



# Hazing Policy and Transparency Report

## I. Policy Statement

Tusculum University is firmly opposed to all forms of hazing, regardless of the name, context, or tradition under which it may occur. The University will take decisive and appropriate action to prevent hazing and to promote the safety, dignity, and well-being of all community members. Hazing is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated in any student organization, athletic team, club, group, or activity affiliated with Tusculum University.

Any organization found responsible for hazing may have its recognition revoked. Likewise, any individual found responsible may face disciplinary action up to and including separation from the University.

## II. Definition of Hazing

Hazing is defined as any act consistent with the Tennessee Anti-Hazing Statute or any knowing, intentional, or reckless act committed for the purpose of pledging, initiating, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization. This definition applies whether the conduct occurs on or off campus and whether it is undertaken by one individual or by a group.

A behavior constitutes hazing when it:

1. **Causes or is reasonably likely to cause** bodily harm, danger, mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, intimidation, fright, stress, humiliation, ridicule, fear of ostracism, or otherwise compromises an individual's dignity;
2. **Compels an individual** to participate in an activity that is unlawful or violates University rules, policies, or regulations; or
3. **Unreasonably interferes** with or impairs an individual's academic performance or responsibilities.

Consent or willingness of a participant does not negate the classification of an act as hazing.

## III. Behavioral Concerns

The following list provides examples of behavior traditionally associated with pledging or initiation that are strictly prohibited. This list is illustrative, not exhaustive. If there is uncertainty regarding the appropriateness of an activity, the organization must consult the Office of Student Affairs prior to participation.

Prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- a. Physical striking, shoving, paddling, or any form of corporal punishment, or creating fear of such behavior.
- b. Compelling participation in strenuous or physically demanding activities such as calisthenics or running.
- c. Requiring individuals to be shaved, branded, tattooed, or pierced.
- d. Mandating physical acts that may cause harm, such as walking backward or confinement to small spaces.

- e. Compelling participation in sexual acts, sexual harassment, racial harassment, slurs, or exhibitionism.
- f. Conducting “line-ups” involving verbal harassment, intimidation, or abuse.
- g. Assigning personal servitude tasks.
- h. Restricting adequate sleep, meals, hydration, or personal hygiene.
- i. Isolating an individual from social contact for prolonged periods.
- j. Forcing consumption of alcohol, drugs, or excessive or unusual food or drink substances.
- k. Throwing or applying any substances onto individuals.
- l. Requiring individuals to wear degrading, uncomfortable, provocative, or burdensome apparel, or causing indecent exposure.

*Note: Small pledge pins or ribbons are permitted; items intended to degrade or humiliate are prohibited.*

- m. Requiring participation in pranks or scavenger hunts.

*Scavenger hunts require written approval from the Vice President of Student Affairs and Retention or designee at least two weeks in advance, and may not occur in Residence Halls, Academic Buildings, or during academic hours except within approved orientation programs.*

- n. Engaging in activities that impede academic performance by causing exhaustion, loss of sleep, or missed classes.
- o. Transporting individuals against their will, abandoning individuals at remote locations, or engaging in “kidnaps,” “ditches,” or “road trips” that endanger health or safety.

#### **IV. Consent Is Not a Defense**

Any activity upon which membership, initiation, or affiliation is conditioned will be considered a compelled activity. The expressed willingness or consent of a participant shall not be considered a defense for hazing.

#### **V. Community Standards Interpretation**

All terms within this policy will be interpreted by university officials in alignment with applicable laws and prevailing community standards designed to ensure safety, respect, and integrity.

#### **VI. Accountability Expectations**

All membership-related activities must be reviewed and approved in advance by the organization’s president, chair, or leader, as well as the organization’s adviser. Such activities must not infringe upon the rights, dignity, or well-being of others and must uphold the values and interests of the University community.

#### **VII. Enforcement Responsibilities**

The president, chair, or leader of each organization is responsible for:

- Ensuring all members, including pledges, associates, affiliates, and initiated members, are informed of this policy;
- Reviewing this policy during the first organizational meeting each semester;
- Informing guests and alumni members of expectations under this policy;
- Ensuring compliance by all participants, guests, and alumni.

Organizational officers may be held individually, jointly, and severally responsible for violations, in addition to any sanctions imposed on the organization as a whole.

Any individual with firsthand knowledge of the planning or occurrence of hazing must promptly report this information to the Vice President of Student Affairs and Retention or their designee.

**VIII. Annual Hazing Disclosure (Stop Campus Hazing Act Compliance)**

Tusculum University is committed to transparency, accountability, and student safety. In accordance with the Stop Campus Hazing Act, the University provides an annual summary of all substantiated hazing incidents involving student organizations, teams, or groups.

**Hazing Incidents Report**

Summary of Substantiated Hazing Incidents 2024-2025				
Case ID	Date of Incident	Organization, Athletic Team, Living Group Name	Description of Violation	Outcome/Sanctions Status
0				

- **Fall 2024:** No hazing allegations reported.
- **Spring 2025:** No hazing allegations reported.

**Reporting Hazing**

To report hazing, contact:

The Office of Student Affairs: [studentaffairs@tusculum.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@tusculum.edu)

The Office of Campus Safety: [tusafe@tusculum.edu](mailto:tusafe@tusculum.edu)