conference will be the preponderance of evidence. For a student or student organization to be found responsible for violation of the

Student Code of Conduct, the information presented must indicate that it is more likely than not that the violation occurred.

D. Notifications

1. The Department of Student Activities may notify the appropriate advisors or national representative in advance of, or in conjunction with, the RSO's notification.
2. A Student Organization is permitted to have a support person(s) present during the conference. A support person may be, but is not limited to, a campus advisor or chapter advisor.

E. The Student Organization will have the opportunity to:

1. Explain their version of the events that led to the alleged violation(s).
2. Provide witnesses or persons they wish not to speak to; to present information that tends to support their version of the alleged violation.
3. Not participate. They may choose not to answer any questions.
4. Refute, question, or ask for clarification on any questions presented.
5. Challenge the objectivity of the conduct administrator if you have reasonable cause to believe that they may be biased or have a conflict of interest.
6. Appeal the outcome of the conference if it resulted in a Loss of Recognition or Long-term Suspension, based on the standards for appeal.

F. Student Organization Outcomes

1. Student Organizations found responsible for violations of the Code of Student Conduct or University policy will be subject to the following outcomes:
 - a. **Educational Outcomes** - An outcome that may be used in lieu of or in combination with other outcomes. Educational Outcomes will be consistent with the behavior. Educational seminars, classes, and/or workshops can be adopted for use in the outcome.
 - b. **Restitution** - Reimbursement by transfer of property or service to the University, other organizations, or a member of the University community in an amount not in excess of the damage or loss incurred. Reimbursement may be accompanied by other outcomes.
 - c. **Restricted University Participation/Loss of Privileges** – Exclusion for a period of time from participation in extracurricular activities for a designated period, including University-wide events such as intramural sports and Homecoming (as an organization), as well as Greek-affiliated events such as Greek Week. This sanction may also include revocation of The Sophomore Housing exemption.

- d. **Probation** - A period of observation and review of conduct in which the student organization demonstrates compliance with the provisions of University regulations. *Organizations on probation shall not have any restricted participation or loss of privileges, unless specifically noted.*
 - e. **Deferred Suspension** - In some cases, an outcome of suspension may be held in abeyance for a specified period. This means that, if the student organization is found responsible of any violation during that period, the organization will be subject to the deferred outcome without further review, in addition to the conduct action appropriate to the new violation. An organization that is placed on deferred suspension may continue to hold meetings but may not sponsor any activity or program.
 - f. **Interim Suspension** – Temporary exclusion from all organizational activities may be imposed prior to and/or during the course of a student organization’s conduct proceedings. While on interim suspension, the organization is prohibited from holding meetings, sponsoring events, or engaging in any activity or program. Interim suspension may be enacted under the following circumstances:
 - To ensure the safety and well-being of members of the university community.
 - To ensure organizational compliance with the conduct process.
 - g. **Suspension/Loss of Recognition** – Exclusion from recognition as a student organization for a period of time, generally from one term to one year.
 - h. **Long term Suspension** - Exclusion for the student organization for any time that is over one calendar year.
2. **Reinstatement** – No student organization that has been placed on interim suspension, formally suspended, or had its registration withdrawn pursuant to this section shall be eligible for reinstatement or re-registration with the University unless all of the following criteria have been satisfactorily met:
- a. The student organization has complied with all conditions and requirements imposed by this policy and the disciplinary decision that resulted in the organization’s interim suspension, suspension, or withdrawal of registration;
 - b. The student organization has remedied the violation that led to the interim suspension, suspension, or withdrawal of registration and put a written plan in place, which has been approved by the Vice President of Enrollment and Student Experience or their designee, to prevent the reoccurrence of the event that led to the interim suspension, suspension, or withdrawal of registration; and
 - c. The student organization and any individuals or entities affiliated with the student organization, including but not limited to national organizations, housing corporations, or other entities acting in concert with or on behalf of the

organization, have satisfied all outstanding financial obligations to the University.

3. Appeal - The decision of the original conduct administrator or committee may be appealed as set in the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

V. Prevention & Education

A. Education Programs & Primary Prevention Strategies

The Office of Student Conduct, Department of Student Activities, and the Office of Institutional Equity work in partnership to offer training and education to the campus community. Trained staff in these respective offices provide training to students, faculty and staff on prevention strategies, bystander intervention, and reporting.

1. Disclosure Training – Throughout the year, trained University staff host virtual and in-person trainings to give WKU students, faculty and staff the opportunity to learn how to helpfully respond to student disclosures of interpersonal violence (including, but not limited to hazing, sexual assault, relationship violence) and how to report disclosures or assist students in reporting instances of interpersonal violence, inclusive of hazing.
2. Additional Educational Programs – Educational programs that provide information and resources regarding hazing include, but are not limited to, M.A.S.T.E.R. Plan, Healthy Days Fair, RSO Fair(s), New Member Greek Symposium, Greek Leadership Symposium, Dynamic Leadership Institute, NPHC Greek 101, Interfraternity Council & Panhellenic Council Recruitment Orientation, and RSO Information Series.
3. RSO Registration & Renewal Policy Hazing Acknowledgement - Each academic year, all RSOs must renew their organization with the Student Activities office. The RSO renewal form requires organizations to update contact information for advisors and student leaders and requires an acknowledgement of Title IX and the WKU hazing policies.

VI. State and Federal Laws related to Hazing

A. State Law

[KRS §§ 508.180-186, “Lofton’s Law”](#)

B. Federal Law

[H.R.5646, “Stop Campus Hazing Act”](#)

VII. Related Policies

See also:

[University Policy # 0.2040: Discrimination and Harassment](#)

[University Policy # 0.2070: Sex and Gender-Based Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation](#)

[University Policy # 6.3000: Student Code of Conduct](#)