

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION – DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS
POLICY NUMBER – SA 3.05
POLICY TITLE – HAZING
SCOPE OF POLICY – USC UPSTATE
DATE OF REVISION – FEBRUARY 24, 2026
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER – VICE CHANCELLOR FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE – STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

PURPOSE

This policy outlines campus policies pertaining to hazing, including what activities may constitute hazing and procedures to report hazing at the University of South Carolina Upstate campus.

DEFINITIONS

Hazing is defined as an act that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student, or that destroys or removes public or private property, for the purpose of initiation, admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in a group or organization. Participation or cooperation by the person(s) being hazed does not excuse the violation. Failing to intervene to prevent and/or failing to discourage and/or failing to report those acts may also violate this policy.

POLICY STATEMENT

USC Upstate is committed to providing a safe educational environment for everyone, cultivating a community that fosters respect for the dignity and rights of all persons. Therefore, hazing will not be tolerated by any group or individual affiliated with the University.

A. Activities that would constitute hazing include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Submission of members or prospective members to situations that a reasonable person would understand to be potentially dangerous or hazardous.
2. Activities which have a foreseeable potential for resulting in personal injury.
3. An activity that would have a potential to cause:
 - a. Mental anxiety or distress – any activity that would subject the individual to extreme mental stress, such as: verbal abuse, sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, excessive cleaning and errand-running
 - b. Public embarrassment - an action that causes embarrassment, humiliation, or ridicule, regardless of a person’s willingness to participate
 - c. Panic
 - d. Unreasonable interference with a student’s academic progress or academic performance
 - e. Experience or observance of forced or coerced sexual acts, whether real or simulated

4. Acts of physical violence which include beating, branding, paddling, whipping, and the like as well as exposure to the elements (activities that include having individuals participate in physical acts of exertion in extreme heat, having members hold ice or other frozen objects, sleeping outside, etc.).
5. Tests of Endurance:
 - a. Calisthenics
 - b. Forced runs
 - c. Forced workouts
 - d. Line ups – Acts where individuals are forced, coerced, or encouraged to line up in any formation and be questioned on information either through physical or verbal threats.
6. Unwanted Ingestion of any substance including, but not limited to:
 - a. Alcohol
 - b. Condiments
 - c. Drugs
 - d. Food
 - e. Tobacco
 - f. Animals, alive or dead
7. Forced Personal Servitude Activities that interfere with one's ability to enjoy time outside of organization activities or unduly interferes with one's ability to succeed academically; this can include, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. Cleaning
 - b. Driving
 - c. Running errands
 - d. Being on call for members
8. Unusual Attire – wearing apparel which is conspicuous, embarrassing, and not normally in good taste, and/or inappropriate for the time of year.
9. Aiding in any form of academic misconduct.

B. Student Group Initiation Ceremonies and Activities

Student groups shall be permitted certain initiation ceremonies and activities, which when examined by the ordinary University student, would seem reasonable under the circumstances and justified in view of the purpose for which they are conducted.

C. Adjudication of Hazing

1. Adjudication of hazing is governed by the USC Upstate Code of Student Conduct. An individual or group is responsible for hazing if they personally take part or contribute to the actions described in this section or if they know hazing will occur or is occurring and does nothing to stop and report it to the appropriate university and legal authorities.
2. It shall not constitute a defense to the charge of hazing that the participants:

- a. Took part voluntarily
 - b. Gave consent to the conduct
 - c. Voluntarily assumed the risks or hardship of the activity
 - d. That the conduct was not part of an official student group event or sanctioned or approved by the student group
 - e. That the conduct was not done as a condition of membership in the student group
 - f. That no injury in fact was suffered
3. A person commits the offense of hazing and is subject to discipline if the person:
 - a. Took part voluntarily
 - b. Engages in hazing
 - c. Solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in engaging in hazing
 - d. Recklessly permits hazing to occur
 - e. Has firsthand knowledge of the planning of a specific hazing incident
 - f. Has firsthand knowledge that a specific hazing incident has occurred, and knowingly fails to report that knowledge to the appropriate official of the institution
 4. An organization commits a hazing offense and is subject to discipline, if the organization:
 - a. Took part voluntarily
 - b. Condone, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid in hazing - if an officer, authorized representative, or any combination of members, prospective members, or alumni of the organization commits or assists in the commission of hazing
 5. Retaliation against any individual who reports a hazing violation or suspected hazing violations to the university or law enforcement official would be considered a violation as defined by the USC Upstate Code of Student Conduct.

PROCEDURES

- A. If there is an immediate threat to a student's health and safety, please call the USC Upstate Police Department at (864-503-5911).
- B. To initiate a complaint for alleged hazing, submit an Incident Report through the Dean of Students: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofSCUpstate&layout_id=0
- C. All supervisors, administrators, employees, and university officials are responsible for promptly reporting incidents of hazing that come to their attention to the Dean of Students.

RELATED UNIVERSITY, STATE, AND FEDERAL POLICIES

S.C Code of Laws section 16-3-510 and 16-3-520

S.C. Code of Laws section 59-101-200

S.C. Code of Laws section 59-101-210 (a report of actual findings of violations related to formally affiliated student organization shall be provided online for the public)

USC Upstate Code of Student Conduct

Registered Student Organizations (SA 3.09)

Tucker Hipps Transparency Act

HISTORY OF REVISIONS

August 2012 - New policy approval

October 2024 - Policy revised in adaptation to USC Columbia Campus Policy – BUSF 3.05.

Office name updated. Format updated

February 2026 - Document format reviewed/revised for accessibility