

Policy Number/Title: 4.25 Hazing Policy for Faculty and Staff

Effective Since: 07/30/2025

Last Revision Approved: 07/30/2025

Responsible Officer: VP for Human Resources

1. Scope:

This policy, pursuant to the Stop Campus Hazing Act, includes all student organizations recognized by the University as well as any unofficial student group consisting of two or more students such as a club, society, association, fraternity, sorority, band, SGA, club sports team, or athletic team. Student groups and individual students should not condone or engage in any hazing activity. Winthrop faculty and staff play an important role in preventing and eliminating hazing by recognizing and reporting hazing conduct consistent with this policy.

2. Definitions:

N/A

3. Policy:

Hazing Policy for Faculty and Staff

Winthrop University is committed to the health and safety of our students. Hazing is a very serious offense that violates federal and South Carolina state law, University policy, student organization policy, the student conduct code, and the national or organizational policies of student organizations such as fraternities and sororities. This policy, pursuant to the Stop Campus Hazing Act, includes all student organizations recognized by the University as well as any unofficial student group consisting of two or more students such as a club, society, association, fraternity, sorority, band, SGA, club sports team, or athletic team. Student groups and individual students should not condone or engage in any hazing activity. Winthrop faculty and staff play an important role in preventing and eliminating hazing by recognizing and reporting hazing conduct consistent with this policy.

Per federal guidelines, **Hazing** is defined as any intentional, knowing or reckless action taken, committed, or situation created by a person (individually or in concert with others) against another person or persons, regardless of the willingness of the other person or persons to participate, which causes or creates a risk, above the reasonable risk encountered in the course of participation in the institution of higher education or 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;

WINTHROP UNIVERSITY

- 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.

As identified in examples below, the university also includes, as potential hazing, actions which produce mental or physical discomfort, public embarrassment or ridicule, and harassment. Such activities and situations include assault in any form, physical and psychological shock, nudity, situations or tasks that materially interfere with scholastic activities, and any other activities which are not consistent with the regulations and policies of Winthrop University.

It is a violation of Winthrop's hazing policy for any person to:

- 1) Engage in and/or knowingly permit or assist any person in committing hazing activities;**
or
- 2) Fail to promptly report hazing activities to the appropriate university official.**

The implied or express consent of a person to participate in hazing does not constitute a defense to violations of the hazing policy.

* Note: this policy is intended to comply with the federal Stop Campus Hazing Act and the South Carolina Tucker Hipps Transparency Act, and related university conduct policies.

Examples of Hazing

Depending upon circumstances, the following activities may, depending on the circumstances, constitute hazing.

Such activities are often required or implied as conditions of inclusion or exclusion from a group, formal or informal, and when these and other similar activities occur as conditions of inclusion or exclusion, hazing may have occurred. Hazing, therefore, may be perpetuated by individual(s) against individual(s), individual(s) against the group, the group against individual(s) or group against group.

- 1. Unrelated/unreasonable physical activity or training:** requiring unreasonable physical activities or calisthenics such as sit-ups, running, or any form of physically abusive or excessive exercise unrelated to the purpose of the group (e.g., not an athletic or club sports team); objectively unreasonable physical training or activities for athletic-related groups; and/or any physical action or restraint that may reasonably inflict harm or pain on an individual(s) or place them in a position or situation of possible harm or threat.
- 2. Direct or indirect (implied) forcing, requiring, recommending, and/or coercing consumption of alcoholic beverages or any other kind of drug or similar substance;**

WINTHROP UNIVERSITY

requiring ingestion of an undesirable or unwanted substance (food, drink, concoction); and/or required overconsumption of any food, drink (including water), or other substance.

3. Verbal, mental, and/or physical abuse of individual(s) or group(s).
4. Scavenger hunts that require or result in theft; objectively dangerous activities; kidnapping; and/or other illegal activities.
5. Endorsing or conducting pranks such as stealing items, destruction of property or objects, pulling false fire alarms, or any other activity in violation of the law.
6. Personal servitude (excessive or inappropriate chores, errands, etc. for the group(s) or individual members).
7. Sleep interruption or deprivation; conducting activities that do not allow reasonably adequate time to study.
8. Degrading, humiliating or significantly embarrassing games or activities.
9. Line-ups or any interrogation for information about the history, purpose or direction of the organization that is not consistent with legitimate testing.
10. Forced isolation from other members, friends or the rest of the campus. This includes any prohibition on speaking or social interaction (including public marching or walking in lines or "online.")
11. Deception and/or threats contrived to convince the pledge he/ she will not be able to join the organization or that inflicts mental stress by not revealing the requirements or basic timetable for joining.

Warning Signs of Hazing

The following behaviors may be key indicators that a student is experiencing or has experienced hazing.

- Sudden change in behavior or attitude after joining the organization or team
- Wanting to leave the organization or team with no real explanation
- Sudden decrease in communication with friends and family
- Physical or psychological exhaustion
- Unexplained weight loss
- Unexplained injuries or illness
- Change in sleeping or eating habits
- Withdrawal from normal activities
- Expressed feeling of sadness or feeling of worthlessness
- Increase in secrecy and unwillingness to share details

Report Hazing:

Employees or students who have direct suspicion of hazing or concerns about a student, should contact the Assistant Director of Student Activities for Fraternity & Sorority Life (if it involves fraternities/sororities), or the Dean of Students Office (if it involves other student groups such as clubs/organizations/sports/etc.). Allegations of hazing will be investigated by the Dean of Students Office and may result in conduct charges if evidence supports the allegation. An employee who fails to report objectively obvious hazing may be subject to disciplinary action, depending on the circumstances.

WINTHROP UNIVERSITY

Employees or students who witness a hazing incident on campus should report the incident to the Winthrop Police Department (WUPD) immediately at 803-323-3333. Hazing incidents may also be reported using Winthrop's Hazing Report Form. Additional resources are available online at www.hazingprevention.org or <http://www.stophazing.org/>.

4. Procedures:

N/A

5. Resources:

N/A

6. History of Revisions:

07/30/2025 Policy first established

7. Approvals:

President Signature/Date:

 07/31/25